

To: All Bargaining Unit Members
From: Sandra Goins-Executive Director, South Bay United Teachers
Re: Student Protests
Date: November 16, 2016

Dear Bargaining Unit Members:

The outcome of the presidential election has sent shockwaves through the United States and the world. No one has been more impacted by the results than students. While there might be great euphoria for some, the vast majority of our young people are afraid. The source of that fear may be a fear of whether they will be able to remain in the country that they know and love or for being targeted for violence by hate groups or for losing healthcare or for irreparable damage to the environment or many other issues that have been targeted by the incoming president. Students are afraid and angry and we all have to manage our own fear and anger and help them through this while doing the jobs we were hired to do.

This is NOT LEGAL ADVICE, but here are some suggestions that may be helpful to you and students:

1. **District employees should not lead or organize any student protests/marches**—especially during instructional time and/or during the work day.
2. District employees have the right to join in or organize protests during non-working hours, but it is strongly advised that students not be invited to participate in these activities—if students opt to protest, it should be a result of their own or their parent or community’s organizing efforts.
3. If District employees see students leaving campus to protest, they should stay at their assigned work location. Administration may opt to follow students, but teachers and staff should stay at their assigned work locations unless directed to do otherwise by administration.
(As a point of student safety, employees may remind determined students that if they choose to engage in any protests, they should be sure to abide by all laws, including traffic signals. Don’t have signs depicting violence or obscenities and do not get into altercations with opposing factions).
4. For an overview of what rights citizens have regarding free speech, visit the ACLU website here: <https://www.aclu.org/know-your-rights/what-do-if-your-rights-are-violated-demonstration-or-protest>. This overview is intended to inform you about general rights of citizens to peacefully protest; however, it does **not** address employment-related issues nor does it address protected activities of government employees.

Should you have any questions regarding whether a particular activity is protected or not, please don’t hesitate to contact me at the SBUT office (310) 921-2500 or via email at sgoins@cta.org.