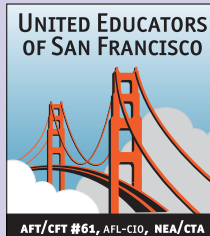


San Francisco EDUCATOR

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and Action



Nearly 750 UESF members and supporters took part in a boisterous rally at 555 Franklin on May 9th. The incredible turnout, the largest in decades, underscores UESF members' commitment to our students and our schools. SFUSD faces many tough decisions in the months and years ahead. We made it clear that cutting special education should not be on the table.

Pressure is on SFUSD as Contract Talks Continue

UESF Members Once Again Step Up in Campaign for Stable, Safe, and Supportive Schools

On May 9th, nearly 750 UESF members and supporters took part in the largest rally at 555 Franklin in decades. The boisterous event, complete with the Brass Liberation Orchestra marching band and a luchador helping to pump up the crowd, was an opportunity for those in attendance to let loose after a long school year. But make no mistake, behind the joyous chanting and dancing was a very serious undertone: A powerful mes-

sage to the SFUSD that proposed cuts to Special Education were unacceptable and that contract negotiations were of critical concern.

The successful rally was the result of weeks of organizing by UESF area organizers, who worked with Union Building Committees and site activists to build the event. It underscores not only UESF members' need for a substantial wage increase, but also the need to ensure that any budget tightening takes place as far

away from the classroom as possible. The rally was followed by an online letter to the Board of Education and the administration, signed by over 700 UESF members, reiterating these demands. Clearly the SFUSD got the message, but it is unclear whether or not they are prepared to respond.

As negotiations move into the summer, it is the goal of the UESF

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UESF

UESF represents more than 6,000 employees of the San Francisco Unified School District including teachers, counselors, instructional aides, psychologists, nurses, speech pathologists, substitutes, and therapists.

2310 Mason St., 2nd Floor
San Francisco, CA 94133
phone 415.956.8373
fax 415.956.8374
email educator@uesf.org
on the web at www.uesf.org

Lita Blanc
President

Susan Solomon
Executive Vice-President

Liz Conley
Vice-President,
Substitutes

Carolyn Samoa
Vice-President,
Paraprofessionals

Lisa Gutierrez Guzmán
Secretary

Elaine Merriweather
Treasurer

AJ Frazier
Sergeant-at-Arms

Matthew Hardy
Editor, Photographer

If you have ideas you'd like us to address in future issues, please write to us or email editor@uesf.org

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Justice in Our Contract is Part of Broader Resistance

By **Lita Blanc**
UESF President



In spite of the comforting familiarity of the yearly rituals of graduations, farewell letters, and packing up of classrooms, this June marks the end of a school year that was marked by the unexpected electoral victory of Donald Trump and the rising resistance to his administration's attempts to roll back decades of social gains.

A year ago, we did not know how significant our dual commitment to increasing member engagement and to strengthening our coalition work would be. The school year began with our back-to-school blitz and the August Organizing/Political Academy which laid the groundwork for important local and statewide electoral wins. We were able to elect our four candidates to the Board of Education, elect progressive candidates to the Board of Supervisors, and pass Prop. 55.

Public awareness of the affordability crisis and the ongoing teacher shortage were such that, even as we were absorbing the shock of Trump's win, the UESF Bargaining Team got a 2% raise for all UESF members in our meet and confer on wages. Following that, for the first time ever, members took the bargaining survey online, paving the way for online voting for our affiliate elections.

In January, hundreds of UESF members participated in three days of resistance: The

Alliance to Reclaim Our Schools (AROS) Day of Action on January 19th, Inauguration Day protests, and the Women's March. As a next step, together with Bay Resistance, UESF helped bring over 1,200 people to the March 4th training on immigrant rights and resistance.

This new wave of activism was a springboard to bring educators into motion in support of our contract fight. Shortly after bargaining began, UESF organizers fanned out to school sites to help UBCs set up communication trees and strategize around member engagement. On April 11th, highlighting the connection between Betsy DeVos's privatization plans and SFUSD's proposed cuts to school sites, UESF members held a double protest: First at the Federal building and then at district headquarters. While the rallies were spirited, the turnout was relatively small. We realized that we had to double down on outreach to school sites while continuing to get out specific information about bargaining to all members.

The UESF negotiating team has put forth a robust set of proposals: An 18% across the board raise, a significant increase in the district's share of dependent benefits, improved language for the implementation of inclusive practices, clarification of workload in Special Education, better training and increased access to Pupil Services supports for Safe and Supportive Schools, and clearer contract language on the rights of itinerant teachers, teacher librarians, and guidance counselors to prep periods and a duty-free lunch.

