

Newsbriefs



President Trump announced a one-month delay to a scheduled tariff to specific goods from Mexico. Earlier this week, tariffs ranging from 10-20% went into effect for imports coming from Canada, Mexico and China.



In a new podcast hosted by California Gov. Gavin Newsom, he said transgender men playing in women sports was “deeply unfair,” angering Demo-crats in the process.



©Frederick M. Brown/AP

Jurors in the trial of Orange County Judge Jeffrey Ferguson, accused of murdering his wife, are deadlocked and will return Tuesday to decide whether to continue deliberations or declare a mistrial.

Calendar

- 7** **Anaheim Ducks Nite**  
Honda Center  
7-8:30 PM (Tix. req.)
- 10** **Storytime @ Park**  
Sandpointe Park  
10 AM-12 PM
- 10** **Planning Cm. Mtg.**  
City Hall  
5:30-10 PM
- 10** **Willard NA Meeting**  
St. Peter Lutheran Ch.  
6-7 PM
- 11** **ETAC Meeting**  
City Hall  
4-5:30 PM
- 11** **Pacific Park NA Mtg.**  
Roosevelt-Walker Ctr.  
6-7 PM
- 11** **Walnut St. Grn Mtg.**  
Roosevelt-Walker Ctr.  
6-7 PM

Weather

Source: Nat'l Weather Service

FRI	SAT	SUN
60° F 42° F	65° F 44° F	68° F 45° F



SAUSD staff surround SAEA President Santa Garner-Marcelo after the Board voted to layoff hundreds of staff. (Daniel Diaz)

Teachers, counselors, staff brace for pink slips

By DANIEL DIAZ  
Community Reporter

SAUSD HQ — The Santa Ana Unified School District Board of Education voted 4-1 (Lebsack in opposition) to approve the layoffs of around 280 educators, including teachers, counselors, and social workers, along with cuts to supplies and services to help manage a \$187 million deficit.

Since the early 2000s, Santa Ana Unified has been losing students little by little every year. Even with the decline, it was still the largest district in the area for a long time.

But by the late 2010s, the drop in enrollment became much sharper, about 5% a school year (about 2,000 students). Then COVID-19 hit, and even more Santanero families moved out, making the situation worse.

The population in Santa Ana has also been shrinking for years, and so has the rest of Orange County. During the pandemic, many of families took advantage of cheaper home prices and low-interest rates or found lower rent in nearby counties, speeding up the decline in students.

According to World Population Review, Santa Ana's population was estimated at 330,900 in 2019, but dropped to 311,200 in 2020. Since then, the city has lost an average of 800-900 residents annually.

Another significant factor adding to the exodus was the rising cost of living in California, including increasing rents and other expenses, which were further exacerbated by inflation. Adding to the losses, an additional 5% of LCFF funds were cut mid-fiscal year (interim) due to stagnant absenteeism, as..

Layoffs, 42

Santa Ana recognized for innovation in development & housing

By DANIEL DIAZ  
Community Reporter

The City of Santa Ana was honored at the Orange County Business Council's 14th Annual Turning Red Tape into Red Carpet Awards, winning recognition for three projects that streamline development and expand affordable housing, according to a press release.

The city received an honorable mention for its PBx express construction permit service, which reduces wait times for permits. Additionally, partnerships with Related California and Jamboree Housing Corp. were celebrated for the Crossroads at Washington and Estrella Springs housing developments, providing affordable and supportive housing for low-income families and individuals.

According to the press release, this marks the third consecutive year Santa Ana has won an award in regard to development and housing innovation.

OCTA to ditch paper passes for reloadable cards

By DANIEL DIAZ  
Community Reporter

OCTA HQ — This summer, the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) is introducing WAVE, a new smart fare card aimed at making bus travel more cost-effective for riders. WAVE will function similarly to fare cards used by LA Metro and New York MTA, offering a reloadable, reusable, and no-expiration payment option.

OCTA currently offers one-day and 30-day paper passes, but some riders either spend more than necessary or don't use



Render by OCTA.

public transportation enough to fully maximize their month-pass cost (\$69). WAVE is designed to eliminate this issue by automatically giving riders the best possible price.

The WAVE system uses fare capping, ensuring that once a rider reaches a certain amount in fares, the rest of their rides are free: One-way rides cost \$2, a one-day pass is \$4.50 on the OC Bus app (\$5.00 cash / coin if boarding),

rest of their rides are free: One-way rides cost \$2, a one-day pass is \$4.50 on the OC Bus app (\$5.00 cash/coin if boarding), after three one-way trips in a single day (totaling \$4.50), the rest of that day's rides are free. After \$69 in fares within a calendar month, the rest of that month's rides are free

Fares are tallied starting on the 1st of every month, and riders must reach the monthly cap within the same month for unlimited rides.

For riders looking to maximize savings: For regular riders to reach the \$69 monthly cap,

they'd have to ride at least three times in a day for 15 days and then one more time on the 16th day within the same month. For disabled/senior riders to get the most value, they'd have to ride three times a day for about 16 days and then one more time on the 17th day within the same month.

WAVE can be managed online or through a new app coming this summer, allowing riders to add funds easily and pay via tap-to-ride using a debit or credit.

Those using current paper passes will still be..

