

# THE ADVOCATE

## Board approves 800 layoffs as protest numbers swell

The outcome of the May 10 SDUSD Board of Education meeting was both a testament to the power of SDEA members' organizing, and a demonstration of the need for more of us to get out of our classrooms and engage in collective action. Despite the voices of roughly 500 people rallying in protest of layoffs outside the Board meeting, the Board approved 800 layoffs.

This vote represents an utter failure of leadership, vision and courage—particularly on the part of Board President Richard Barrera and Trustees Scott Barnett and John Lee Evans, who voted against a motion made by Trustee Shelia Jackson and seconded by Trustee Kevin Beiser to rescind the Board's certificated and classified notices.

But the votes were present to rescind nearly 300 permanent layoff notices, showing the Board is feeling the pressure. A motion by Barrera to rescind based on attrition failed because Beiser and Jackson felt that it did not go far enough. We agree—but the inability of the Board to rescind at least those notices which they have acknowledged are not fiscally necessary is yet another example of their inability to get things done, particularly under Barrera's haphazard leadership.

The Board added insult to injury on May 11 by sending a bargaining proposal to the layoff impacts and effects bargaining

session that demonstrated a core disregard for our classrooms, our members, and our members' families—including a whole-cloth reversal of the information they distributed at their own informational meetings promising to continue laid off members' benefits through September 30. This is unacceptable!

The road ahead of us is not an easy one. SDEA leadership has described the fight against layoffs as a marathon, not a sprint. Our efforts in organizing at our worksites and reaching out to parents and the community through ongoing school rallies are paying off. Roughly 7,500 parents, educators, students and community members have attended 41 rallies and counting. In response to our pressure, nearly 700 layoff notices have been rescinded to date. But our work is not finished.

The Board absolutely has the power to undo what they have done and recall all 800 educators they have laid off, as well as to negotiate an impacts and effects settlement that adequately addresses the needs of laid off members and our students for stability. But they won't unless we and the broader San Diego community force them to. SDEA members will continue rallying with parents outside of our schools through the end of the year, or until all



Members at the "66 Million Reasons to Rescind Rally" were given play money and asked to vote with their dollars between two options—use the money to restore layoffs, or stuff the money into the couch cushions to store for a rainy day. Rallygoers voted unanimously to use the extra funds to restore layoffs. SDUSD Chief Financial Officer Ron Little looked on in puppet form as members made the choice he refuses to make—prioritize schools, not spreadsheets.

of these layoffs are recalled. We must continue to call and email Board members and demand that they do the right thing. And we must continue to reach out to our friends, neighbors, co-workers, students and families, and union brothers and sisters to ask them to support us in our struggle.

Every single one of us reading these words must see them as an individual call to collective action. If we don't,

then we have already lost. No one else is going to fight this battle for us. But we know if we all fight together, we can win! If SDEA members want to protect our classrooms, our students, our jobs and public education as we know it, we must stand up and demand that the Board act to undo that damage they have done. For information about upcoming events and to contact the Board, visit [www.saveschools.com](http://www.saveschools.com).



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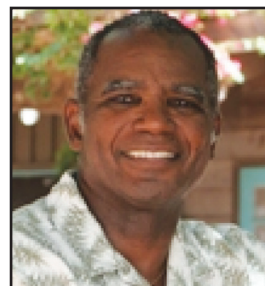
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## Letters in Solidarity

Bill Freeman  
SDEA President



Camille Zombro  
SDEA Vice President

## Site organizing: The source of our power

SDEA Members—

Site organizing has never been more important than it is today. Our schools and programs across the city have demonstrated time and again what it means to build collective power through organizing by simply making a commitment to each other to meet, talk, plan and act in solidarity. Organizing isn't just a union issue, it is imperative that all of us who chose a career in service to children understand how important our efforts are to our entire community. Through organizing, we can address the issues that matter most to all of us.

Over the past couple of months sites have rallied thousands of parents, community members and students as a direct result of constant member organizing. The numerous challenges before us demand that we step to the plate to save our schools. The threats we face include continuing attacks by wealthy elitists who want to circumvent democracy and take over our schools (*see story below*), elected officials trying to eliminate our pension plans, a growing movement to evaluate educators based on a so-called "value added" evaluation system that would judge us by standardized test scores, constant attacks on our due process rights, and a persistent nationwide wave of legislative attacks intended to eliminate our collective bargaining rights. To add to this long list, our own District has approved 800 unnecessary final layoff notices to our sisters and brothers across SDUSD.

