

The TORRANCE TEACHER

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1619 CRAVENS AVENUE, TORRANCE, CA 90501 (310) 320-8200 www.torrance teachers.org
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We All Rise Together, pt. 3

Investment in Classrooms Decreases Under Current District Leadership

As TTA gears up for a successor bargaining campaign, we have a clear message for the school board: Increased investment in the top executives and consultants should not outweigh the increases in investment in students' classrooms. The Association continues to insist that a rising tide should lift all boats, not some more than others.

In the past two issues of *The Torrance Teacher*, we outlined the increase in the Superintendent's and the Deputy Superintendent's pay since 2020. In this issue, the focus is on the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources position. In 2020, Dr. Mario Liberati held the title of Senior Director of Certificated Human Resources (though he handled both certificated and classified HR). When he left the district in 2021, Dr. Dylan Farris was hired as a Chief Personnel Officer, and TUSD added a Director of Human Resources position to assist him with classified HR needs. This reconfiguration of the position's title and addition of staff increased investment into HR substantially—by over \$184,000. That increased investment continued when Julio Hernandez was hired to be the Chief Personnel Officer. Within a two year span, his title was changed to Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources and TUSD is now seeking another HR directorship. If TUSD moves forward with restoring the Senior Director of Certificated Human Resources, that will swell the investment into HR well beyond just the increase in salary in the department head's position as shown in the graphic below.

TTA President Carlos Anwandter continues to point out that labor isn't against paying district administrators competitively, but that **we should all rise together**. These numbers again merely highlight that the Board of Education has disproportionately invested in executives over those working on the frontlines with students every day. TTA acknowledges that TUSD has invested in employees, but not to the extent that it has invested in top management in the District. TTA continues to believe that TUSD has set sights on median salaries for employees while ensuring that executives are at the top of the scale while continuing to grow the administrative class.

