



Labor Today



El Trabajo Diario

Bilingual Publication (Publicación BILINGÜE) of Labor United for Class Struggle

Post Office Box 93116, Los Angeles, CA. 90093 www.labortoday.us E-mail: joseph@labortoday.us (323) 239-6335

CLASS ORIENTED, UNITING, DEMOCRATIC, INDEPENDENT, MODERN, INTERNATIONAL

CLASISTA, UNITARIA, DEMOCRATICA, MODERNA, INDEPENDIENTE, INTERNACIONAL

The Los Angeles Teachers Strike is a Victory for all Working People

By Joseph Hancock

Editor

Los Angeles

On January 22, the teachers' union tweeted: "By withholding their labor and winning overwhelming public support, strikers were able to wrest major concessions from a billionaire superintendent intent on privatizing the district." [#UTLAstrong](#) An agreement was reached with UTLA and LAUSD.

I remember my first teachers strike in 1970. I was a student at Washington Irving Junior High School in Glassell Park. The LAUSD tried to keep the schools going by putting all the students in the auditorium and showing us films. They tried to take attendance with sign-in sheets. We all signed in with various fake names like Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck and we were generally uncooperative. I wasn't sure if there was any class consciousness among the students, but I sure had it. You see, my Mom was a teacher. Simultaneously, while the strike was going on in the L.A. Unified, the community college instructors were organizing into a union, Local 1521 of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT). My Mom helped organize the chapter of the union at Los Angeles Trade-Technical College (LATTTC). I would often go to the college and have lunch with her and help her stuff the instructors' mailboxes with information from the union.

So, it was not only nostalgic, but very rewarding when I joined the UTLA picket line at Hollywood High School on January 20th. All of the entertainment unions adopted Hollywood High as a site because of its historic significance to the education and training of future actors, musicians, and other movie making professionals. As a musician and a member of AFM Local 47, I was proud to stand with the union teachers marching in the rain for better public schools.



LT Editor Joseph Hancock (L) with AFM Local 47 President John Acosta supporting Los Angeles Teachers PHOTO: Linda Rapka for Overture

It needs to be clearly understood by all that this strike was all about the fight to protect public education. A growing movement of “Charter” schools has been slowly eroding our school system. Public schools have been forced to compete with exclusive charters for diminished education funding, creating a “separate but equal” school system. The charter schools benefit from donations from large benefactors. They also take away public monies from non-charter schools. This leaves public schools overcrowded, understaffed, and underfunded, while charter schools are presented as great success stories. What is not reported is that charter schools have limited enrollment, spend exorbitant amounts of money on administrative

salaries, and have no public accountability.

The reason that this strike was so impressive and important was that it was a line in the sand against further attacks on public education. A massive shift in public opinion has taken place and the public now understands how destructive the charter school movement has been, and that it was supported by both major political parties. Trump and Obama both support school privatization. Former Education Secretary Arne Duncan and current Education Secretary Betsy DeVos do too. While the Republicans and Democrats shout the slogan, “children first,” and paint the teachers and their unions as greedy, self-interest groups, the teachers work longer hours with unmanageable class sizes in classrooms that are too small, with furniture that is too old, and buy school supplies and food for their students because the district doesn’t provide affordable meals. To add insult to injury, public schools are forced to share space with charter schools which means that there is a loss of badly needed classroom space. The reality is that the Republicans and Democrats have a political line that is anti-public education. Their goal is to privatize all of education, and to continue the separate but equal system that was struck down by the Supreme Court in 1954. This is part of a larger ultra-right agenda worldwide. Teachers and their union received international messages of support. From the teachers union of France came this message: “The national Education Union of French Teachers (CGT), has followed the struggles of Los Angeles teachers and progressive people to defend the education system in California.

In France too, teachers are now fighting to keep our national public education, facing the aggressive and backwards policy of Macron with



job cuts, the freeze of wages, privatisations and repression. That's why we support the movements in California and other states. We also inform you that a national strike is

organised January 24, by the teachers' unions. Once more we are pleased and proud to bring our support and solidarity to the growing movements in the USA.

