

The TORRANCE TEACHER

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We All Rise Together, pt. 4 Consultant Costs Steeply Increase over Past Five Years

Next week, the TTA Negotiations Team will begin bargaining with TUSD. As the team has been taking a deep dive into TUSD’s financials, the District’s narrative has become clear. In their projections, TUSD’s financial picture looks bleak—to the point of discussing potential layoffs in 28-29 without any raises in the next two years. Despite the gloomy picture coming from TUSD, TTA maintains our message that we all rise together and that TUSD must reprioritize its expenditures to put students and the classroom first. Our message to the school board remains: 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. And the Board of Education must make classroom spending a clear, public, and measurable priority.

In the past three issues of *The Torrance Teacher*, we outlined the increase in the Superintendent’s, Deputy Superintendent’s, and Assistant Superintendent of HR’s pay since 2020. In this issue, the focus is on the Assistant Superintendents of Education Services and Student Services. These two positions were originally one position held by Dr. Kati Krumpe. When Dr. Krumpe retired last summer, her position was divided into two Assistant Superintendent positions. The position of Director of Compliance was absorbed as well to make the division of Dr. Krumpe’s position as cost neutral as possible. The task of compliance was then divided among the three Special Education coordinators on top of their already existing duties. This reconfiguration of positions and duties has increased costs by over \$36,000.

Anatomy of TUSD Top Executive Investment

Chief Academic Officer + Director of Compliance

Vs

Asst. Supt. Ed Services + Asst. Supt. Student Services

Year	CAO	Compliance	Total
24-25 (CAO + Compliance)	\$300,872	\$188,026	\$488,898
	Ed Services	Student Services	Total
25-26 (Asst. Supts)	\$265,880	\$259,555	\$525,435 (+36,537)

Asst. Supt. Pay is calculated using half a year at their initial salary and half a year at their January salary increase.
 Compliance Director’s salary is taken from Transparent California.

That increased investment is amplified when taken over a multiyear period for the duties that go with the Chief Academic Officer position. Within a four year span, the title changed from Chief Academic Officer to Assistant Superintendent of Education Services and Assistant Superintendent of Student Services. The amount of money spent on these duties has increased by 47% in four years.

Anatomy of TUSD Top Executive Investment

Chief Academic Officer → Asst. Supts. Ed Services & Student Services

+ Me-too Clause

Year	Base	Longevity/10 Days	Stipend(s)	Total
22-23 (CAO)	\$251,412.70	\$277,182.50	\$1,541.69	\$278,724
23-24 (CAO)	\$263,983.34	\$296,321.30	\$1,571.63	\$297,893
24-25 (CAO)	\$266,623.17	\$299,284.50	\$1,587.35	\$300,872
25-26 (Asst. Supts.)	\$496,734	\$519,384	\$6,053	\$525,437 (47% increase)

25-26 is now two positions combined with their total cost including their January raise after six months on the job.

TTA’s main point in assessing these expenditures has not been to say that TUSD’s top administrators do not deserve top pay. The main point is that TUSD Labor deserves top pay too. TUSD educators deliver results by providing a top tier education for our students, and they deserve to be compensated fairly and commensurately. 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. TTA demands that the Board of Education and TUSD top administrators reflect and look at budgeting priorities and trend lines, that they listen and evaluate existing programs and expenditures. The next few years will not get any easier budgetarily, so how TUSD prioritizes will be crucial moving forward.

For example, one of the areas that TUSD can and should review and reflect upon is spending on consultants. TTA leaders recently shared the decrease in classroom spending and the increase in consultant expenditures with Dr. Tim Stowe. He listened intently and asked for copies of our charts. He took the charts to the Board of Education. How do we know? Because at the March 2nd Board of Education meeting, Trustee James Han started asking Dr. Stowe and Dr. Butler about the increase in consultant costs over the past few years. Rather than reflect and work with the Association in dialogue, they tried to get their narrative out in public before TTA. What they don’t understand is that this isn’t a game of who gets the information out first. There is a story of paying architects and lawyers. Ours is a story about how the cost of consultants is eating away funds that should be spent directly in the classroom. We are demanding that TUSD take stock of those expenditures and find ways to stem the divestment in the classroom, to find ways to reinvest in students first.