Anatomy of TUSD Top Executive Investment

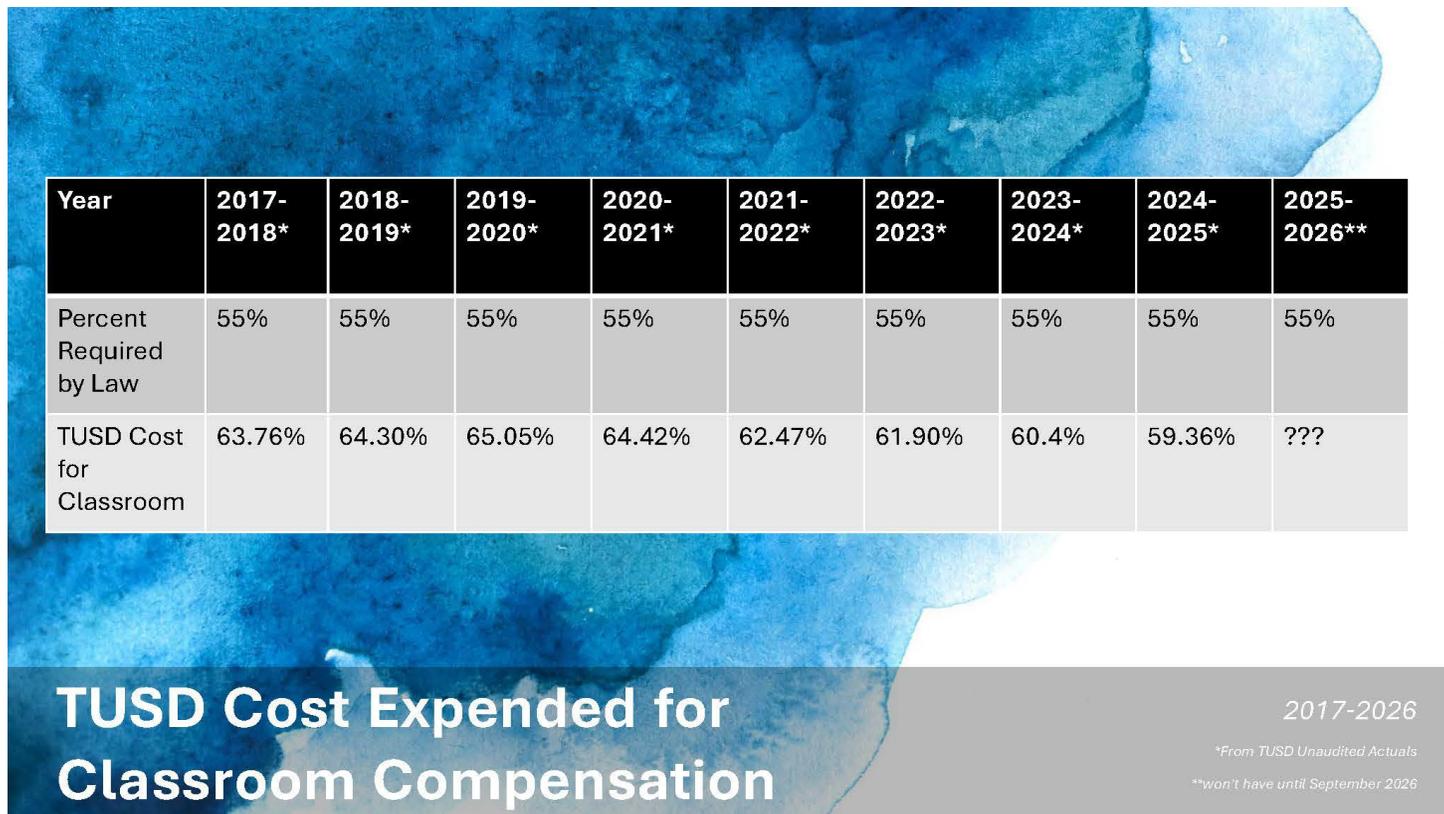
Assistant Superintendent—HR

- 2025-26 Asst Supt—HR Contract Pay
- Base Pay: \$254,775 (36% increase over 2020 position's base pay of \$162,449; 7.8% over current holder's starting base salary of \$235,000 in January 2024)
- BCLAD Stipend: \$4,496.55
- Total Pay = \$259,271.55 (37% increase over 2020 total pay; 9.4% over 2024 pay)
- Up to 10 vacation days surrendered at per diem rate: \$11,678.90
- Total Pay w/ 10 extra days: \$270,950.45 (39% increase over 2020 pay; 13.3% increase over 2024 pay)
- + Me-too Clause

To further support TTA's contention that TUSD has increased funding outside the classroom, TTA looked at the trendline on what TUSD reports as being spent directly in the classroom. And the trendline tells a story of redistribution of funds from the classroom to elsewhere. By state law (CA Ed Code §41372), TUSD is mandated to expend a minimum of 55% of annual funds for compensation of teachers and instructional aides in the classroom. According to the [California Department of Education](#), the formula includes the following expenditures: certificated salaries (line 1000), classified salaries (line 2000), employee benefits (line 3000), books and supplies (line 4000), equipment replacement (line 6500), and services and indirect costs (lines 5000 & 7300). Among our comparison districts, TUSD ranked 11 of 12 in the **amount spent per student**:

1	Bellflower Unified	\$23,582	7	Placentia/Yorba Linda Unified	\$17,635
2	Hacienda/La Puente Unified	\$20,968	8	Palos Verdes Unified	\$17,611
3	Downey Unified	\$19,955	9	Glendale Unified	\$17,464
4	ABC Unified	\$19,765	10	Burbank Unified	\$16,445
5	Culver City Unified	\$19,208	11	Torrance Unified	\$16,002
6	Manhattan Beach Unified	\$18,693	12	Redondo Beach Unified	\$15,012

Overall, several indicators in investment into the classroom show that since 2020, TUSD has decreased overall investment directly into the classroom. Even during the Great Recession, TUSD invested more in the classroom (a whopping 67% during the lean layoff and furlough years between 2009-2011). While last year, TUSD spent 59.36% in the classroom according to their own reporting via the unaudited actuals released in September 2025. The downward trend sends a troubling signal, especially when coupled with the increased investment in top executive pay and expansion of the number of top executives across the district.