The Los Angeles teachers and their trade union have put a stop to this class collaborationist trend, and with their solid strike, have won concessions from management that are long overdue: Here are just a few critical improvements in the new UTLA contract with LAUSD:

- A much-deserved 6% pay raise with no contingencies
- A nurse in every school five days a week
- A teacher librarian in every secondary school five days a week
- Hard caps on class size that will go into effect immediately in 2019-2020, with additional improvements every year after
- A commitment to reduce testing by 50%
- Hard caps on special education caseloads
- A clear pathway to cap charter schools

Never have we seen the labor movement as united as it was for this strike. Never have we seen this level of public support for education. The corporate agenda has been broken, and in 2020 a new contract will be negotiated. The days of privatization of our schools is over. The teachers in France, in Greece, in México, in Zimbabwe, in England, and here in the United States are all resisting privatization and corporatization of our schools. Education is a right not a privilege. Our students deserve the best. UTLA is leading the way.



OUR CONTRACT AGREEMENT

What we won & how it builds our future



Our strike and our unity on the picket lines have resulted in tremendous contract and policy victories. The strike made us stronger as a union for future struggles, connected us with parents in ways we have never seen before, and fundamentally shifted the narrative on public education in the US. We have made history together. Here are the key victories:

	What we won	How it fights privatization & invests in our future
PAY & HEALTHCARE	6% salary increase with no contingencies.	We defeated the district's priority to start cutting healthcare, which LAUSD's Hard Choices report claimed is 44% too generous.
MORE NURSES, COUNSELORS, LIBRARIANS, AND MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS	<p>A nurse in every school every day.</p> <p>A teacher librarian in every secondary school every day.</p> <p>Contractual guarantee of student-counselor ratios of 500:1 at every secondary school.</p> <p>Psychologists, PSWs, and PSAs will be key staff positions in the new Community Schools (see next page).</p>	<p>Increased staffing gives students the supports they deserve and builds the kind of schools parents want to send their children to.</p> <p>We rejected the plan to hire staff for only one year, which would have allowed the district to downsize a year later.</p>
LOWER CLASS SIZES	<p>Agreement paves the way for the first real class-size reduction program in 25 years by eliminating Section 1.5 and creating enforceable hard caps.</p> <p>Will impact all grade levels and subjects by enforcing adherence to hard caps.</p> <p>More improvements to class size every year starting in 2019-20, including an immediate cap size of 39 in ELA and math secondary classes.</p> <p>Agreement sets the stage for pushing caps even lower.</p>	<p>Besides greatly improving learning conditions, lower class sizes protect space from being given to charters through Prop. 39.</p> <p>Our strike raised public consciousness about the absolute need to do something about California's shameful per-pupil spending, which is the primary driver of high class sizes. Next step: Pass the Schools & Communities First initiative to bring billions to schools.</p>
REDUCING TESTING	Agreement forces transparency and creates plan to identify all district assessments and impact on instructional time, with stated goal of reducing assessments by 50%.	<p>Overtesting wastes instructional time and crowds out arts, music, ethnic studies, and other classes.</p> <p>Securing a provision on testing reinforces that the issue is bargainable and intrinsically tied to teachers' rights as classroom professionals.</p>

	What we won	How it fights privatization & invests in our future
CHARTER CAP	Board of Education will vote on resolution calling on state to stop charter growth in LAUSD.	Unregulated charter growth drains \$600 million from LAUSD schools every year. Our strike has dramatically shifted the conversation around charters, with elected officials, a larger portion of the public, and even the LATimes now voicing support for charter regulation and against more charter saturation.
COMMUNITY SCHOOLS	Funding for 30 Community Schools over the next few years, with additional money and UTLA positions, including psychologists, PSWs, and PSAs.	By offering rich curriculum, parent engagement, and wraparound services, Community Schools are the proactive vision for strengthening the public school system.
SPECIAL EDUCATION	Articulation of district norms on special education caseloads for purposes of enforcement, release time for teachers for testing, requirement for district to provide real data on current caseloads, and other improvements. Gives UTLA the right to bargain over changes to instructional delivery models.	Public schools, because they serve special needs children at higher levels than charters, need to provide increased support for special education. We continue to fight to get the federal government to fully fund special ed mandates.
MAGNET CONVERSION & GREATER VOICE FOR EDUCATORS	UTLA members must vote before school is converted to magnet. Chapter chairs sign off on local school waivers. Substitute and itinerant employees have increased representation by chapter leaders.	We hit against the privatizers' agenda to deprofessionalize teaching, give us less of a voice on campus, and use the magnetization process to undermine teachers' rights.
CO-LOCATION	More opportunity to push back on co-location by requiring notification of schools threatened by co-location. More ability to protect space at co-located schools by creating UTLA co-location coordinator position, requiring the coordinator's input in the development of the Shared-Use Agreement, and ensuring coordinator's appointment to School Safety Committee.	Getting advance notice on co-location threats gives the community time to organize against co-location, which many sites have successfully done.
KEY WORKING CONDITION ISSUES	<p>Eight-hour work day inclusive of a 30-minute duty-free lunch for Early Education teachers.</p> <p>Work stations at schools that protect student privacy for itinerant health and human services professionals.</p> <p>10 hours of paid prep time each month for ROC/ROP teachers.</p>	Improving working conditions means respecting the role that all UTLA members play in our educational system and giving them the resources to do their job.

