

United Teachers Los Angeles
3303 Wilshire Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90010
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Data Collection: Bill Harju, Interviewer
Data Source: John Perez, NEA Affiliate Vice President

A. Demographics

Number of Schools: (668)

Elementary 420

Middle/Junior High 72

High School 49

Other: 127 (Includes Multi-level, magnet, continuation, special education, opportunity, and community schools)

Total number of employees by classification: (Total: 67,169)

Certified: 40,014

Classified: 25,655

Management/supervisory: 1500

Other (Above figures do not include substitute and part time employees)

Current enrollment by level: 913,119

Elementary 353,330

Middle/Junior High: 139,308

High School: 148,946

Other: (See above - schools - for categories) 215,976

Current enrollment by race/ethnicity

Caucasian: 10.5%

Hispanic: 69.1%

Black/African American: 13.6%

Asian: 6.6%

Other: 0.3%

Current enrollment: Language: 40% of enrollment are limited English proficient.

Average Class Size by level:

Primary: 20

Upper: 35.5

Middle/Junior High: 36.25

High School: 35.5

Private School enrollments in area/trends: Estimate: approximately 9% in private schools.

School District Budget

Total expenditures: \$6,527,002,344

Expenditures per student:

B. Significant Background Information:

. Union Structure/Roles

Officers (Names, longevity)

Lois Bradford, Secretary, 3 years - beginning second three year term.

Mike Cherry, AFT Vice President, 3 years

Beverly Cook, Secondary Vice President, 3 years

Day Higuchi, President, officer for 9 years, president for 3.

John Perez, NEA Affiliate Vice President, officer for 9 years, current position for three.

Becky Robinson, Elementary Vice President, 5 years

Jim Weber, Treasurer, Officer for 9 years, treasurer for three.

Executive Body

UTLA has Board of Directors composed of 46 members. Members include the 7 officers, plus the following:

3 Directors from each of 8 geographic areas

Immediate past-president

1 director elected from auxiliary services (nurses, counselors, librarians, etc.)

1 director elected by substitute teachers.

1 director elected by Adult Education teachers.

1 director elected by children's center teachers.

1 director elected by special education teachers.

1 director elected by year round schoolteachers.

1 director elected by bilingual teachers.

The Board of Directors is the administrative body of UTLA.

Representative Body

UTLA has a house of representatives composed of approximately 350 members. Representatives are elected from eight areas - with one representative elected for each 75 members. Areas are divided into four electoral districts, and representatives are elected from within these districts. Board of director members are members of the House of Representatives ex-officio. In addition, several interest groups including nurses, counselors, children center teachers, retired contingent, etc. maintain representation in the House of Representatives. The HR is the policymaking body of the UTLA.

Committees Union:

UTLA has 21 standing committees:

1. Salary and School Finance
2. Professional Rights and Responsibilities.
3. Government Relations
4. Teacher Education and Professional Standards
5. Welfare and Economic Services
6. Educational Policies and Curriculum
7. Human Relations
8. Auxiliary Services
9. Chicano
10. Inner City
11. Substitutes
12. Retirement
13. Black Education
14. Asian
15. Women's Education
16. Adult Education
17. Children's Centers
18. Special Education
19. Year Round Schools
20. Teachers for Better Administrative Relations
21. Human Rights

Committees: Joint:

Permanent Union Staff (Names, positions, tenure)

1. Sam Kresner, Assistant to the President (Since 1960's)
2. Bill Lambert, Director of Govt. Relations (Since 1960's)
3. Kimi Nakashima, Director of Business Operations (Since 1960's)
4. Don Carlos, Director of Information Technology (3 years)
5. Diana Darty, Director of Support Services (New Hire)
6. Terry Skotnes, Director of Organizational Services (2 years in current position, total of 8)
7. Steve Blazak, Director of Communications (2 years in current position, total of 10)

Term limits

There are term limits on terms of officers who enjoy full or part time released time. Term limits are 2 three-year terms in each office.

Union Partnerships

Beginning to develop some partnerships with local universities. Attempting to develop partnerships to enhance the vision and guiding principles of the UTLA Sponsored "Helen Bernstein Professional Development Center," under a grant from NFIE.