Since 2020, there have been several administrative positions created, including the Director of Human Resources (as mentioned earlier), the Director of Accountability and Intervention, ELOP Coordinator and Assistant Principal, and many more. Now TUSD is advocating to add even more administrative positions while quietly laying off two teachers and eliminating positions that directly service students. TTA is not advocating for elimination of these positions or programs but instead are advocating for a review of the efficacy and need for the positions while identifying ways to reinvest directly into the classroom.

Again, our view of the Board of Education’s spending isn’t about Stowe, Butler, Hernandez, et al. It is about the inequity in distribution of funds and divestment of resources directly from the classroom. We will continue to question why the median good for labor, but the top is what is good for management. We will continue to question why TUSD is divesting resources and funding from the classroom. TTA and our labor partners will continue to hold to the principles that money should be spent on current students in the current year and that budgeting priorities should always center on the classroom first. TUSD has seen so much growth in the administrative ranks and in top administrative salaries while class sizes stagnate and employee workload increases. This hardly demonstrates a “classroom first” mentality.

TTA Leaders invite all our members to join us at each Board of Education meeting in support of our bargain as we move forward with our push to Rise Together and put the Classroom First. The next Board of Education meeting is March 2nd. Labor will begin gathering at 6:15 PM. The open session is scheduled to begin at 7:00 PM.

Quick Hits

Prop 55 Extension Campaign: TTA’s campaign to gather signatures for the California Children’s Education and Healthcare Protection Act of 2026 which extends Prop 55 revenues permanently is moving into its second phase. If you did not sign the petition the first time around, you will be hearing from TTA leaders to secure your signature. Remember that approval of the act does not add new taxes; it extends existing taxes and secures current funding structures that have lifted California’s education system funding from bottom 5 in the nation to 31st in the nation. To not extend Prop 55 would be a tax cut for the wealthiest among us while harming students by cutting up to 1 of every 6 teachers in the state. **TUSD would lose more than \$48 million in funding should Prop 55 expire** resulting in mass layoffs locally. Currently 52% of our members have signed the petitions. TTA Leaders will be reaching out to site representatives to assist.

National Education Association Representative Assembly: TTA has two candidates running as State Delegates to the NEA-RA. **Deb Tabush** (Riviera Elementary) and **America Moreno** (Yukon Elementary) have declared candidacy. Their names will appear on a CTA issued digital ballot with a voting window of February 17th-March 9th. TTA leadership encourages all members to vote for NEA-RA delegates. Even if you don’t know most of the people, we have two who wish to represent you. Candidate statements will be available as well.

Catastrophic Leave Bank: The TTA Catastrophic Leave Bank has been entirely depleted and needs donations. All unit members are eligible to contribute to the Catastrophic Leave Bank on a voluntary basis. A unit member’s contribution must be made on the appropriate form authorized by the unit member. Eligible sick leave credits must be donated at a minimum of one day and in full-day (6 hour) increments. To donate, visit the TTA website’s Member Resources page where you can find the donation form and other pertinent information about the program.

TTA and CTA Scholarships Available: [Scholarships, Grants, and Awards - California Teachers Association](#) CTA is offering scholarships for members and members’ dependent children. Visit the CTA website for more information about due dates. TTA Scholarships for dependent children are also available. Forms are due on Monday, April 6th, no later than 5:00 PM.

Contact the TTA office for more information. Learn more about the scholarships and find the forms online at <https://torranceteachers.org/scholarships/>.

WHO Award Nominations: It is the time of year where We Honor Ours (WHO)! The WHO Awards are awarded annually to a member of each local association in CTA. Any member of a local association can be nominated for WHO Award for demonstrating outstanding active service to the union during the last three years. The nomination form can be found on the TTA website [HERE](#) (at the bottom of the home page). Nominations are due Friday, March 6th by 5:00 PM.

