The TORRANCE TEACHER

Published by TORRANCE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION CTA / NEA
1619 CRAVENS AVENUE, TORRANCE, CA 90501 (310) 320-8200 www.torranceteachers.org
August 19, 2026

When We Fight, We Win!
TTA Leaders Enact Action Plan for 26-27

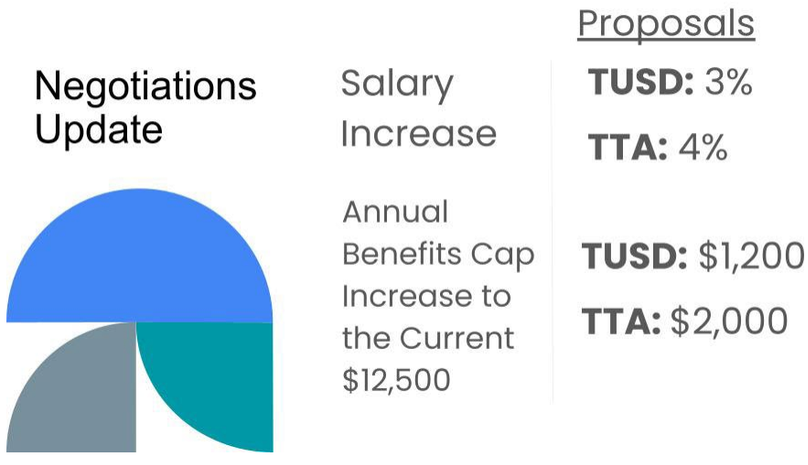
Action Plan

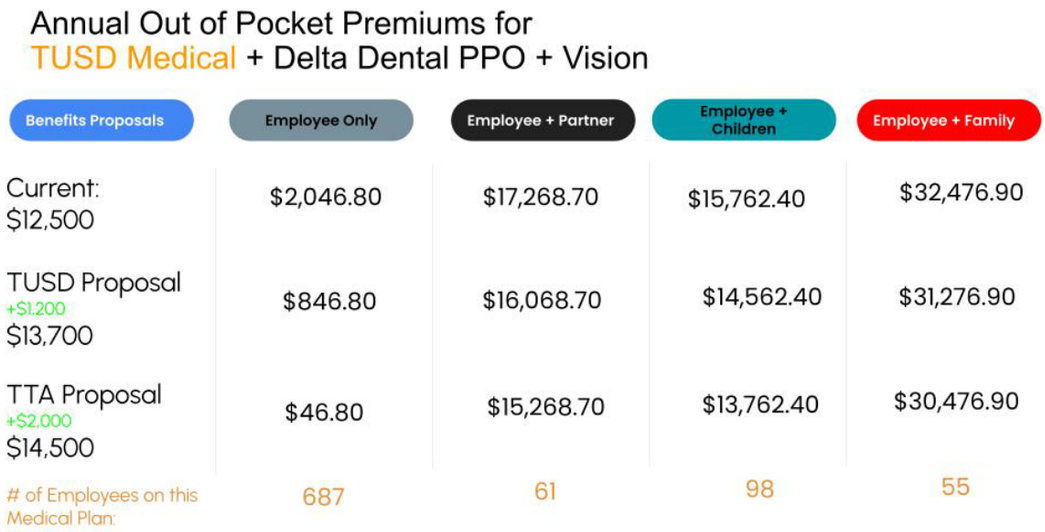
Over the summer, TTA leadership and negotiators have been hard at work building an action plan for this new school year. The action plan's key theme is "When We Fight, We Win!" It will roll out in four phases throughout the school year. Phase One is "We All Rise Together." TTA leaders are working hard to improve our members' working conditions—and our students' learning conditions. To learn more about the action plan, use the left hand QR code below to learn more about the plan and four phases. Also, to keep members in the know, TTA leaders recommend attending site meetings, reading the TTA newsletter, reading TTA e-blasts, following TTA on social media (Facebook, Blue Sky, Threads, Instagram, and YouTube), and signing up for WhatsApp updates. You can sign up for those updates using the right hand QR code below.