UTLA had a partnership with UCLA, funded by the Stewart Foundation, that lasted three years, ending in the publication of the "language arts handbook integrating standards, curricula and assessment" The handbook was then copyrighted by the District and the Union. The partnership lead to an additional \$600,000 grant from the Federal Department of Education for the purpose of 1) Develop more demonstration lessons and units in language arts and 2) TO train teachers on how to use the handbook.

Principal means of communication with members:

United Teacher - Professionally printed Newspaper, printed monthly.

"UTLA Update" - In-house newsletter, printed as necessary.

Building Representative Letters - provide information to building representatives as necessary.

Limited use of e-mail.

Website in development

Membership Engagement

Organized teachers around the district to picket and demonstrate at sites that have bad principals. "Bad Principals" are determined by recommendation of the Area Representatives to the staff, to the UTLA officers.

Significant amounts of training of New Teachers in the Bernstein Center, and in cooperation with the District.

Significant recent budget developments (cutbacks, infusions) if any:

Nothing extra-ordinary, other than the California Class Size Reduction program which has provided funds to reduce class sizes in grades k-3 to 20, and 9th grade math and science to 20.

In order to understand this district, what is it necessary to know/understand?

LAUSD is an archetypal Urban District, with an extremely large percentage of students living in poverty. The educational challenges LAUSD is faced with are much more severe than most of the Districts in the State of California. It is also the second largest district in the nation. Considering all of the problems inherent in its size, LAUSD is not as bad as the press and media would indicate. For example, two years ago, the percentage of non certificated or unlicensed teachers in LA county was 18%, while the same number in LAUSD was only 19% - Compton district had 51% of the teaching staff without credentials. In terms of the most recent SAT9 Scores, of 82 districts listed, LAUSD was 67 of 80, while the limited English proficiency numbers are among the highest. In terms of percentage of graduating seniors who matriculate to the University of California or State University system, the percent in LAUSD is slightly below the county average for UC and slightly above in the CS system, and above the state average for both systems. In terms of non-college bound students, the district doesn't do as well.

Labor-management relationship:

The labor management relationship has not been good. The district is dominated by administrators who believe that the administration has the answer, and employees do not. That said, there are areas within the large LAUSD bureaucracy where the relationship is good. The attitude among the administration is that all employees are equal - teachers receive no primacy in

the hierarchy. In the annual county salary study, administrators are in the top five in salary and benefits, where teacher categories in mid career and at maximum are at or below the median, and have often been in the bottom quartile. The district bargains from the point of view that a 1% increase for teachers means a 1% increase for all employees. This "me to" negotiations exacerbates the ranking problem, and creates a serious tension at the bargaining table.

Key crises:

Los Angeles teachers were forced into a 10% pay cut in the 1993-94, which was gradually reinstated, and recently, salaries have increased; however the monies actually lost have never been recouped. This created a significant amount of anger - however, the anger for the most part was aimed at the district and the state - since members knew UTLA was not the cause of the pay cuts.

Measured outcomes - test scores, college acceptance rates (1997-98 & 1998-99)

Test score data attached (See Attachment __)

Current Superintendency:

Name: Dr. Ruben Zacarias

Background:

Zacarias has spend his entire career in LA Unified, beginning as an elementary teacher 40 years ago, and proceeding through the chairs to principal, regional administrator, associate superintendent, superintendent.

Tenure:

Zacarias has been superintendent for approximately three years. His contract was recently extended by a board of education that was replaced during the most recent election.

Management team:

There are two top managers with the title of "Associate Superintendent", who advise Zacarias. These are the three people who make major decisions. However, the district has more than ten individuals who carry the title Assistant Superintendent.

Other employee unions (Name, approximate unit membership, relationship to teachers)

Secretarial/clerical: Unknown

Maintenance/Bus drivers: Unknown

Food services: Unknown

Principals: Unknown

Security Staff: Unknown

Paraprofessionals: Unknown

Status of contract:

Expiration of current agreement: June 30, 2000

Agency fee: yes.

Dues are approximately \$450. Fee payers pay 81% of the dues. UTLA has very few fee payers

Binding arbitration: Yes. UTLA processes approximately 15 arbitrations annually.