We can't over-emphasize the importance of site organizing, because while it is impossible for our

## SD4GS attack on democratic elections continues

The self-titled "San Diegans 4 Great Schools" group, a well-funded mix of business elites and Alan Bersin-connected school "reformers," have escalated their attack on democracy in our local schools. The group, partly financed by Qualcomm founder Erwin Jacobs and Chicago billionaire Rod Dammeyer, delivered 133,000 signatures to the San Diego City Clerk's office and could have their anti-democratic initiative placed on the ballot as early as November of this year. The initiative would add four appointed members to our local School Board. The initiative has even been challenged as undemocratic by union basher and former *Union-Tribune* editor Bob Kittle.

members alone to acquire the necessary funding or stop the legislation in order to combat these challenges, we are more than 8,000 members strong! We communicate with parents on a daily basis, and our organized sites mean that we have a unified voice to speak loudly across the city and the state together. When we organize, we can provide the community with the real facts about education and we can push back on the hostile attacks on our schools and our profession.

Our community understands the problems educators are enduring today. Many of our problems are their problems as well. Many of them have lost their jobs, taken pay cuts, and have lost their benefits and due process rights. They also understand that our work is what will give their children and our next generation of leaders the ability to move ahead. Let's be very clear about the issue here: we are not just dealing with attack on education, we are dealing with an attack on middle class America.

So while we realize how hard educators work, it is only through our shared commitment to a little more work—site organizing—that we will win this fight. Find out what you can do to help your AR and other members at your site and remember, TOGETHER WE ARE STRONGER!

In Solidarity,

*Bill Freeman*  
Bill Freeman  
SDEA President

*Camille Zombro*  
Camille Zombro  
SDEA Vice President

# WEEK OF ACTION

## SDEA members turn out for CTA 'State of Emergency'

On Wednesday, May 11 roughly 200 members attended SDEA's Day of the Teacher Action Celebration and participated in an amazing 500 separate actions in the space of two hours pressuring state and local politicians to support our schools. In addition to celebrating Day of the Teacher with good food and good conversation with fellow union brothers and sisters, SDEA members spent the afternoon sending emails and making phone calls urging state legislators to keep cuts away from education, as well as sending postcards and video diaries to SDUSD School Board members urging them to reverse their 800 educator layoffs (see photos below and at right). These 500 phone calls, emails, postcards and video messages are an important part of holding our elected officials accountable for the decisions they make about our schools, our students and our jobs.

SDEA's Day of the Teacher Action Celebration was one of three major events that SDEA members participated in as a part of CTA's statewide "State of Emergency" during the week of May 9. Nearly 1,000 SDEA members participated in actions last week, including our May 10 "66 Million Reasons to Rescind Rally" (see page one) and a County-wide rally to protest budget cuts held on Friday, May 13 at the Embarcadero, as well as ongoing rolling rallies at school sites to protest the SDUSD's 800 layoffs.

SDEA member action also took the form of teams of union members meeting with SDUSD Trustees in advance of the May 10 Board meeting, urging them to vote against layoffs. Members met with Trustees Richard Barrera, Shelia Jackson and Scott Barnett and Superintendent Bill Kowba, while Trustee Kevin Beiser attended an accountability session with members from his Board area, hosted at Hoover High School. Only Trustee John Lee Evans would not meet with members, at first insisting that he would only attend a meeting if the purpose was to jointly lobby the state, and then offering a last-minute evening meeting in La Jolla that members could not attend. Members who participated include Juliet de la Paz, Chris Boyd, Jason Folkman, Brooke Burton, Dennis Schamp, Michelle Sanchez, Chris McKerlie, Emilio Torres-Lumsden, Betty Valenzuela, Pam Holzman, Ellen Brakespear-Rodge, Emily Merchant, Lisa Ellis and Dave Erving.



Top, from left: Lili Reeves (Kearny AR), Monica Hernandez-Dancher (Curie AR), Eleanor Evans (Millennial Tech AR/SDEA Board Member) and Randy Wheeler (Point Loma AR) email assembly members about upcoming legislation. Bottom: Guillermo Gomez (Lincoln HS Center for Social Justice teacher) and his daughters make call to legislators urging them to fund schools.

### AR/CR Election Reminder

Have you elected your Site Rep(s) for next school year, 2011-12? AR/CR Election material is available on SDEA's website. Please make sure your site is represented during the 2011-12 school year. For SDEA Election material and updates please visit [www.sdea.net/about/sdea-elections/](http://www.sdea.net/about/sdea-elections/) or call SDEA at 619-283-4411.