Bus, 42



From cAl, Bus

OCTA to launch WAVE, a smart fare-capping system for riders later this year

By DANIEL DIAZ  
Community Reporter

allowed to use them, as well as all other pre-existing bus programs, such as free rides for students. As well as continue to accept coins and bills.

OCTA has confirmed that this initiative will not increase fares, and instead, WAVE will always ensure riders get the best price possible automatically.

"[W]ith the WAVE system no rider will pay more than what they pay today, and most will pay less," Eric Carpenter of OCTA said.

As OCTA prepares to roll out WAVE this summer, they are seeking public input to fine-tune the program. Riders can learn more or share their thoughts by visiting octa.net/wave.



Hundreds face layoffs at SAUSD



SAUSD staff surround SAEA President Sonta Garner-Marcelo after the Board voted to layoff hundreds of staff. (Daniel Diaz/The Santanero)

From cAl, Layoffs announced during a budget webinar in late December.

Another possible reason for lower enrollment is how the District responds and handles student safety such as sexual assault and basic education, specifically in math and English.

Locally, SAUSD ranks the lowest when compared to surrounding school districts. Nationally however, Santa Ana Unified isn't alone. More than half of districts nationwide are behind the 2019 national average based on 2023 test scores.

Districtwide, students are about two years behind the 2019 national average in those subjects. Meanwhile, Irvine Unified actually saw a surge in enrollment during the pandemic and test scores.

Board Member Brenda Lebsack pointed this out when before she voted against the layoffs. Vice President Katelyn Brazer-Aceves had also suggested a different way to handle things using attrition.

One idea was to reduce staff through natural attrition instead of direct layoffs.

Natural attrition is when staff retire or resign on their own, usually the most senior employees. In the past, the District has offered incentives like the Supplemental Employee Retirement Plan (SERP) right after asking people to leave through attrition.

When the SERP window closed in November, 116 employees took the deal. Then, the Board voted unanimously Tuesday to extend the SERP window until mid - March. The

more people who take the offer, the fewer layoffs might be needed—but that also depends on how many employees are left who can fill priority positions like special education.

Another alternative that the Santa Ana Educators Association (SAEA) questioned was why the District didn't hire pandemic-era staff on temporary contracts. Essentially, telling new hires upfront that their jobs were funded by one-time money and not permanent. That way, when the funding ran out, the District wouldn't have to lay people off unexpectedly.

But this might not have been allowed because of California's rule during the pandemic that banned school layoffs and also told districts to hire more staff to help with

distance learning and reopening schools.

According to CBO and Associate Superintendent Ron Hacker, the District was already overstaffed even before the pandemic. In 2018, layoffs were on the table, but the Board voted against it, keeping extra staff. Another round of layoffs was considered right when COVID hit, but then the State of California stepped in and said: No layoffs. Keep all staff. Also, hire more.

As for the rest of the Board, most had met with stakeholders. The District will issue pink slips to those affected by the layoffs by March 15. From there, the District will work with its legal team and stakeholders, including the Santa Ana Educators Association (SAEA), to finalize the layoff process.

ATTENTION SANTANEROS!  
¡ATENCIÓN SANTANEROS!

YOU HAVE UNALIENABLE RIGHTS!

If immigration is at your door:

★ DO NOT OPEN THE DOOR

if an immigration agent is knocking on the door

★ DO NOT ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS

from an immigration agent if they try to talk to you.

You have the right to remain silent.

★ DO NOT SIGN ANYTHING without first speaking to a lawyer.

You have the right to speak with a lawyer.

★ If you are outside of your home, ask the agent

if you are free to leave and if they say yes, leave calmly.

★ Say: I do not wish to speak with you, answer your questions, or sign or hand you any documents based on my 5th Amendment rights under the United States Constitution.

★ Say: I do not give you permission to enter my home based on my 4th Amendment rights under the United States Constitution unless you have a warrant to enter, signed by a judge or magistrate with my name on it and that you slide the document(s) under the door.

★ I do not give you permission to search any of my belongings based on my 4th Amendment rights. I choose to exercise my constitutional rights.

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Si la inmigración está a tu puerta:

★ NO ABRIR LA PUERTA

si un agente de inmigración está tocando a la puerta

★ NO RESPONDA NINGUNA PREGUNTA

de un agente de inmigración si intenta hablar con usted.

Tienes derecho a permanecer en silencio.

★ NO FIRME NADA sin antes hablar con un abogado.

Tiene derecho a hablar con un abogado.

★ Si estás fuera de tu casa, pregunta al agente

si eres libre de irte y si te dicen que sí, vete tranquilamente.

★ Diga: No deseo hablar con usted, responder sus preguntas, ni firmar ni entregarle ningún documento basado en mis derechos de la Quinta Enmienda según la Constitución de los Estados Unidos.

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Our Staff

Daniel Diaz ..... Co-Founder & Publisher  
Editor-in-Chief (2022- )  
Community Reporter  
Advertising Director  
Canva Pg. Designer  
Website Editor  
Photographer  
Lucia Ylitzara González ..... Co-Founder

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Daniel Diaz is the primary person to get in contact with regarding pretty much anything on this newspaper. His email is [ddiaz@santanero.org](mailto:ddiaz@santanero.org).

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