The unprecedented turnout for our May 9th rally was an indication that a growing

portion of our membership is ready to fight for a fair contract. Nearly 750 teachers, para-professionals, and supporters from over 90 schools and departments joined in. The many hand-made signs, the great number of newer educators, and the energy of the rally all point to an increased militancy among UESF members.

The struggle for justice in our schools cannot be separated from the fight for justice in our communities and across our country.

It is in that context that in May the UESF Assembly agreed that if SFUSD does not come to an agreement with UESF on contract proposals that addresses our needs, the UESF leadership will be authorized to include a strike vote in our organizing plan. This plan will also include outreach to sites and the training of new leaders.

While we are organizing for a fair contract, we will also continue to fight alongside our allies, such as Bay Resistance, the Close the Gap coalition, AROS, and the California Coalition for Community Schools. The struggle for justice in our schools cannot be separated from the fight for justice in our communities and across our country.

Resistance to Trump's attacks has energized us. Dedication to our students continues to motivate us. A commitment to collective action will empower us. Together, we can and will win a fair contract!

Ken Tray and Matthew Hardy Are Moving on From UESF

UESF Political Director Ken Tray and Communications Director Matthew Hardy are moving on from UESF. Starting July 1st Matthew will join the communications team at the California Federation of Teachers and Ken will enjoy a well-earned retirement from the SFUSD and UESF. Both Matthew and Ken have been critical parts of the UESF team for over ten years, supporting UESF's campaigns and raising the profile of educators and

UESF in San Francisco and beyond.

"The best decision I ever made was entering the classroom and continuing that work as Political Director in the union hall," says Ken. "One lesson we have all learned is that when we organize, mobilize, and fight, we win."

"I'd like to thank all of the members, leadership, and staff of UESF for a wonderful twelve year my appreciation and respect

for what educators do has continued to grow and I am proud of the work we've done together to ensure that educators get the pay and respect you need and the students get the education they deserve."

Ken will transition to an emeritus status at UESF, working with the new Political Director and will continue to be available at ktray@uesf.org. Matthew will continue to sup-



PHOTO BY JEANNE HANSEN

port UESF in his new role at the CFT and can be reached at mhardy415@gmail.com.

We wish them both the best!

Organizing for Next School Year Underway

Continued from page 1

Bargaining Team to reach a settlement with negotiators with the SFUSD as quickly as possible. But with major issues still unresolved at the table, the UESF team is urging everyone to prepare for the possibility that talks will continue into next school year.

“With the new school year around the corner and hundreds of positions still unfilled, our campaign for Stable, Safe, and Supportive schools has taken on a sense of urgency,” says UESF President Lita Blanc. “But we’ve also got to get it right. It is not just about educators being able to afford to live in the communities we serve. It’s also about ensuring we get the training and supports we need to do the work, and about holding the SFUSD accountable to making cuts away from teaching and learning.”

According to Lita, to help build on the momentum from the May 9th rally and our spring organizing effort, UESF will put together a Contract Organizing Team in the coming weeks to continue organizing into next year should negotiations continue beyond the summer. Along with area organizers and staff, the UESF Contract Organizing Team will reach out to every school site to help build site-specific action plans.

Training and Support Essential to Contract

According to UESF Executive Vice-President Susan Solomon, while addressing the affordability crisis is key to UESF’s efforts both at the bargaining table and beyond, issues of training and support are also fundamental to ensuring that educators

have the tools necessary to get the job done. She was heartened by the incredible turnout at the May 9th rally, not only because of the size of the crowd, but the powerful demand that UESF members made to the SFUSD to stop the para and teacher consolidations in Special Education.

“We have a comprehensive set of proposals at the table that will improve training, support Special Education, and ensure that the Safe and Supportive Schools resolution is fully realized,” says Susan, who has helped to craft all of these proposals. “But the para and teacher consolidations the SFUSD is pushing really would undermine what we are trying to achieve.”

Updates on bargaining are regularly posted on the UESF website, along with a comprehensive list of the all of the proposals UESF and the SFUSD have put on the table. At press time the UESF team was poring over the proposed SFUSD budget, paying careful attention to spending levels at the administrative level. The team was also preparing a counter-proposal on compensation.

UESF members should check the union website throughout the summer and mark your calendars for August 16th or 17th, our first union meeting as the school year begins.

Go to UESF.org for More on Negotiations

For complete details on the contract talks, including detailed bargaining updates, go to www.uesf.org/negotiations.

Save the Date

UBC Trainings & Contract Organizing August 16th & 17th

All UESF school site leaders and activists are encouraged to attend one of our two training sessions on August 16th or 17th, from 4:00-6:00 p.m. (location TBA). The trainings will be an opportunity to get all

the essential information needed for a successful beginning of the school year, and the tools and resources you will need to organize your school site for the ongoing contract campaign. All are welcome!