Year	2019-2020*	2020-2021*	2021-2022*	2022-2023*	2023-2024*	2024-2025*	2025-2026**
Unrestricted Costs	\$4,442,757	\$4,209,994	\$5,257,413	\$6,483,530	\$8,142,578	\$9,796,188	\$8,348,000
Restricted Costs	\$2,688,977	\$4,394,826	\$7,828,794	\$6,455,697	\$5,860,100	\$6,625,802	\$5,414,000
Total Costs	\$7,131,734 2.7% of budget	\$8,604,820 3.1% of budget	\$13,086,207 4.4% of budget (COVID relief \$)	\$12,939,226 3.7% of budget	\$14,002,679 4.1% of budget	\$16,421,990 4.8% of budget	\$13,762,000 Current expenditure as of March 2, 2026 \$10,739,752

TUSD Consultant Expenditures

2019-2026

*From TUSD Unaudited Actuals

**from the 2025-2026 Budget

It is a challenge. We know. We understand. But until we are all rising together, we do not believe that TUSD is doing the best it can do. With four months remaining in the fiscal year, TUSD has already spent 78% of the funds it budgeted for consultants. We know that TUSD has hired a variety of consultants this year—for professional development (up to \$150,000 for one consultant alone), for assessing facility conditions for a potential bond campaign (\$299,222), for assessing the Dual Language Immersion program, for surveying for a potential bond, for running interactive meetings, for conducting third party investigations into complaints, etc. Are these things bad? No. Matter of fact, a bond could assist in freeing up general fund money to put directly into the classroom. Quality professional development is always a good thing. So is having neutral third parties help ensure fairness in complaint processes. But are these expenditures the best methods of achieving said goals? That’s debatable.

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 is 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 while increasing consultant expenditures and adding administrative positions—all while saying they can’t afford raises over the next three years.

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 students and the classroom first. TTA will continue to fight to reduce class size and employee workload while increasing total compensation to be competitive in the education marketplace. We fight these fights because our work environment is students’ learning environment. The better our workspace, the better our students learn.

TTA Spring Election

Initial Candidate Slate Is Set

Fourteen of the 16 TTA Executive Board seats are up for election this spring. The election timeline and declarations of candidacy have been available since early February. The below candidates have declared for TTA Executive Board seats by the March 6th deadline. At the April 23rd Representative Council meeting, the final slates will be set by taking nominations from the floor. An election will be held for the three executive officer seats, any contested seat, and any seat where the ballot has not been waived by the Rep Council. The election will be held May 12-15th. For more election timeline information, visit [HERE](#) on the TTA website. If you are interested in being nominated from the floor for any seat, contact Elections Chair Lisa Hamilton for information at lisa.hamilton.tta@gmail.com.

TTA uses the CTA alphabetical order for elections. The CTA alphabetical order for 2025-2026 shall be:

P V Q K H C N Y W E M B R Z O X F S L U G D J T I A

In the event that the last name of more than one candidate begins with the same letter or more than one candidate has the same last name, the CTA alphabetical order shall continue to be applied throughout the name, including the first name.

Officers	Candidate(s)
President	Carlos Anwandter (Torrance High)
Vice President	Amy Irwin (Bert Lynn Middle School)
Treasurer	Dena Ludwig (Jefferson Middle School)
North High Director	Isabelle Martinez
South High Director	VACANT
Torrance High Director	Ken Johnston
West High Director	Mark Pesusich
Middle School Directors (two elected at-large)	Maribeth Borowski Shawna Leader
Central Area Elementary Director	Amanda Leyland
North Area Elementary Director	America Moreno
South Area Elementary Director	VACANT
West Area Elementary Director	VACANT
At-Large Director	Patricia Jackson

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 in the final phase. If you have not yet signed the petition, 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 61% of our members have signed the petitions. TTA Leaders will be reaching out to site representatives to assist.

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/>.

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 applications for interim candidates are due on March 27th no later than 4:00 PM. For more information, visit the TUSD website [HERE](#).

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 issued retro and \$1,500 off-schedule checks on March 5th. So far, there have been some checks not processed or sent to wrong sites. Members will also want to verify the accuracy of the retro checks. To do so, note that the old rate of pay is not on the check stub. The new rate and the amount difference is on the stub. For the old rate, you will need to look at a pay stub from October or November. If you changed column during that time, you will need to take that change into account as well. Those who taught summer school after July 1st will also see retroactive pay for summer dates. Summer professional development hours are not included because the contract hourly rate was not retroactively increased. If you did not receive one or both of your checks, or you believe your check amount(s) to be in error, please email 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.

- You can also volunteer to SPEAK if you want. Talk to a TTA leader for more information and/or talking points.

April 20
School 1: Arlington Elementary School
School 2: Yukon Elementary School
School 3: West High School
May 18
School 1: West High School

- 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



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.



LABOR LUAAU

★ STAND TOGETHER FOR SCHOOLS & COMMUNITY! ★

To show our ongoing support with our certificated & classified friends we will be having a spring luau themed gathering!

For those willing, we will be walking from the District to Wilson park to show our strength to the community

THURSDAY, MARCH 26
4:00 PM - 6:00 PM

WEAR YOUR BEST ALOHA ATTIRE!

★ **LOCATION: TORRANCE USD OFFICE** ★
2335 PLAZA DEL AMO, TORRANCE, CA

For those that want to join but want to skip the 25m. walk, meet us at Wilson park picnic area near the basketball courts.





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