# ROLLING RALLIES ROLL ON

## 7,500 RALLIERS, 41 RALLIES, ONE SOLUTION: ZERO LAYOFFS

Between March 18 and May 18, an astounding 7,500 parents, educators, students and community members have participated in 41 school and program rallies. SDEA members have launched an ongoing series of rolling rallies protesting the 1,349 educator layoff notices issued by the SDUSD School Board. And we are not done yet! The San Diego community is turning out in droves with one united message and one united voice: We will not allow the School Board to decimate our schools by laying off one out of six educators! Photos from the rallies held between April 14 and May 11 are featured here. Photos from all rallies are available online, with more to come in the June Advocate. For a schedule of upcoming events, visit [www.saveschools.com](http://www.saveschools.com). To watch a video highlighting the rallies, visit [www.youtube.com/user/SDEAUnion](http://www.youtube.com/user/SDEAUnion).



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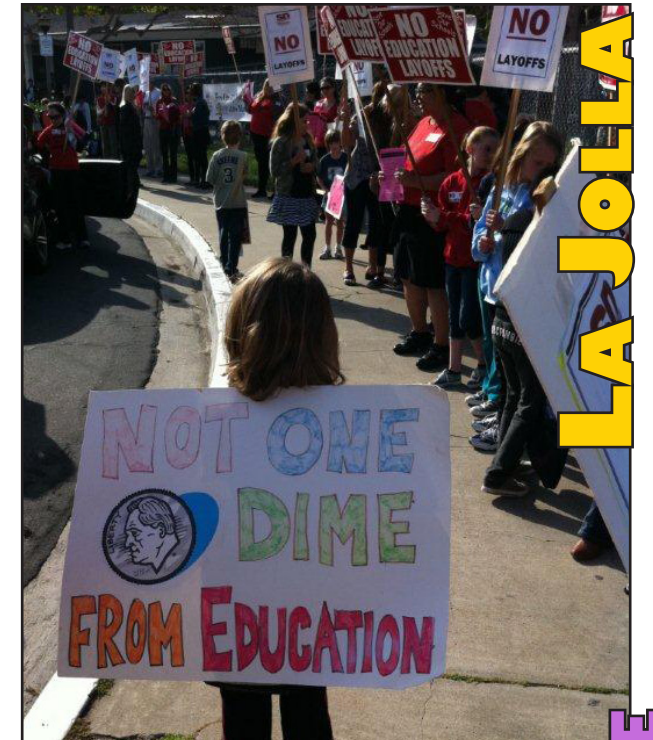
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## Fulton fights for voice in principal selection

SDEA members at Fulton K-8 may have set a new standard for democratic selection of principals with a recent organizing victory.

In February, Fulton staff elected certificated and classified coworkers to represent them on a principal hiring committee. (Parents were chosen for the committee through a less open and transparent process.) The committee met and interviewed ten candidates for the principal position, one of whom was the current interim principal of Fulton. After committee members scored candidates, the Area Superintendent said that one candidate scored significantly lower than the nine others, and that this "discrepancy" would invalidate the results of the committee. This explanation didn't make sense to the Fulton staff. They said that if one candidate was ranked significantly lower, it was an indication that the candidate performed poorly in the interview, not of a procedural problem or "discrepancy." Given the reaction of the Area Superintendent, it seems likely that the poorly performing candidate was the interim principal.

The Area Superintendent shortly thereafter disbanded the elected committee and created a new committee. The members of the second committee were not elected, but rather its members were *appointed by administration*. Staff sensed that top dogs in SDUSD wanted to see the interim principal continue at Fulton, and would do anything to make that happen. Fulton staff felt that even though the members appointed to the second committee are respected members of the school community, if the community is to have a real voice in choosing its principal, SDUSD must honor the decisions of the democratically elected representatives on the hiring committee.

Fulton staff swung into action to make that happen. They came together in a standing-room-only union meeting with both SDEA and CSEA members to decide a course of action to protect openness, transparency and democracy in the principal hiring process. A subcommittee of staff members wrote a letter demanding that the appointment of a new principal at Fulton be postponed until (1) the completion of an investigation into the disbandment of the elected committee and the creation of the appointed committee, and (2) a meeting took place with Board President Richard Barrera and Trustee Shelia Jackson and Fulton staff. Instead of simply mailing the letter, eight staff members read it during public comment at the March School Board meeting.

