



Struggle-La-Lucha.org

# Los Angeles teachers' strike bulletin - Jan. 16, 2019

written by Struggle - La Lucha  
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On Wednesday, the third day of the United Teachers Los Angeles (UTLA) strike, picket lines remained strong — while more cracks showed in the armor of the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) bosses headed by Superintendent Austin Beutner. You could almost feel the city's rich and powerful quaking at this week's massive show of working-class solidarity.

Despite on and off torrential rain, following the morning pickets at every school, UTLA members held successful rallies at seven locations spread out over the entirety of Los Angeles, including offices of LAUSD and selected schools. Numerous sympathy strikes are happening and 1,000 charter school workers represented by UTLA, but not employed by LAUSD, struck against their own private employer.

Significantly, the number of students attending scab-run classrooms fell dramatically, down from 159,000 on Tuesday to 132,000 on Wednesday. That means only 27 percent of enrolled students showed up for classes.

One reason for the decline is that union members and supporters are succeeding in

breaking through lies and rumors spread by LAUSD through the media that students might face penalties for being absent during the strike.

“In all, the district says it has lost \$69.1 million in state funding based on attendance” since the start of the strike, [reported the Los Angeles Times](#). “Subtract the \$10 million a day in wages it hasn’t had to pay its striking workforce, and that’s a net loss of \$39.1 million.”

The head of the school administrators union, Juan Flecha, suggested that campuses may need to close entirely because of “dire and unsafe working conditions.” And [School Board member Scott Schmerelson broke ranks](#) with Beutner, declaring, “I believe that there are resources available to end this strike.”

Meanwhile, School Board President Monica Garcia, a staunch supporter of Beutner’s anti-union hard line, found herself confronted by more than 100 protesting students, parents and teachers who held a rally outside her home, chanting “Monica, come out!” Instead of responding to the protesters’ demand to meet with them, [Garcia called the cops](#).

Late in the day, the UTLA announced that there would be another attempt at bargaining on Thursday, Jan. 17. Negotiations broke off last Friday after LAUSD came forward with a new proposal that addressed the lack of school nurses and overcrowded classes, but for only one year, and limited to certain grades. After one year, a clause included in previous contracts would allow the district to again increase class sizes and eliminate nurses and other important staff.

The newly announced negotiations will include Mayor Eric Garcetti, who claims to be playing the role of mediator. However, it’s been reported that Garcetti referred to Beutner’s “strategic plan” to divide the district into 32 small units as a possible vehicle to resolution, if the union would collaborate with him.

Beutner once admitted to a group of businesspeople that this strategic plan could mean that there would be no public education system in Los Angeles by 2021. His plan to make all education, education for profit has been clearly and forcefully rejected by the people of Los Angeles this week.

This is an important fight for union rights, for sure. But it is also a huge labor and community battle to fight for and defend quality public education, at a time when school workers from Oakland to Chicago to the state of Virginia have drawn the line. UTLA and Los Angeles parents and students will win.

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### **Day 3 Valley West rally**

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