Action Plan Video **WhatsApp Updates**

Contract Negotiations

TTA Negotiators met with TUSD over the summer. While there were some successes with language, the pathway for a fair settlement narrowed substantially. TTA issued our best, last, and final proposal on compensation. That means that TTA is saying we will move no further on compensation. The following graphics show where TTA is versus TUSD. Using TUSD's numbers for the cost of a 1% raise and the cost per $1,000 of benefits cap increase, TTA's proposal differs from TUSD's by approximately $4.1M (1.64%) to cover ALL TUSD EMPLOYEES. TTA believes that TUSD has the money to make this investment in its employees. By adjusting the budget to reflect the new funds coming from the state as part of the finalized state budget, and by redirecting money from other line items (such as the consultants' line item) back to the classroom, TUSD can begin to make steps toward a more competitive compensation structure. TTA is holding to its bargaining principle to cover the individual on the EPO health plan and the PPO dental plan. TUSD has proposed resetting the standard to covering the individual employee on both the health and dental HMO plans. TTA does not agree with the District on benchmarking to different standard where choice of doctors is limited and members have to potentially fight for approval for care. We know that members are already having to make tough decisions when it comes to family care. The Association is adamant about negotiating a competitive healthcare cap so those decisions are not quite as daunting. The following two slides show the difference between TTA and TUSD on total compensation and what the health proposals look like using TTA's bargaining principle to cover the individual on the EPO/PPO plans.





Employee Discipline

Another part of our local action plan has stemmed from addressing working conditions for our educators, particularly regarding District abuses in employee discipline. On June 10th, the California Public Employees Relations Board (PERB) issued a ruling in our favor against TUSD for their unfair labor practices regarding employee discipline. There should be notices of such posted at each site in a conspicuous, easy to see place where teachers frequent. If it is not posted OR is not in an easy to see place, notify the TTA Office immediately. We will work with the site rep(s) to rectify that as soon as possible. All bargaining unit members should also receive an email of the PERB notice as well. If that notice hasn't been delivered this week, again, let your site rep and/or the TTA office know. Last year, TTA leaders consulted in good faith with TUSD to develop an Employee Accountability Guide that outlines the rights and responsibilities of both management and employees in disciplinary matters. Unfortunately, the rollout of the guide has been poor and TUSD violated its own guide on several occasions last year. TTA has requested multiple times to sit down with TUSD to evaluate how to use the guide moving forward, but here we are starting another year without a plan in place for how to have the conversations/training with employees regarding the guide. TTA has a digital copy available to all members on our website under the Member Resources tab. TTA leaders encourage all members to download a copy and use it as a resource. The Association also advises members to always avail themselves of their Weingarten rights should a meeting turn negative—stop the meeting and ask for representation!

TTA Advocates Proactive Approach to Heat Mitigation

This summer has seen worldwide heat waves. Southern California has also had unusually high humidity. Heat advisories in August, September, and early October have become more commonplace, and Torrance students and teachers are continuously faced with dangerously overheated classrooms. TTA Leaders express appreciation for the mitigation efforts that do exist, as any measures are welcome. But for this year, Carlos Anwandter, TTA President, has already reached out to TUSD and to the Torrance Council of PTAs to take a collaborative approach to push for sites having clear plans in place when the CalOSHA regulations about Indoor Heat Illness Prevention are exceeded.

CalOSHA regulations (Title 8 CCR Section 3396) apply to indoor spaces that reach above 87°F. The definition of "indoor space" is any area that has a ceiling or overhead covering that restricts airflow and is enclosed by walls, doors, etc. School buses are included in the definition as well. The regulations call for temperature monitoring, feasible mechanisms to cool temperatures like A/C and fans, having a Heat Illness Prevention Plan, access to fresh, suitably cool water, etc.