Strikes:

The last strike was in 1989, lasted for 9 days, and resulted in a pay raise of 8% per year for 3 years - built on one time money, and resulted, in part, in the 10% pay cut that eventually ensued.

Unfair labor practices:

ULP's are filed on a relatively regular basis. Two are currently on file, alleging failure to negotiate the issue of reconstitution of schools, and an individual case regarding a principal's refusal to allow teachers to participate in a program despite a written agreement between the parties.

Significant litigation:

An appellate court hearing is scheduled for 23 September, to determine whether a law has an implied exclusionary rule for illegal videotapes of teachers in the classroom. Students videotaped a teacher surreptitiously, turned the tape over to the principal who turned it over to the district. The law says that a student who illegally electronically records a teacher must receive appropriate punishment. The issue is, legality of the tape aside, can the district utilize the data provided on the videotape for disciplinary purposes. The trial court had indicated that the videotape was illegal, that the district could not use it in a disciplinary action, but that he did not have the power to stop the district from viewing the tape

Approximate number of grievances per year:

Several hundred grievances are filed annually.

Union role in community:

Political endorsements:

UTLA has a political action committee, Political Action Committee of Educators (PACE), which raises funds through voluntary dues deduction. Endorsements are made through PACE interviews, recommendations to the Board which passes the recommendations on to the House of Representatives, which approves endorsements by a 60% majority. UTLA endorses in nearly every state, local and federal race with the exception of city council and mayor.

Community engagement

When a school has an identified "bad principal," UTLA reaches out to community organizations for support, but not in a consistent and ongoing manner.

UTLA is moving in the direction of increasing activity in this area, and is contemplating the employment of a professional staff person to develop and coordinate community engagement activity for the union.

C. Education Reform

Union posture:

Pro/anti reform:

UTLA is pro-reform, with a minority faction that opposes the concepts behind the so-called "new unionism."

Membership attitudes

UTLA has recently done a membership poll. The Poll has indicated that members strongly support education reform and in particular, Peer Assistance and Review. The poll, conducted by Peter Hart Research Associates Inc, on behalf of UTLA, indicated that 70% of teachers favored or strongly favored the adoption of a peer review plan, and only 25% opposed or strongly opposed such a plan.

Financial commitment

UTLA has a full time staff person who is responsible for training including Professional Development through the Helen Bernstein Professional Development Center.

Reform elements in contract:

1. Article XIV - Salaries, Section 37 - Provides a 15% salary increase for unit members who achieve certification by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.
2. Article XXVII - Shared Decisionmaking and School-Based Management - Establishes guidelines for both Shared Decisionmaking and School Based Management at school sites within LAUSD.
3. MOU on Professional Development Establishes a "Quality Educational Design Collaborative (QED-C)" and charges it with the development of a comprehensive staff development program that meets site needs.

Organization/structure for reform:

Central coordinating structure:

There exists not joint central coordinating structure for education reform initiatives.

District office structure:

The District has a reform office, under an Assistant Superintendent. The district has mandated that all schools need to be on a school reform plan on one of five pathways, 1) LEARN, 2) Site based management; 3) Charter Schools; 4) "Local School Option," a district program and 5) A federal program that mandates a type of coordinating council at the school. UTLA works cooperatively with the reform office, as the office is one of the areas of the district where collaboration is possible.

Union structure:

No separate union structure.

Responsibility (within union - leaders? Staff?)

Officers, and through the officers, the Board of Directors

Organization around standards

Implementation:

There is a curriculum council charged with dealing with Standards, Standards based education, and social promotion. The makeup of the council includes representation from the district, the union and the community. The council has subcommittees around subject matter, and grade level. The Standard have been developed jointly independent of the curriculum council by the District and the UTLA, and the council was subsequently established to oversee implementation of standards. The council also deals with intervention programs in the district to respond to students who are held back rather than being socially promoted. The standards have been published and disseminated throughout the district and teachers have been instructed to post the standards in their classrooms. Further, the Council is charged with developing assessment procedures to determine whether students have met the standards.

Role of union:

The standards were developed jointly, with UTLA appointing representatives to the various committees.

Training/Staff Development

Not a significant amount of training.