UESF members came out in force to our May 9th rally at the Board of Education when we rallied for a fair contract and to stop the cuts in Special Education. Look for more photos on UESF’s Facebook page!

August 7, 2017

Early Education Committee Meeting
6:30 p.m. @ San Miguel

August 16 & 17, 2017

UBC Workshops
4:00 p.m. @ TBA

August 21, 2017

First Day of Instruction

August 23, 2017

UESF Executive Board
4:15 p.m. @ Parks ES

September 6, 2017

UESF Executive Board
4:15 p.m. @ Parks ES

September 18, 2017

UBC Training
4:15 p.m. @ Parks ES

September 25, 2017

UESF Assembly
4:15 p.m. @ Parks ES

Other Meetings

SFUSD Board Meetings
6:00 p.m. 2nd & 4th
Tuesdays @ 555 Franklin

Labor Council Meetings
6:00 p.m. 2nd & 4th
Mondays @ 1621 Market

SFUSD Welcomes New Superintendent Vincent Matthews



UESF looks to build a strong working relationship with new superintendent Vincent Matthews (above, left), who has done well on a 90-day listening tour as his introduction to the district. Of course, settling a good contract would be an excellent start!

AWARDS, HONORS, & ACTION!

Congratulations to All New UESF Retirees

A shout out to all of the teachers, para-educators, and other support staff who retired from the SFUSD this year! As we fight to ensure a place in San Francisco for all educators, we salute those who commit their careers to the students of San Francisco. Check out the UESF Retired Division and enjoy some well-deserved rest and relaxation! Pictured below: New retirees Lawrence Montgomery and Jay Kozak from Washington High School.



Labor History Class this Fall at CCSF

CFT Communications Director Fred Glass will once again teach his well-regarded class on labor history this fall at CCSF. The class offers a great perspective on how far we've come not only as educators, but as working people in this City and in this Country, and helps students develop a critical perspective on how we can continue to resist and organize today.

UESF members who complete the class will have all of their fees reimbursed. The class meets at the Mission campus on Valencia on Tuesdays at 6:10 p.m., starting on August 22. Go to uesf.org/labor-history for details.

Congratulations to the 2016-2017 Teachers of the Year

Congratulations to the 2016-2017 Mayor's Teacher of the Year Award winners. The annual award, first established in 2008 by Mayor Gavin Newsom at the urging of UESF, is an opportunity to recognize great teaching in the SFUSD. In addition to the distinction, award winners receive a variety of gifts in recognition of their great work. We are happy to report that next school year, Mayor Ed Lee will recognize a para-educator of the year as well!

<i>Daisy Chan</i> Noriega Early Education School	<i>Betty Momjian</i> Giannini Middle School
<i>Antoinette Thornton Street</i> El Dorado Elementary School	<i>Kenneth Gonzalez</i> Balboa High School

Marna Wolak
Sanchez Elementary School



The 2016-2017 Mayor's Teachers of the Year wear honored at a pre-game ceremony at AT&T park by Mayor Ed Lee on May 11th and at a City Hall reception on May 15th.

UESF Members Hit the Street On May 1st Day of Action

Thanks to the hundreds of UESF members who joined thousands of fellow San Franciscans on May Day to march and rally in support of labor and immigrant rights. The highlights of the day were the entire school communities marching together, with large delegations of educators, parents, and students from Buena Vista Horace Mann, Chavez Elementary, Fairmount Elementary, and Longfellow Elementary marching together as one.

The day was an incredible opportunity for San Franciscans from across the political spectrum to take a stand for our communities in the face of threats from the Trump administration. It was capped off by UESF's program in Civic Center at 4:00 p.m., when educators and school supporters gathered to sign a pledge to defend our schools and our students.



2017 UESF Scholarship Winners!



UESF scholarship winners were honored at a brief ceremony at the UESF office on May 19th.

UESF is proud to recognize the students who have been awarded the 2017 UESF scholarships. Congratulations to all of the hard-working students, we know a bright future is in store for all of you!

<i>Brendan Fong</i> Kent Mitchell	<i>Dustin Lee</i> James Ballard	<i>Victor Qiu</i> Educational Grant
<i>China Furaha-Denis</i> Educational Grant	<i>Jenny Lee</i> Richard Darrington	<i>Sean Sumi</i> Educational Grant
<i>Katherine Harris</i> Norma Mitchell Hardy	<i>Zabir Mammadzada</i> Joan Marie Shelly	<i>Darcy Woo</i> Educational Grant
		<i>Princess Yu</i> Educational Grant