For Tax Return Information:

TK-12 - 2025 TTA MEMBERSHIP DUES

<u>FTE 61-100%</u> CAT 1	<u>FTE 34-50%</u> CAT 2A	<u>FTE 51-60%</u> CAT 2B	<u>FTE 25% or Less</u> CAT 3A	<u>FTE 26-33%</u> CAT 3B
\$1,236.40	\$639.40	\$735.60	\$341.65	\$389.30

ADULT EDUCATION - 2025 TTA MEMBERSHIP DUES

More than 21 Weekly Hours – CAT 2A	20 Weekly Hours or Less – CAT 3A
\$639.40	\$341.65

School Board Seat Vacated: Jasmine Park, the TUSD Trustee for Area B, resigned at the end of the February 17th Board of Education meeting. The District now has 60 days to fill her seat with an interim trustee or hold an election. Upon Mrs. Park’s announcement the Board of Education indicated that they would follow the same process that they did to fill Trustee Jeremy Gerson’s seat when he resigned from the Board due to being elected to the Torrance City Council in 2024. That process included citizens from the trustee area applying for consideration and the Board of Education appointing from the pool of interim candidates.

The Standard Disability Insurance Special Enrollment Opportunity: The Standard, CTA’s recommended Disability and Life Insurance company, is hosting a special enrollment opportunity for TTA members. Between March 15- May 15, 2026, TTA members can sign up for The Standard with no health questions asked if the minimum number of participants enroll (46 members are needed). The Standard’s CTA endorsed Disability insurance replaces up to 80% of your pay if you are unable to work due to illness, injury, pregnancy, or childbirth. They provide coverage for disabilities that occur on and off the job and have additional benefits for student loans, cancer, and summer. If you don’t know whether you have disability insurance, you can check on your pay warrant or call the TUSD benefits office. You would either have American Fidelity or The Standard or neither. You should not have both as you can only have one disability insurer. More information will be available after March 15, so watch this space.

Retro & Off-Schedule Checks: TUSD has put forward March 5th as the date that TTA unit members will receive both their retro checks and the \$1,500 off-schedule checks. If you do not receive them on that date, please notify the TTA office and contact the TUSD payroll office for further information.

TTA Board of Education Solidarity Roll Call

TTA members are encouraged to attend all the school board meetings for the remainder of the school year. To assist with ensuring that our members’ voices are heard during the upcoming negotiations, TTA leaders have asked for schools to sign up for dates to attend. This list will be updated after Rep Council on February 19th. Everyone is welcome even if your school hasn’t signed up yet or if your school hasn’t signed up on that specific night. Any and all members are encouraged to shirt up, show up, and speak up.

- Bring at least 5 TTA members from your site with you
- Wear your BLUE SHIRTS
- Meet at the EMB at 6:15 PM (Solidarity Tailgates will be in the parking lot of each meeting)
- Sit in the Boardroom with your TTA colleagues and watch the meeting
- You can also volunteer to SPEAK if you want. Talk to a TTA leader for more information and/or talking points.

March 2
School 1: Hull Middle School
School 2: Jefferson Middle School
School 3: West High School
April 20
School 1: Arlington Elementary School
School 2: Yukon Elementary School
School 3: West High School
May 18
School 1: West High School

TTA EXECUTIVE BOARD ELECTION 2026-28

AVAILABLE SEATS

<p>OFFICERS: PRESIDENT VICE PRESIDENT TREASURER <i>2 Year Term / 3 Seats / Elected At-Large</i></p>
<p>ELEMENTARY DIRECTORS <i>2 Year Term / 4 Seats / Elected At-Large from Area</i> CENTRAL AREA: Adams, Fern, Hickory, Torrance El., Wood NORTH AREA: Arlington, Carr, Edison, Lincoln, Yukon SOUTH AREA: Arnold, Riviera, Seaside, Waltheria WEST AREA: Anza, Towers, Victor</p>
<p>MIDDLE SCHOOL DIRECTORS <i>2 Year Term / 2 Seats / Elected At-Large in Middle Schools</i></p>
<p>HIGH SCHOOL DIRECTORS <i>2 Year Term / 4 Seats (One Seat per High School)</i> North High South High Torrance High West High</p>
<p>AT-LARGE DIRECTOR <i>2 Year Term / 1 Seat</i> Elected At-Large from: Adult Transition Program, EMB, Drevno Community Day School, Griffith Adult School, Hamilton Adult School, Levy Adult School, Launch Preschool, Kurt T Shery Continuation School, Special Education Office</p>