Professional Development

Program description & Operation:

The professional development program is a joint effort between UTLA and the District, and concentrates on new teachers. The training program for new teachers is basic, and is conducted as a "New Teacher Academy," which provides opportunities for the new teachers to be trained at UTLA's offices, as well as in locations throughout the district.

Relationship to union:

The contract contains a professional development collaborative (Quality Educational Design Collaborative - QED-C) which has taken over the planning and development of district training programs with training implemented by teachers and others throughout the district. The Collaborative includes five full time bargaining unit assignments, selected by UTLA, with three to five appointed by the district.

In addition, UTLA runs a National Board Certification Program, which provides a support system for teachers who are attempting to obtain national board certification. The program has an employee paid by the district, appointed by UTLA who coordinates the program.

Low performing Schools

Program description:

The district has unilaterally developed an accountability scheme. At one time, there was a joint plan developed as a part of an MOU, however, it was never implemented, and when Zacarias took over as Superintendent, he was not supportive and thus the MOU expired. UTLA has challenged the district in its unilateral implementation and in fact has a ULP on file based upon the district's efforts to implement a policy regarding school accountability and reconstitution without bargaining with UTLA.

In the event that a school is identified as low performing under the district's unilaterally established program, UTLA contacts the school and schedules discussions with the staff, in an attempt to assist the school with understanding of the process and developing a strategy to deal with the process.

Relationship to union:

The Accountability process was unilaterally developed and adopted by the district.

Incentives for school improvement - measures to raise student achievement or teacher quality:

National board certification program which provides a fifteen percent permanent pay increase for teachers who become national board certified.

Peer review:

Program description:

A Peer Review Program is currently under negotiations with the LAUSD. Negotiations have just begun, and UTLA is attempting to develop a program that meets the elements of the new California legislation regarding peer review and assistance.

School based management/decisionmaking related to school improvement

Program structure:

Schools by contract all have a shared decisionmaking council (SDM). The council operates in five areas identified in the contract. Any school may write a "school based management plan" and submit it to the district and the union for approval. The plan can go as far as designing a process for the selection of a principal when a vacancy occurs. Over 250 plans from schools have been approved, and over 350 have been approved in the LEARN program (There is some overlap - some school based management schools are also LEARN schools). LEARN (Los Angeles Education Reform Now) Schools must write a plan, and after achieving a 75% commitment from the teaching staff to participate in the LEARN program, then LEARN training provided with outside funding, is provided for teachers as they develop their LEARN plan. There is an agreement that if there is a conflict between the LEARN plan and the contract, the contract prevails.

The concept, in LA was that Local School Leadership Councils were the first step in shared management, and that School Based Management was an expansion into other areas beyond the five originally mentioned in the collective bargaining agreement.

Role of site teams:

Local School Leadership Councils were given five responsibilities spelled out in the Contract, and included:

1. Staff Development program.
2. Student discipline guidelines and code of student conduct.
3. Schedule of school activities and events.
4. Guidelines for use of school equipment including copy machine
5. Certain budgetary matters.

School Based Management expands the Leadership Council's authority based upon a SBM plan developed at the site and submitted to the parties for approval. The site plan must receive the affirmative vote of the UTLA bargaining unit members at the site, the Principal and the parents. Plans can include any/all of the following: 1) hiring process for principals and staff 2) site budget, 3) program, 4) curricula, etc

Site budgets:

Contract/rule waivers:

The collective bargaining agreement provides for contract waivers with a 2/3 vote of the staff at the school, and approval of both the union and the district. Waivers are requested annually, primarily around selecting principals, certain budgetary items and other district policy matters. Very few contract waivers have been requested.

Other major reform efforts (Description, scope, relationship to union)

None

Attachments:

1. Collective Bargaining Agreement, 1998-2000
2. UTLA Constitution & Bylaws
3. United Teacher, August 20, 1999
4. UTLA Budget, 1998-99
5. "Can We Talk?" Series of Articles from United Teacher re: Standards
6. California STAR District Summary Report - Los Angeles Unified School District
7. UTLA "Update" - August 16, 1999
8. Los Angeles Unified School District "Focus on Achievement - Student Learning Standards"