TTA is urging that TUSD inform teachers about the mitigation resources and plans so that everyone knows what to do when that 87° temperature occurs. TTA Leadership believes that plans at every site should include:

- Clearly designated cool-down areas at each site—both indoor (rooms with A/C) and outdoor (shaded areas like under trees and EZ-ups)
- Protocols for access to the cool-down areas
- Readily available cold water and spray bottles for each classroom
- Readily available cold compresses for each classroom (such as wet paper towels or baby wipes cooled in fridges)
- Cool-down rest periods
- Fans in every classroom (available from TUSD by request)
- Heat illness prevention strategies and heat mitigation education for employees, parents, and students

These plans should be readily available resources on Day 1 of school every year. Heat will continue to be a problem in the early months of the school year. With no ability to add air conditioning to every room at each site, having a clear plan in place is an imperative. TTA leadership imagines a world where when a heat wave arrives, employees already know where the cooling areas are and how/when to use them; employees already know where and how to access cold water and compresses for classroom use; employees already have enough district-provided fans available to circulate the air based upon classroom sizes.

TTA Leaders are asking members to document indoor temperatures that exceed 87°F, as well as any heat injuries. Work with your site representative(s) to call on site administrators to put mitigation strategies in place. This is where we can use our agency and voice to protect our students' learning environment and our work environment.

Quick Hits

Protect Yourself/Your Voice—All TTA correspondence should be conducted via an often-checked personal email and device. If you use TUSD's email and/or devices, your employer now has access to your personal business and potential political action. TUSD can also document misuse and lock you out of your account (which happened to multiple people the past two school years). TUSD Board Policy outlines acceptable use of district email and devices as well as political speech. If you have questions regarding union correspondence, reach out to your site representative, TTA Executive Board Director, or the TTA office for more information.

Representation Matters—As we start this new year and members at sites are electing new site representatives, remember that the number of site reps each site is allotted is based upon the number of members at the site. Per the TTA bylaws, a site representative seat is designated for every 20 members at the site. When a site's membership exceeds increments of 20 by at least half of 20 plus 1 (e.g., 31, 51, 71, 91, etc.), then another seat is opened. If you have questions about how many representatives your site is entitled to, contact the TTA office. It is important that all members are adequately represented, so we want to ensure that the number of seats for each site is filled. Each site rep is basically like a member of the House of Representatives. Each site rep represents a different group of people. Hence, ensuring that all members are represented is important. Electing the requisite number of site reps, and all elected site reps attending rep council meetings is essential to ensuring that all members have a voice in Association leadership, policy, and action. TTA is a democratic organization, so let's keep our local democracy healthy! Site reps should have already received Day 1 resource packets and will be receiving official welcome packets soon. The first Rep Council meeting will be Thursday, September 17th. The meeting will be held at the TTA Office Meeting Hall at 1623 Cravens Avenue in downtown Torrance (across the street from Foster's Freeze).

Class Size Leveling—In Article XI. A. 2., the TTA/TUSD Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) states that "The District shall level class sizes by the end of the 15th calendar day of the school year. If after the end of the 15th district calendar day of school it becomes necessary for the District to assign students in excess of the individual teacher load specified above, the District shall consult with the affected teacher to discuss the impact and possible alternatives." This school year, the 15th calendar day is Thursday, September 10th. Consult with your administrators prior to that date—and bring your site rep along with you for an open and honest discussion about alternatives and/or support strategies to be used.

Personal Observance Day (POD)—This is a quick reminder to refer to Article XXVII (Calendar Considerations) on page 79 of the TTA/TUSD Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) when choosing when to take your personal observance day. All bargaining unit members are eligible to take this one "use or lose" day. The POD cannot be used to extend holidays, to skip professional development, final exams, parent conferences or parent-teacher nights. The days are subject to administrative approval, and they could be denied if the request would significantly disrupt the operations of the District. But the District cannot arbitrarily deny the requests. Requests must be submitted five working days in advance and can only be taken in a full day increment (not half days). If you have questions, reach out to your site rep for more information. Also, the POD took several years of advocacy and bargaining to earn, yet in the two years we've had the POD on the books, fewer than one quarter of TTA members have used it.

TUSD Benefits Open Enrollment—Remember that the TUSD Open Enrollment period that opened on August 1st will close on August 31st. Members who wish to make changes to their health and welfare plans will need to schedule a meeting to make those changes. There will be no extension or grace period. Whatever is in place on September 1st, will be in place for the remainder of the plan year, which runs October 1-September 30.

Fall Special Election Announced

Late last spring, CTA moved TTA into a "multiple" State Council Representative District, meaning that TTA's CTA State Council Members now represent three other locals as well. CTA also opened a third seat. That third seat went unfilled in the spring election cycle. CTA members in each of the local associations in our "multiple" district should have received a notification for a fall special election for the open CTA State Council seat. The CTA Elections Committee runs all elections for "multiple" districts. If you are interested in serving on CTA State Council, file the candidacy form by the deadline in the CTA email directly to CTA.

Locally, however, we have two vacant seats on the TTA Executive Board, the South Area Elementary seat and the West Area Elementary seat. TTA will hold a special fall election for those two seats following the timeline posted in this newsletter. It anyone is interested in representing your elementary area, reach out to the TTA office for a candidacy form or click HERE to make a copy of the form to fill out and return by Friday, September 11th at 5:00 PM. The slate will be finalized at the Representative Council meeting on September 17th. The election timeline is designed to provide representation to our members for the November Executive Board meeting. Look for more information on the election timeline in future issues of *The Torrance Teacher* as well.

Torrance Teachers Association

TTA EXECUTIVE BOARD FALL ELECTION 2026-28

AVAILABLE SEATS – ELECTED BY AREA

ELEMENTARY DIRECTORS

2 Year Term / 2 Seats / Elected At-Large from Area

SOUTH AREA: Arnold, Riviera, Seaside, Walteria

WEST AREA: Anza, Towers, Victor

ELECTION TIMELINE

August 14 - Election timeline and available seats announced at Executive Board Summer Workshop.

August 18/19 - Site reps announce the election timeline and available seats at first day site meetings.

August 21 - Election timeline and available seats published in *The Torrance Teacher*.

September 11 - Declaration of Candidacy forms due at TTA's office by 5 PM.

September 16 - Slate of declared candidates published in *The Torrance Teacher*.

September 17 Rep Council Meeting:

1. Election chair announces slate of declared candidates. Final call for candidate nominations from floor.
2. Nominations closed. 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*)
4. An election will commence for any contested seats.

October 2 - The final slate of candidates will be published in *The Torrance Teacher*.

October 5 – If an election commences, the office will deliver ballot boxes and election material to school sites/site reps.

October 6-9 – If an election commences, the election voting window for TTA Executive Board Fall Election.

October 9

- **3:30 PM** - Voting window closes at sites. Ballot boxes or ballot envelope, roster, and any election materials must be dropped off at TTA's office by 5 PM.
- **5 PM** - Election material must be dropped off at the TTA office by 5 PM. Sites who drop off their ballot boxes or envelopes after 5:15 PM on October 9th will be disqualified by the elections committee, and their site's ballots WILL NOT be counted.
- **5:30 PM** - Ballots counted. Candidates notified.

October 19 – The Tellers Report finalized and results published in *The Torrance Teacher*.

November 5 – New members seated at TTA Executive Board Meeting.

THE STATE OF OUR UNION

THE PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

Welcome back to another school year! I hope you have all had an opportunity to rest and enjoy some downtime over the last few weeks. The beginning of the school year is always a time of great promise, but also uncertainty and even anxiety. As we all navigate the loosely organized chaos of these first days, I want to emphasize the importance of the solidarity and camaraderie we all share. It is truly a joy to work alongside so many talented, dedicated, and passionate professionals. I sincerely wish all of you a rewarding and enriching year with your students and your colleagues.

This year, the standard chaos and uncertainty are unfortunately magnified by the fact that we open the year working under an expired contract. Hopefully, you have been keeping up with the negotiations updates. (You can find them on our YouTube page.) After 12 sessions, we have made progress on some important issues, but we remain stuck on key issues--especially discipline, salary, and benefits. It is clear that if we hope to have a breakthrough at the negotiating table, the full membership of TTA needs to mobilize and support the Negotiations Team. It is time for everyone to Shirt Up and Show Up and let TUSD know that they must prioritize our classrooms and our students over consultants and lawyers. TUSD must understand that fiscal responsibility and fully supporting classrooms are not mutually exclusive. The priority must be to spend today's dollars on today's students.

