

From: [Gregory Smith](#)
Subject: Chancellor's Message: Employee Representation and Governance Updates
Date: Tuesday, January 13, 2026 3:27:56 PM
Attachments: [image003.png](#)

Good Afternoon SDCCD Community,

The email contains an update on the formal recognition of the Supervisory and Professional Administrators Association (SPAA) collective bargaining unit and updates to participatory governance committees.

In October 2020, a majority of employees represented by the SPAA meet-and-confer unit voted to petition the California Public Employment Relations Board (PERB) to have SPAA recognized as the exclusive representative of the job classifications and employees in the meet-and-confer unit. In other words, the majority of employees in the unit voted to form a formal collective bargaining unit akin to the AFT Faculty, AFT Classified Professionals, and Police Officers Association in our district. The petition started a lengthy legal process to determine whether any job classifications represented by the SPAA meet-and-confer unit in 2020 should be part of the AFT Classified Professionals unit or the Association of Confidential Employees (ACE) meet-and-confer unit. In the context of California public employment, “confidential” means an employee working in a non-management position and responsible for participating in the development, presentation, and/or negotiation of labor relations matters with a bargaining unit or significant access to management bargaining information.

In September 2024, PERB issued a final determination of the appropriate representation of classifications, shifting some former SPAA classifications to the AFT Classified Professionals unit and establishing three SPAA bargaining units – Classified Supervisors, Academic Supervisors, and an Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) Exempt Professional Employees unit. The FLSA is a federal law governing overtime eligible and overtime exempt employment. PERB excluded several classifications from the newly formed SPAA units, which led to a series of meetings between SPAA and AFT Local 1931 to resolve appropriate representation and new petitions to PERB for recognition as the appropriate representative.

At this time, only a small number of classifications remain in question for representation. SPAA and the District have presented the Board of Trustees with initial proposals for the first collective bargaining agreement for the SPAA bargaining units and negotiations are ongoing. AFT Classified Professionals and the District will continue to work on incorporating classifications moved from the former SPAA meet-and-confer unit in the existing collective bargaining agreement for Classified Professionals.

The formal recognition of the SPAA bargaining units has required changes to participatory governance committees, most notably, the District Governance Council (DGC). DGC is the highest level of participatory governance for policies, procedures, and districtwide governance matters before they are presented to the Board of Trustees. DGC is comprised of representatives for each college’s Academic Senate and Classified Senate, each college’s Associated Student Government, and each collective bargaining unit (AFT Faculty, AFT Classified Professionals, and POA). Following PERB’s recognition of the SPAA bargaining units, SPAA was added as a voting member of DGC,

consistent with the other bargaining units.

These changes have led to questions about the role of SPAA members in the colleges' Classified Senates and in college governance committees. The District's governance handbook implements policies for legally-required and district-adopted participatory governance. The handbook does not dictate how each college structures its participatory processes for local decision-making. With the establishment of the SPAA bargaining units, each college will determine whether and where it is appropriate to have a SPAA representative separate from Classified Senate representation and where there will be Senate representatives, but no collective bargaining unit representation.

I am sharing these details in hopes of providing clarity and preventing or correcting any misunderstanding about why there are changes in employee representation, committee participation, and the formal distinctions between employees representing a bargaining unit and employees representing a Senate. In particular, I want to make sure everyone understands the District's role is to support the will of employees in determining their exclusive representatives and ensure consistency in participation of bargaining units and Academic and Classified Senates in the formation and implementation of policies, procedures, and negotiations.

Thank you,

Greg



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