Following the School Board meeting, the Fulton staff hunkered down to prepare for the meeting with School Board trustees. They created a School Climate Survey that members used to assess their current principal's job performance. The survey results clearly showed that the interim principal was not a good pick for Fulton.

In preparation for a meeting with School Board members, staff came together again in a union meeting to choose delegates to represent them in the meeting with the trustees, plan the agenda, and to clarify the staff's demands. On April 14 a delegation



including eight SDEA members and two CSEA members met with Barrera and Jackson. The delegates emphasized that if the school community is to have a real voice in choosing its principal, SDUSD must honor the people the community chooses to represent them. With much passion and conviction they said that they want openness, transparency and democracy in the selection of a new principal. Barrera and Jackson said they'd look into it, but didn't offer a real solution.

Fulton staff waited two weeks for a resolution from the School Board, but it seemed none was forthcoming. In a union meeting, they planned to get the School Board's attention by launching a parent petition and holding a meeting with parents. Just as the petition got underway, they got word from Barrera and Superintendent Bill Kowba: Victory! Kowba promised to "start from scratch" and hold democratic elections for a new committee. Kowba appointed Deputy Superintendent Nellie Meyer and a retired administrator to oversee the hiring process to ensure that it will use "an inclusive and transparent methodology." The process was slated to begin by May 15 and be completed by June 15, according to the Superintendent.

Fulton staff take Kowba's and Barrera's promise as good news, but they are reluctant to count their chickens before they hatch. They say that they'll truly declare victory once the hiring process is complete. In the meantime, they are moving forward with their parent meeting later this month. Each staff member is recruiting at least five parents to come to the meeting. They say they will use the parent meeting to involve parents in the principal hiring process, and as a catalyst to get members more involved in other school issues, including building a PTA.

What started as an effort to create an open, transparent and democratic process in principal hiring at Fulton could serve as a precedent for an open, transparent and democratic principal hiring process across the entire District!

## Contract Fact: Your rights when exceeded

The technical term in the union contract (Article 12) for exceeding is "reduction of staff." It refers to a type of involuntary transfer from one work site to another to achieve a reduction of staff at the originating work site. Excessing can occur at the following times and under the following conditions:

- At the end of a school year based on student enrollment estimates for the next year;
- During the school year based on actual enrollments;
- During or at the beginning of a school year in response to decreases in categorical and/or site funding.

When the supervisor determines that the site must reduce staff, principals should first ask for volunteers to meet the desired reduction of staff. If there are no volunteers, the member with the least seniority at the grade level (K-3 or 4-6), or in the subject area or in the program that is to be reduced should be transferred. However, that member may be able to exercise seniority rights to stay at the site. To exercise seniority rights he or she has to:

- Have taught in SDUSD in a different subject or at a different level for at least two school years within the last nine years, or one school year within the last five, and


- Be more senior than another employee who works in the subject or at the grade level in which he or she wishes to exercise seniority rights.

A member who is excessed from his or her site (or is assigned to a school that is going to be closed) has priority consideration status in the Post and Bid process. A member with priority consideration is guaranteed an interview and must be hired for a position that he or she bids on as long as he or she is qualified for the position. This is complicated when multiple bidders with priority consideration bid on the same position. In such a case, SDUSD must interview all bidders with priority consideration *and* must hire one of the bidders with priority consideration. Priority consideration does not apply to staffing at API 1-3 schools or at magnet schools. A member's priority consideration expires on September 1, or upon placement in a position, whichever comes first.


The union contract states that when October enrollment justifies, a member may go back to her original site with the agreement of the "division head" (Area Superintendent). If you'd like to return to your original site, keep an eye on its status by staying in touch with union members and/or the principal.

### Annual Notice

A designated portion of SDEA dues is normally allocated to the SDEA Political Action Committee, a general purpose County PAC, through which SDEA/PAC principally supports or opposes local candidates or issues. If you wish this dues amount to remain in the SDEA general fund, contact Larry Moreno at 619-283-4411. In addition, a designated portion of CTA dues is normally allocated to the Association for Better Citizenship (ABC/CTA), a bipartisan political fund through which CTA provides financial support for education issues and CTA-endorsed candidates for local and state offices. Members who choose not to allocate a portion of their dues to the CTA/ABC, but instead want it to remain in the general fund, should complete a CTA-General Fund Allocation Form. Contact Larry Moreno at 619-283-441 to obtain a copy of the form.



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