

# THE ADVOCATE

## Lessons in accountability for School Board

SDEA members are starting the new year off strong with a series of accountability sessions — one with each SDUSD School Board member. The purpose of these meetings is two-fold. Participating members are asking each Board member to commit on the record to vote against layoffs this spring and begin to restore SDEA members' bargained pay increases, as well as demanding an end to the following unfair labor practices that the District is committing:

- SDUSD's refusal to honor secondary class size;
- SDUSD's refusal to arbitrate grievances related to lesson plan requirements, and nursing and counseling ratios;
- New charges of \$2,400-

\$3,000 a year for new teachers to complete the BTS program; and

- New fees to retired SDEA members who continue District healthcare.

Meetings have been held with School Board President John Lee Evans and Trustees Marne Foster and Scott Barnett (*see page 3 for a full report*). Meetings are scheduled with Trustees Richard Barrera and Kevin Beiser later this month.

SDEA members worked hard to pass Props. 30 and Z, and San Diego's voters stood with us. Their expectation is that the School Board honor their votes and stabilize our schools. SDEA members must make sure the Board does right thing. To get involved, contact your site AR.



**Sessions AR Megan Sussman (center), who hosted the accountability session with School Board member Scott Barnett in her classroom, began the meeting by making it clear that SDEA members and San Diego's voters expect good governance from our Board. Members objected to the Board's early January decision to increase spending on central office staffing by \$600,000 while still contemplating educator layoffs. Barnett suggested that SDEA members' healthcare costs are the problem—but members didn't take the bait, insisting that the Board stop increasing central office bloat before even thinking about seeking further employee concessions.**

## Brown's budget holds good news for schools

Governor Brown released his proposed education budget for the 2013-2014 school year on Thursday, Jan. 10. The proposal reflects the fact that the state economy is no longer shrinking and that Prop. 30's passage has taken the pressure off of the state to make further budget reductions. The Governor proposes higher funding for K-12 education, community colleges, and higher education. After years of declining state funding per student, the Governor announced

an increase of \$2.7 billion to K-12 education in 2013-2014, which translates to \$337 per student. Total spending would rise to \$56.2 billion next year.

Brown also proposed a new school funding formula that increases revenue to districts serving California's most challenged students. Although short on details, the new school funding formula could generate more educational funding for San Diego.

SDEA is analyzing the

specific impact to San Diego, but the preliminary analysis shows good news for our schools. The proposed budget provides funding for job stability and security in 2013. The bargained agreement that was approved by SDEA members in June 2012 captures 57% of Base Revenue Limit (BRL) increases the District receives for each student (i.e. ADA). *For example*, a \$337 BRL increase per student, using 109,000 ADA, would generate approximately \$20 million

dollars to restore furlough days and deferred pay raises.

While the District may still "project" a deficit for the 2013-2014 school year, this new revenue and future increases generated by Prop. 30 in future years should create financial stability for the District, and more importantly for SDEA members. The District should realize issuing layoff notices would mean losing public trust and voter support for any future tax increase for education.



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Letters in Solidarity

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Props. 30, Z mean layoffs NOT necessary

SDEA Members,

During December and January, SDEA conducted accountability sessions with some of the SDUSD School Board members. To date, sessions have been held with Trustees John Lee Evans and Marne Foster (both of whom SDEA endorsed during this past election cycle), as well Scott Barnett (see page 3 for more details). One objective of the sessions was to obtain a commitment from Board members to not issue layoff notices this year. Thus far, only School Board member Marne Foster has committed to vote against layoffs this year.

The SDEA leadership strongly reaffirms our position that, with the passage of Propositions 30 and Z, layoffs are not necessary. For the first time in four years, the District will be able to project and receive increases in educational funding for future years. The results of November's election are clear as to where voters stand on layoffs. The message is evident that the community would rather bear the burden of temporary tax increases than see public education funding slashed once again. All of us—SDEA members, parents, and community members and leaders—must continue to pressure the School Board to not betray the public's trust by voting for layoffs in 2013. Voters clearly decided to invest in education to ensure their child's teacher will be

around for a long time to provide quality instruction year after year.