	What we won	How it fights privatization & invests in our future
STATE FUNDING	Commitments from district, mayor's office, and others to support Schools & Communities First ballot measure, local measures, and state legislation to increase funding for education.	One of the most powerful byproducts of our strike is the overdue attention on our criminally underfunded public education system and the clear community demand to address the problem.
ETHNIC STUDIES	Ethnic studies resources provided to teachers and committee will explore expanding ethnic studies.	Expanding relevant pedagogy in the most diverse city in the country will connect schools with the community and connect students with our curriculum.
COMMON GOOD DEMANDS	Plan to increase green space by removing bungalows and asphalt. Pilot program to expand schools exempt from conducting so-called random searches, instead moving to alternative proactive programs to provide school safety support, such as LA City's GRYD program. Immigrant defense support through dedicated hotline and attorney for immigrant families, supported by charitable giving.	Making progress on our common good demands solidifies our connection with parents and community allies and creates schools that are connected with the community.



La huelga de maestros de Los Ángeles es una victoria para todos los trabajadores

Por Joseph Hancock, Editor

Los Angeles, CA. El 22 de enero, el sindicato de docentes publicó en Twitter: "Reteniendo su trabajo y ganando un apoyo público abrumador, los huelguistas pudieron obtener grandes concesiones de un intento del superintendente multimillonario de privatizar el distrito".

Recuerdo mi primera huelga de maestros en 1970. Estudié en la secundaria Washington Irving en Glassell Park. El LAUSD trató de mantener a las escuelas en funcionamiento poniendo a todos los estudiantes en el auditorio y mostrándonos películas. Trataron de tomar asistencia con las hojas de registro. Todos iniciamos sesión con varios nombres falsos como Mickey Mouse y Donald Duck y, en general, no cooperamos. No estaba seguro de si había alguna conciencia de clase entre los estudiantes, pero seguro que la tenía. Ya ves, mi mamá era una maestra. Simultáneamente, mientras la huelga continuaba en el Distrito Escolar Unificado de Arizona, los instructores de las universidades comunitarias se estaban organizando en un sindicato, el Local 1521 de la Federación Americana de Maestros (AFT). Mi mamá ayudó a organizar el capítulo del sindicato en el Colegio Técnico y Comercial de Los Ángeles (LATTC). A menudo, iba a la universidad, almorzaba con ella y la ayudaba a llenar los buzones de los instructores con información del sindicato.

Entonces, no solo fue nostálgico, sino muy gratificante cuando me uní a la línea de piquetes de UTLA en Hollywood High School el 20 de enero. Todas las uniones de entretenimiento adoptaron Hollywood High como un sitio debido a su importancia histórica para la educación y la capacitación de futuros actores, músicos y otros profesionales del cine. Como músico y miembro de AFM Local 47, me enorgullecía estar junto a los maestros del sindicato que marchaban bajo la lluvia para obtener mejores escuelas públicas.

Es necesario que todos entiendan claramente que esta huelga fue todo sobre la lucha para proteger la educación pública. Un creciente movimiento de escuelas "Charter" ha ido erosionando lentamente nuestro sistema escolar. Las escuelas públicas se han visto obligadas a competir con las cartas exclusivas por la disminución de los fondos para la educación, creando un sistema escolar "separado pero igual". Las escuelas charter se benefician de las donaciones de grandes benefactores. También les quitan el dinero público a las escuelas no autónomas. Esto deja a las escuelas públicas abarrotadas, con poco personal y con fondos insuficientes, mientras que las escuelas autónomas se presentan como grandes historias de éxito. Lo que no se informa es que las escuelas autónomas tienen inscripción limitada, gastan cantidades exorbitantes de dinero en salarios administrativos y no tienen responsabilidad pública.

