



**The Education Trust—West**  
Closing the gaps in opportunity and  
achievement, pre-k through college.

## **MORE THAN JUST SENIORITY: Documenting the Movement to End Seniority-Based Layoffs**

There is a movement underway to change the way districts layoff teachers in times of budget crisis. Teachers and school administrators, researchers and advocates, parents and community members are all beginning to take action against the damaging practice of seniority-based, quality-blind layoffs. Over the past year, national, state, and local media have provided plenty of ammunition for advocates and other stakeholders to help “make the case” that lawmakers should replace the state’s seniority-based layoff law and to argue that school districts should leverage their authority to mitigate the negative impacts of layoffs on high-need students.

### **Coverage of Education Trust—West Work on Ending Seniority-Based Layoffs**

[Latitude needed on 'last-hired and first-fired'](#) – *Editorial, Sacramento Bee*

“But the [seniority-based layoff] law does allow two exceptions – and school districts should use them. Contrary to conventional opinion, districts are not constrained only to seniority-based layoffs.”

[Will LAUSD layoffs be a model?](#) – *Top-Ed*

“An appeals court on Monday refused to delay a settlement that will shield children in 45 low-income schools in Los Angeles Unified from layoffs that would create havoc with their education. With a March 15 deadline a week away for teacher layoff notices statewide, the big question is whether other districts will follow the lead of Los Angeles Unified and protect their most vulnerable children as well.”

[Districts will lay off some of their best and brightest today; that must change](#) – *Arun Ramanathan, Top-Ed*

“Now, three years of state budget cuts later, it is strikingly clear that both the education budget cuts and the state-mandated layoff processes based on seniority are disastrous for California’s future.”

[San Diego Explained: Last Hired, First Fired](#) – *VoiceofSanDiego.org*

“Education Trust West, a nonprofit that advocates to close the achievement gap, recently argued against using seniority as the sole or chief basis for layoffs.”

[Pink slip policies hurt schools](#) – *NBC SanDiego*

“A new report from education advocacy organization The Education Trust West claims state teacher lay-off policies are “damaging” the school community in terms of over-noticing teachers.”

### **National News**

[Teacher Layoff Plans in Los Angeles Pose Broad Implications](#) – *The New York Times*

“Under a court ruling, not a single teacher at the school would be let go. Instead, Gompers and 44 other schools in the Los Angeles Unified School District would be exempt from any layoffs at all.”

[Teacher layoffs based only on seniority fail kids](#) – *USA Today*

“Many of the worst teachers will survive the ax they so richly deserve because of a state law that makes seniority the *only* consideration in laying off teachers. Newer, perhaps excellent, teachers will be fired, while incompetents or worse stay in classrooms and on the public payroll.”

[Seniority should not make teachers immune to layoffs](#) – *The Washington Post*

“State law enshrining the policy of “last in, first out” doesn’t allow performance to be a factor and that means good teachers - possibly even great teachers - are likely to be forced out of the classroom.”

## **California News**

### **[Record Number of Teachers Likely to See Pink Slips](#)** – *San Francisco Chronicle*

“The notices, required by state law to be sent out by March 15, will advise the teachers, mostly those with the least seniority, that they might not have a job next year. The layoffs must be confirmed in mid-May.”

### **[Layoff Scares vs. Fair Warning](#)** – *VoiceofSanDiego.org*

“Districts often end up laying off fewer teachers once they get their actual budget numbers. Even if they end up being canceled, layoff warnings cause a lot of anxiety and even spur teachers to leave.”

### **[Last-in, first-out layoff policies hit some schools harder than others](#)** – *The Oakland Tribune*

“The threat of layoffs left few schools in the district untouched, but it hit some much harder than others. Like most districts, Oakland uses the “last-in, first-out” rule to determine who will keep their jobs in a time of financial uncertainty.”

### **[Deadline for pink slips for thousands of teachers arrives today](#)** – *California Watch*

“March 15 has become an annual ritual marked by pain and distress for thousands of California teachers who will receive pink slips by the end of the day today, or will be waiting to receive them in the mail.”

### **[L.A. school district announces potential layoff plans](#)** – *Los Angeles Times*

“Los Angeles school officials unveiled a plan Friday to send preliminary layoff notices to more than 5,000 teachers and other staff members to help close a projected budget gap. This is the first time that the nation’s second-largest district will protect some campuses that previously had been hit hard by layoffs.”

### **[L.A. Unified settlement of lawsuit mushroomed into assault on long-held district practices](#)** – *Los Angeles Times*

“[The settlement] would require layoffs to occur at about the same rate campus by campus across the school system. Less experienced teachers at some schools would thus be spared at the expense of more veteran colleagues elsewhere. And up to 45 schools could avoid layoffs completely if they demonstrate academic growth.”