It is now up to Governor Brown and our School Board members to act in the interest of the voters who elected them. Governor Brown must hold true to his word that the financial bleeding will finally stop now that Proposition 30 has passed. Education has shouldered more than its fair share of cuts in the past and we expect, as promised, that education will receive a larger allocation from the new tax revenues. Now is the time for the School Board to demonstrate to the voters their educational priorities. We would like to think that our students, classrooms and educators are their priorities. The School Board must live up to their stated words of support and take positive actions to avoid layoffs and begin the process of compensation restoration. District leaders need to begin to build trust, acknowledge the tough decisions made by educators and the community over the past year and ensure this March 15 is like any other day this spring.

Lastly, the leadership of SDEA wishes all a happy and prosperous 2013.

Bill Freeman SDEA President

Lindsay Burningham SDEA Vice President

ECE teachers organize to save their program



Frustrated with the downward spiral of the Early Childhood Education (ECE) Program due to mismanagement from the top, a delegation of ECE teachers delivered to the School Board a petition signed by more than 500 staff members and parents (top left). The petition calls out problems with mismanagement of \$3 million in funding, wasteful spending, and low staff morale due to sudden and unexplained changes, lack of respect, and violations of the union contract. ECE teachers called on the School Board and the Superintendent to recall the 40 ECE teachers and support staff who are still laid off, and to take whatever action necessary to make sure the program has the kind of leader it deserves. Top right: ECE teachers Colleen Andrews, Ta Davies and Blanca Trevino.

# On the record: Trustees Barnett, Evans and Foster

## Foster: No Layoffs, No Way!

On Dec. 18, more than 20 teachers from throughout the area represented by newly-elected School Board member Marne Foster attended her first accountability session, which was held at Millennial Tech Middle School.

“It’s important that the School Board hear directly from members,” said Millennial Tech AR Patrick Schoettler. “In the end, Board member Foster was able to see and hear how important these issues are to educators and that we expect the Board to act responsibly by correcting them.”

Foster agreed that the District should not consider laying off educators on the heels of voters agreeing to sacrifice financial for stable staffing in the classroom. In addition, she said that District staff must honor the contract and respect the agreements they have made with educators. Foster also expressed her disappointment and anger that the previous Board voted to increase the salary of attorneys within the District’s legal department on Election Day, while educators were working to pass Propositions 30 and Z. She vowed to work with educators to correct these issues going

forward.

## Evans Disappoints on Layoffs

On Dec. 18 roughly a dozen SDEA members met with School Board President John Lee Evans and Superintendent Bill Kowba for an accountability session at University City High School. Despite having just run for reelection on a campaign of saving educators’ jobs, Evans would not make any hard commitments at the meeting. He did say that the cycle of layoffs must end and that the issues we are facing with the District’s Labor Relations Department must be addressed. Now it’s time for him to show real leadership.

## Barnett Targets Our Healthcare

While Scott Barnett is a frequent public critic of SDEA, he is also the only Board member who voted against layoffs in 2010 and 2011, and so 15 SDEA members came to his Jan. 10 accountability session expecting him to do the same this year.

Unfortunately, Barnett would not commit to vote against layoffs this spring. Instead, he suggested that the cost of our fully paid family healthcare was the problem, even when it was pointed out that SDEA members’ salaries remain far

below the County median. He also would not commit to direct District staff to cease their unfair labor practices against SDEA, stating only that he would direct staff to supply budgeting information about the impacts of several of the issues. In one piece of good news, Barnett did state that the District will make good on the salary restoration language in our new contract.

“I think the meeting was successful in that SDEA members were able to get our concerns across, but unfortunately we didn’t get a lot of clear answers from Scott Barnett, and he didn’t always answer fully,” said Claudia Weimer, SDEA Board member and Bayview Terrace AR. “He seemed more interested in exploring ways to cheapen healthcare costs than solve the problems we were raising.”

SDEA members underscored with Barnett the need for the District to begin acting in good faith toward our union, and pressed him on the need to prioritize actual people over budgetary projections. It was clear that Barnett needs to hear more educator and parent voices to ensure that he makes good decisions for our students and our classrooms this spring and beyond.



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