

# Support the striking Oakland teachers!

As teachers go on strike in Oakland, the District leadership and corporate media will ramp up the offensive to paint the teachers in a bad light. They will try to pit students and families against the teachers. They will try to discredit the union. But we know the truth.

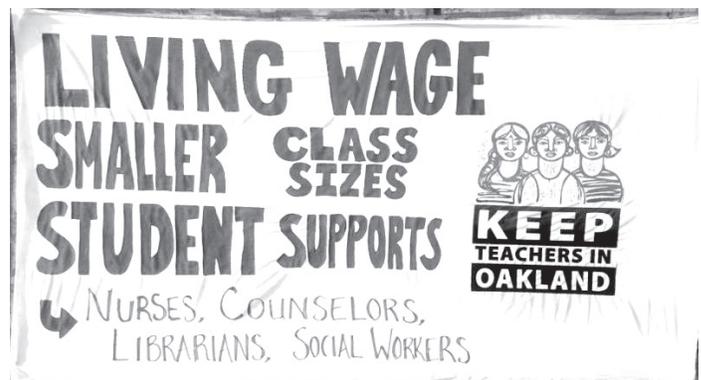
Oakland teachers have the support of their students, the community, and people around the country. They are taking action just as teachers in Denver, Colorado, Los Angeles, California, Arizona, West Virginia and elsewhere have been rising up against what has been a tide of privatization efforts.

Oakland Education Association union members are negotiating for a strong contract that improves the quality of education for their students with the demands of lower class sizes, a living wage, better working conditions, and more counselors and nurses. Currently, the entire district has only 21 nurses and one academic counselor for every 600 students. This amounts to one nurse per 1,750 students, or one nurse for every four schools.

These demands are needed not only in Oakland schools, but in school districts nationwide in order to truly meet the needs of students and their families.

**We applaud the Oakland Unified teachers for courageously taking a stand.** We demand that OUSD, the school board and the superintendent stop their union-busting tactic of hiring scabs and respect the educators and students.

While the district and school board are shuttering neighborhood schools, privately-run charter schools have proliferated in Oakland. Thirty percent of Oakland students attend charter schools, a higher percentage than any other city in California. In the 2016 - 2017 school year, OUSD spent \$57 million on charter schools, which meant \$1,500 less per public school student. Unregulated charter school growth drains resources from traditional public schools that serve EVERY student. Charter schools are free to pick and choose. They exclude or kick out any student they want, and serve far fewer children with disabilities and English-language learners than true public schools. Charter schools are a tool for privatizing public education and diminishing the power of teachers' unions.



**Oakland teachers need a living wage.** They are the lowest paid teachers in Alameda County and have been working without a contract for a year and a half. Rents have gone up 32 percent in the last five years while salaries lag behind the increasing cost of living. For the last three school years, OUSD has lost on average a quarter of all their teachers, primarily because teachers can't afford Bay Area rents.

**The money is there to meet the demands of teachers.** Research by the OEA found that OUSD has received at least \$21 million in new state and local revenue and finished the 2017-2018 fiscal year with a surplus of roughly \$18 million in unrestricted funds.

California spends about \$9,000 per year to educate each student while at the same time spending over \$70,000 per inmate in the prison system *that largely ends up in the coffers of the prison-industrial complex*. Childhood poverty in California is greater than in any other state in the country. Investing in our public schools means investing in the community and society. All children deserve access to quality public education. All youth deserve healthy and robust schools where they are able to survive and thrive. Striking Oakland teachers are at the forefront of saving public schools and we must stand with them!

## What you can do to support

If you're in the Bay Area, wear red and join the picket line with the teachers. If you're in another part of the country, keep up to date with the strike at <https://oaklandea.org> website and share posts from OEA on social media. Talk to your friends, co-workers and family about the teacher's struggle.