We can make these changes happen, but only if we stand together every day. It starts with a simple commitment:

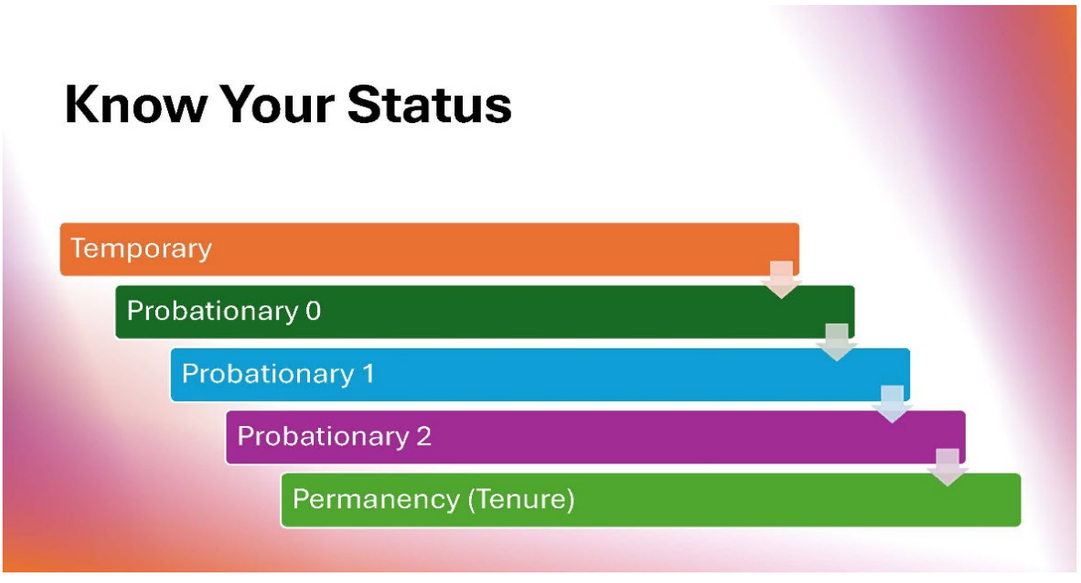
- Wear blue every Thursday
- Shirt Up and Show Up for site actions and school board meetings
- Stay Connected and Stay Informed

Your site rep has more information, including the details of our 2026-2027 Action Plan. I look forward to joining you every day, in our TTA blue, to fight for the Trust, Value, and Respect we know we deserve. When we stand together, we can be confident that When We Fight, We Win - for each other and for our students.

In Solidarity,
Carlos Anwandter
TTA President

FAQs: Understanding Your "Status"

TTA Leadership recently welcomed TUSD new hires. One of the most frequently asked questions was that of knowing their "status." This information should be found on the contract signed with TUSD. Every certificated employee should be in one of the categories on this chart.



Here's the quick info on what those categories mean:

Temporary (temp): This is a certificated educator hired to back fill a position held by a permanent employee or fill a position that is paid for with temporary funds. One year of temporary status may count toward permanent status should the employee move to a probationary track position (often called an "open and valid" position). School districts may hire employees with a temporary (often called "temp") classification to work in categorically or one-time funded positions, to replace probationary or permanent employees on leaves of absence, or to fill in for probationary or permanent employees who have been assigned categorically funded positions, like TOSA positions. Temps are at-will employees who serve on contracts for one school year or shorter defined periods of time. This means the District can release them at any time during the first 75% of the school year, for any reason. If given a release notice from the District, temps do not have an automatic right to reemployment the next year or a right to be placed into another assignment. A person may be a temporary employee for many years (typically up to five years) without gaining probationary status, but if rehired into a probationary position for the next school year, one previous year of the temporary position will count toward permanent status. This would effectively render that employee a Probationary 2. Temps who wish to become a probationary employee should seek assignments that are "open and valid," meaning a probationary assignment that is a regular part of the school's allocation.

