

THE DEFENDER



UNION

Message from our President~

What a start to the year! The Budget for California is looking great, and we are hopeful that we will receive a competitive deal during this round of negotiations. Look for updates after negotiations from our team. It is election season. The importance of having favorable school board members cannot be emphasized enough.

With this in mind SMEA has endorsed Andrés Martín for Area C. Andrés Martín is a CTA member, Ramona Teachers Association member and a counselor at Ramona High School. Additionally, he is a long-time resident of San Marcos, as well as a product of the San Marcos Unified School District. For Area E, we are endorsing incumbent Stacy Carlson. By the time of printing of this newsletter we should be finishing up our own election for our second Elementary at Large position. Look for that announcement soon (unless it's already been announced). Our organizing committee and contract action teams will be busy this year with both the Elections and Contract Negotiations. (continued on page 3)

Election News by Brandon Maze

What is so important about School Board elections? For educators, the answer is everything. From curriculum and book approvals to staffing and safety, a district's governing board is the final arbiter of everything that happens in any public school district. How does the district spend its funding? The board votes on that. New programs for kids? The board votes on that. Bargaining and negotiations for class size, working conditions, compensation, and benefits? It is SMUSD's Governing Board that directs the Districts' team on what to offer and has the final vote on those too. Additionally, the School Board is also the sole entity that guides the district's goals and has the power to hold the Superintendent accountable for progression toward those goals. In other words, they have an inordinate amount of power when it comes to how our schools operate, how our working conditions are affected, and the tools each and every one of our students receive as they progress through their K-12 education. That is why SMEA believes it is vital to engage with the process of electing new Board Members, and having our voices heard through our Endorsement Campaigns.

This election, SMEA is proudly endorsing Stacy Carlson for Area E and Andrés Martín for Area C. SMUSD Board President Stacy Carlson has been on our board for 8 years, and believes firmly in public education, educators, and especially students. Her proven leadership and commitment to public education, as well as her experience, has guided the district through challenging times and will help SMUSD to continue to excel. Andrés Martín is a long time resident of San Marcos, a product of SMUSD schools, and a working High School Counselor in one of our neighboring districts. He knows first hand that students must always come first and, with over 21 years of experience in public education, understands what we need to help our students succeed. This is why we know that our two candidates are the best choice for San Marcos, and especially for our kids.

Please join us in supporting Stacy Carlson (Area E) and Andrés Martín (Area C) for SMUSD School Board and spreading the word.



SOCIAL JUSTICE Resources by Rikki Kuykendall

Free Quality Public Education for All!

Public schools are places where students come to learn and prepare to be contributing members to our society, economy and citizenry. All students from all diverse backgrounds have the right to public education that helps them prepare for their future.

- You can visit CTA's website and take the pledge to join over 10,000 educators who believe that success is for all students. Social Justice is a commitment to be responsible for the good of our society and to eradicate "ageism, heterosexism, religious bias and xenophobia" (CTA).
- We wanted to provide CTA members with helpful social justice resources, videos, posters and shareables. <https://www.cta.org/our-advocacy/social-justice/social-justice-resources/>

What is I'm Here?

- Creating a safe environment couldn't be easier. By wearing an I'm Here badge, you announce that you are a safe person to discuss LGBTQ+ issues with.

Please visit <https://www.nea-lgbtqc.org/imhere> for more information.



President's Message Continued...

There will be plenty of opportunities for you to get involved this year. Look for future emails and ways to support our union. SMEA fought diligently last year to limit the scope of the 97 RIFs and I am happy to report that all were rescinded. I will be sending out opportunities and membership offers whenever I get them. As always, work with your site reps for any and all site issues. We have an amazing group of Union members in SMEA and I am glad to be of service. I lean on so many of our executive board and site reps and every time I need them, they come through, I look forward to serving as your president for the next two years.

~Yours in Solidarity, Dale Pluciennik