ELECTION TIMELINE

February 5 - Election timeline and available seats announced at Executive Board Meeting

February - Election timeline and available seats published in *The Torrance Teacher*

February 19 - Election timeline and available seats announced at Rep Council

March 6 - Declaration of Candidacy forms due at TTA's office by 5 PM

March 19 - Election chair announces slate of declared candidates at Rep Council

Late March/Early April - Declared candidates are published in *The Torrance Teacher*

April 23 Rep Council Meeting:

1. Election chair announces slate of declared candidates. Final call for candidate nominations from floor.
2. Nominations close. Final slate established.
3. If a seat has only one declared candidate after nominations close, Rep Council may vote to waive the ballot for that seat and elect the lone candidate by acclamation. If no candidate has been declared for a seat, then the ballot shall be automatically waived for this seat. If the seat is still open after a special election, the President has the discretion to appoint representation for the impacted members. (*TTA Bylaws Article VI-Section 12*)

NOTE: *The President, Vice President, and Treasurer will be elected via a ballot in a members-only election, not by acclamation at Rep Council in April. CTA Elections will run the election for the CTA State Council Rep and Alternate.*

AN ELECTION WILL COMMENCE FOR OFFICERS AND ANY CONTESTED SEATS.

May 4 – The final slate of candidates will be printed in *The Torrance Teacher*.

May 11 – The office will deliver ballot boxes and election material to school sites/site reps.

May 12-15 – Election dates for TTA Executive Board 2026-28.

May 15

- 3:30 PM - Election ends at sites at 3:30 PM. Ballot boxes or ballot envelopes, rosters, and any election materials must be dropped off at TTA's office by 5 PM.
- 5:30 – Election committee counts ballots. Candidates notified. Results published in *The Torrance Teacher*.

June 4 - TTA Executive Board Installation Dinner



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Torrance Teachers Association Storefront
Support the TTA Charity Fund and Scholarships with your See's Candies purchase!

HELLO SPRING





UNITY BLUE THURSDAYS

WHY BLUE THURSDAY?

It MEANS you are showing your advocacy, unity, and strength as a TTA member!

It MATTERS because:

- 

It shows **SILENT UNITY**, especially to my colleagues who need it.
- 

It shows others that educators are **TOGETHER** and support each other.
- 

It shows my administrators that I stand in **SUPPORT** of my colleagues.
- 

It shows everyone if you stand together we continue to **MAKE a DIFFERENCE.**

www.torranceteachers.org



Special Enrollment Opportunity for TTA Members
March 15 - May 15, 2026

Torrance Teachers Association has partnered with Standard Insurance Company to bring you a special enrollment opportunity to make it easy for you to apply for CTA-endorsed Disability and Life insurance **without answering health questions.***

Disability insurance replaces up to 80% of your paycheck if you're unable to work due to illness injury, pregnancy and childbirth.

Learn more and apply at standard.com/cta/torrance.

* No health questions asked if 5% of eligible chapter members apply for Disability insurance and/or when applying for up to the Guarantee Issue amount of Life insurance.

For costs and further details of the coverage, including exclusions, any reductions or limitations and the terms under which the policies may be continued in force, please contact Standard Insurance Company at 800.522.0406. Standard Insurance Company, 1100 SW Sixth Avenue, Portland, OR 97204 GP190-LTD/S399/CTA.1 GP190-LIFE/S399/CTA.3 SI 16480-CTAvol (2/26)

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