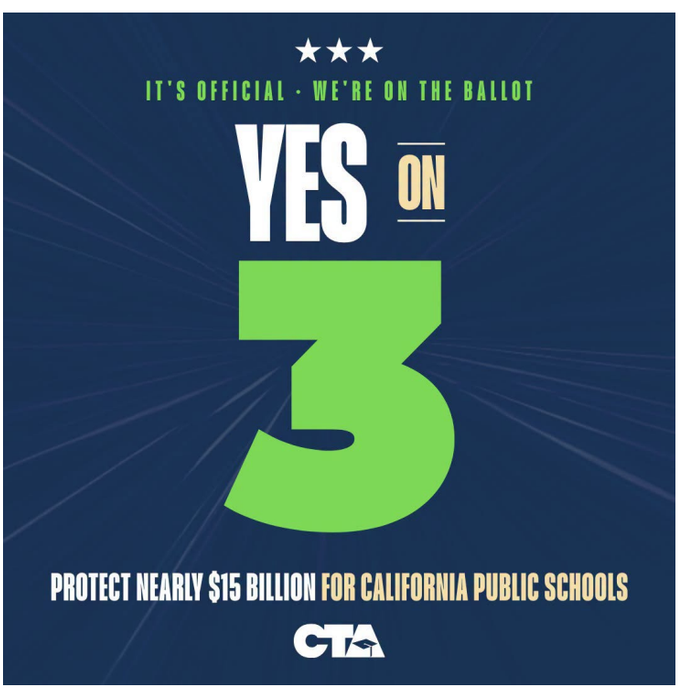
Probationary 0 (probe 0): This refers to an intern, a person who is currently in school working on certification requirements, hired to work on a temporary basis while completing their credential requirements. The probe 0 year does not count toward permanency.

Probationary 1 (probe 1): This refers to a certificated educator hired into an "open and valid" (funded) position in their first year in that probationary track position.

Probationary 2 (probe 2): This refers to a certificated educator who has been re-elected to an "open and valid position" for a second year.

Probationary status is the default classification under California Education Code when educators are hired. Educators should be told otherwise if they are temporary. The District may terminate a probationary teacher for non-economic reasons, without cause, by providing the educator with a notice of non-reelection. Probe 1's must be served with a notice of non-reelection before June 30th. Probe 2's must be served with a notice of non-reelection by March 15th. Terminations for economic reasons (Reduction in Force aka RIF's) may only be effected through the March 15th RIF procedure. In Torrance, the past practice has been to notify both Probe 1's and Probe 2's of non-reelection by March 15th despite the March date only being legally binding for Probe 2's. This early notification allows for non-reelected educators to apply for jobs in other districts at the height of hiring season. Note that after March 15, a Probe 2 employee cannot be terminated without a full evidentiary hearing.

There are often questions that arise if you were a temp in year 1 and hired as a probe in year 2. By law you can retroactively count that temp year as probe 1 in most cases. Probe 0 does not count toward permanency though.

Permanent: Permanent status is often called tenure, though it technically is not tenure. An individual who has served two consecutive and complete school years (at least 75% of the number of school days—that's 139 days in TUSD) in probationary status is eligible for permanent status. Permanent status begins on the first day of paid service of year 3 in an "open and valid" position. An educator with permanent status can only be terminated for cause with due process, a reduction in force (RIF), or the inability to perform job (health). Permanent status educators are placed on a 39-month rehire list. During that 39-month window, educators who are laid off (RIF'ed) are given the first right of refusal to any position for which they are credentialed that opens during that time. Any educator who is placed on the list for inability to perform the job for health reasons has the first right of refusal to any position for which they are credentialed that opens once they are medically cleared to return to work.

Also, if you worked in another district, you may transfer up to 15 years of service on the salary schedule, but that does not count toward your status. It only counts for initial placement on the salary schedule. You will still hire in as a temp or probe—not a permanent teacher regardless of the number of years of service elsewhere.