La razón por la que esta huelga fue tan impresionante e importante fue que fue una línea en la arena contra nuevos ataques a la educación pública. Se ha producido un cambio masivo en la opinión pública y el público ahora comprende cuán destructivo ha sido el movimiento de las escuelas autónomas y que ambos partidos políticos lo apoyaron. Trump y Obama apoyan la privatización escolar. El ex secretario de educación Arne Duncan y la actual secretaria de educación Betsy DeVos también lo hacen. Mientras los republicanos y los demócratas gritan el eslogan, "los niños primero", y pintan a los maestros y sus sindicatos como grupos codiciosos e interesados, los maestros trabajan más horas con clases inigualables en clases que son

demasiado pequeñas, con muebles demasiado viejos, y compre útiles escolares y alimentos para sus estudiantes porque el distrito no proporciona comidas asequibles. Para agregar insulto a las lesiones, las escuelas públicas se ven obligadas a compartir espacio con las escuelas autónomas, lo que significa que hay una pérdida de espacio en el aula muy necesario. La realidad es que los republicanos y los demócratas tienen una línea política que es la educación anti-pública. Su objetivo es privatizar toda la educación y continuar con el sistema separado pero igual que fue derribado por la Corte Suprema en 1954. Esto es parte de una agenda más grande de ultraderecha en todo el mundo. Los docentes y su sindicato recibieron mensajes internacionales de apoyo. Del sindicato de docentes de Francia llegó este mensaje: “El Sindicato Nacional de Educación de Profesores de Francia (CGT) ha seguido las luchas de los docentes y personas progresistas de Los Ángeles para defender el sistema educativo en California.

También en Francia, los maestros ahora luchan para mantener nuestra educación pública nacional, enfrentando la política agresiva y atrasada de Macron con

Recortes de empleos, congelación de salarios, privatizaciones y represión. Es por eso que apoyamos los movimientos en California y otros estados. También le informamos que los sindicatos de docentes organizan una huelga nacional el 24 de enero. Una vez más, nos complace y nos enorgullece brindar nuestro apoyo y solidaridad a los movimientos en crecimiento en los Estados Unidos.

Los maestros de Los Ángeles y su sindicato han puesto fin a esta tendencia colaboracionista de clase, y con su sólida huelga, han obtenido concesiones de la administración que llevan mucho tiempo atrasadas: Estas son algunas mejoras críticas en el nuevo contrato de UTLA con LAUSD:

- Un muy bien merecido aumento de sueldo del 6% sin contingencias.
- Una enfermera en cada escuela cinco días a la semana.
- Un bibliotecario docente en cada escuela secundaria cinco días a la semana.
- Dirigidos límites en el tamaño de la clase que entrarán en vigencia inmediatamente en 2019-2020, con mejoras adicionales cada año después
- Un compromiso para reducir las pruebas en un 50%.
- Capuchas duras en casos de educación especial.
- Un camino claro para el límite de las escuelas charter

Nunca hemos visto al movimiento obrero tan unido como lo fue para esta huelga. Nunca hemos visto este nivel de apoyo público a la educación. La agenda corporativa se ha roto, y en 2020 se negociará un nuevo contrato. Los días de privatización de nuestras escuelas han terminado. Los maestros en Francia, en Grecia, en México, en Zimbabue, en Inglaterra y aquí en los Estados Unidos se resisten a la privatización y corporatización de nuestras escuelas. La educación es un derecho, no un privilegio. Nuestros alumnos se merecen lo mejor. UTLA está liderando el camino.

Greetings were also received from AFM Local 47 and other trade unions.

Statement in support of UTLA from AFM Local 47

LOS ANGELES (January 14, 2019) – American Federation of Musicians Local 47 proudly stands with the thousands of brave workers who are striking for our communities, our families and our children.

Members of the United Teachers Los Angeles union are taking a stand to be treated with dignity and respect. The Los Angeles Unified School District is the second largest in the country, yet our schools are painfully underfunded, understaffed, and overcrowded.

The numbers say it all: California ranks 43 out of 50 in per-pupil spending. We rank 48 out of 50 in student-to-teacher ratio, and our student-to-counselor ratio is 945:1. Cost of living has increased 27% since 2008, but wages are so low that many teachers are forced to take a second job to support their families.

Yet while LAUSD sits on a nearly \$2 billion reserve, they refuse to agree to fair terms at the bargaining table.

This fight is personal. We have children who attend LAUSD schools; we have colleagues who work at LAUSD schools; and many of us teach at LAUSD schools ourselves. As professional musicians we understand what it means to be a worker whose professional calling helps build community, and we recognize the critical role teachers play in this pursuit.

AFM Local 47 fully rejects the display of greed shown by the LAUSD Board of Education and calls upon them to solve this dispute immediately and fairly, and put our teachers and students back in the classroom.

