

Stop the UTLA bureaucracy's censorship of rank-and file-teachers!

Los Angeles Educators Rank and File Committee
27 April 2023

Brothers and Sisters,

With voting scheduled to begin this coming Tuesday, the United Teachers Los Angeles (UTLA) has launched a massive campaign to censor even the most modest criticism of the tentative agreement it reached with the district last week.

The contract is a sellout. It contains wage increases that barely keep pace with inflation, meager and unenforceable class size reductions and no measures whatsoever for school sites to contain the spread of COVID-19. Knowing that the latest agreement would engender massive opposition, the UTLA waited a full six days before releasing anything more than a few paragraphs of self-serving “highlights.”

The Los Angeles Educators Rank-and-File Committee calls for a “No” vote on the contract and is campaigning for a contract containing provisions that teachers, students and school support workers actually need and not what the union, district, city and state governments say they can afford.

As soon as the deal was announced, teachers across the district reacted angrily. Therefore, the apparatus moved to prevent workers from expressing themselves on social media, and widespread censorship of union social media pages began.

The UTLA's website asks teachers to join the union and pay it \$1,000 a year in dues money to “build an educational system that we believe in” and to “Be part of a revolution in education.” In reality, members of the UTLA are told what conditions they'll have to face on the job, and if they dare to raise any voices in opposition, they'll be silenced by the union bureaucracy itself.

For posting our statement on the contract, “ Los Angeles teachers: No to the UTLA sell-out! Demand the immediate release of the full contract and adequate

time to study it! ” members and supporters of the Los Angeles Educators Rank-and-File Committee have been banned from the UTLA's Facebook, Instagram and Twitter accounts. They've also had postings removed in other union-affiliated social media groups, including on Reddit. Requests that moderators explain the reason for removing the posts remain unanswered.

In that statement, based on the way in which the UTLA rammed through the previous deal in 2019 and the reopening of schools in 2021, we called on our coworkers to “organize against the conspiracy to once again nullify our democratic will and to bureaucratically ‘ratify’ the contract.” The UTLA's own actions prove this warning was correct. The vote which the bureaucracy is attempting to organize is one in which the only opinions which are permitted to be expressed are those which support the deal.

We call on our co-workers to demand the immediate end to all online censorship. Teachers have a right to see any and all posts, regardless of whether or not they're supportive or critical of the union and the latest TA. The future of our students and our livelihoods are at stake, and we need to make the most informed decisions possible.

These social media accounts should be forums for UTLA members to discuss, openly and without fear of retaliation, our opinions on our own fight and what our strategy is, not a megaphone for the bureaucracy to amplify only support for their own positions.

The move also shows the urgent need for Los Angeles teachers to organize ourselves independently. We need structures which we control, not the apparatus, which give us the ability to conduct a broad, uncensored and democratic discussion and decide on what our own strategy will be. This is the only way in which a real fight for public education can be

conducted, in opposition to not only the LAUSD administration and the city government but also against the betrayals of the UTLA bureaucracy.

This is why we've formed the Los Angeles Educators Rank-and-File Committee. We urge our coworkers: If you agree with this, then join us. Contact us by texting (619) 431-0643 or by emailing wcedrankandfile@gmail.com to join the fight for rank-and-file control today.



To contact the WSWS and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact