

# THE ADVOCATE

## SDEA wins secondary class size grievance!

SDEA and SDUSD have reached a grievance settlement that clearly reaffirms a secondary teacher's right to a class size cap of 36 students (with the exceptions of music, P.E. and business education). SDEA members and ARs met to review the terms of the agreement which is now final and official. Represented at the meeting were Hoover, University City, Scripps Ranch, Mission Bay, Henry, Morse, La Jolla and Point Loma High Schools.

This past fall, our union contract required that teachers' new secondary class size protections, which limit classes to 36 students, go into effect. The contract's "hard cap" of 36 students is an improvement upon the previous standard, which was an average of 36 students across

all teaching periods. As members know very well, this allowed some classes to be as large as 45 students so long as a teacher's total enrollment still averaged 36 across all periods. Members were all looking forward to class sizes stabilizing, but SDUSD would not honor the "hard cap."

But SDEA members didn't take no for an answer. "We care deeply about the quality of our students' education," said La Jolla HS math teacher and Association Representative Pat Thomas. "The evidence is clear that, the larger the class size, the more our students' learning is compromised. Our grievance and our organizing reminded the Board of this fact. Resolving this secondary class size grievance shows that, when we stand



**Scripps Ranch HS AR Julia Knoff and SRHS members after their secondary class size grievance meeting.**

together, we can move the Board to listen to our collective voice, but it doesn't work without us."

Members sprang into action, holding group grievance meetings with principals and speaking out at SDEA accountability sessions with School Board members. SDEA leaders also filed an Unfair Labor Practice charge (ULP) with a

state agency to put additional legal pressure on the District. SDEA members' collective strength and persistence paid off!

SDEA leaders reached an agreement with SDUSD on a settlement to the secondary class size grievance that accomplishes the following:

- Reaffirms our right to a class
- See CLASS SIZE, page 2*

## SDEA members build bridges to charter teachers

SDEA members, together with union charter teachers from San Diego and Los Angeles, joined together this past month for an energetic weekend of outreach and conversation with unorganized charter teachers in the San Diego area.

"I'm glad I participated," said Claudia Weimer, SDEA Board member and Bayview Terrace Association Representative (AR). "I learned a lot about how important our

own contract protections are and also how our future as teachers, both district and charter, are tied together."

Participants spoke with many charter teachers from a variety of different charter schools, the majority of whom would like to continue conversations about working together with district teachers on issues affecting students, education, and the teaching profession.

Charter school growth is on

the rise in San Diego, as well as in the rest of the state and country. According to the Charter School Capital Blog, a charter industry funding source, charter school enrollment increased nationally by 275,000 students this year compared to last—the largest increase in the past 20 years. And in San Diego, they report that 9.9% of all public school students are enrolled in charter schools, compared to a 4.2% national average.

Teachers at the vast majority of charter schools are all employees-at-will, meaning they can be fired at any time, for any reason. Their salaries and benefits are usually substantially less than SDEA members, and due process rights are non-existent. That is, unless teachers decide to form a union and join the majority of San Diego teachers in SDEA. Only then can charter teachers bargain with their employer to

*See CHARTER, page 2*



10393 San Diego Mission Rd. Ste.  
100, San Diego, 92108

Phone (619) 283-4411 Fax (619) 282-7659

Web www.sdea.net Email advocate@sdea.net

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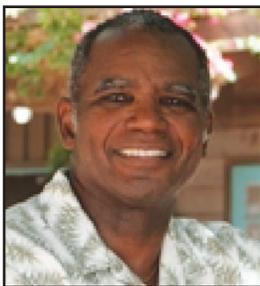
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# Letters in Solidarity

Bill Freeman  
SDEA President



Lindsay Burningham  
SDEA Vice President

## Real reform comes from the ground up

SDEA Members,

The concept of education “reform” is a huge issue today, as throughout the country many schools have been closed or converted to charters in the name of these phony reform measures.

Education historian Diane Ravitch recently addressed many educators in San Diego on this specific issue, where we have at least one organization seeking to convert schools within our District to charters. We have been fortunate that our Superintendent has been willing to work with educators and agree that these phony reform agendas spreading around the country are often nothing more than a sham. Our members have done well in improving the quality of the education our students receive by instituting real change that has focused on student needs.

We can cite many examples of San Diego Unified schools which are improving every day. However, these schools were reformed to specifically meet the needs of those specific students and families rather than a one-size-fits-all approach aimed at stripping away the rights of education professionals.

Our educators have done a fantastic job while facing unprecedented economic conditions within

our district. This is certainly not to say that there isn’t room for improvement at all of our schools. However, we must do this the right way. Unfortunately, laws like No Child Left Behind have led to widespread vilification of public school educators for problems caused by external social conditions outside our control in the classroom. This is being used all over the country as a pretext for reforming or closing schools in mostly urban school districts with large numbers of low-income families. More often than not, the parents and community members have little or no say in the changes being made.

If our schools are to be reformed, let’s do it the right way. We must ensure that educators and parents guide the reform efforts at a local level. We must prevent outsiders from coming into our communities convincing parents that their child’s school is failing and they must be converted to charter schools. Now is the time for us to work together and start planning our true reform efforts which will lead to better results for all our students.

*Bill Freeman*  
Bill Freeman  
SDEA President

*Lindsay Burningham*  
Lindsay Burningham  
SDEA Vice President

### Class size

*Cont. from p. 1*

- size “hard cap” of 36,
- Acknowledges that teachers’ “hard cap” class size right was violated and that future violations can be grieved and arbitrated, and
- As a remedy, pays a stipend to teachers with class sizes in excess of 36 ranging between \$400 and \$2,000 depending on the number of overages.

The complete settlement is available at <http://www.sdea.net/wp-content/uploads/class-size-settlement.pdf>. The District must provide SDEA with a list of impacted members by April 15. Once SDEA receives the list, we will post it on the website. Members who are not on the list, but believe they should be, have until June 15 to provide documentation of eligibility. Members with questions should contact their site Association Representative.

### Charter

*Cont. from p. 1*

win the same protections and standards as union teachers. Already teachers at charter schools like Tubman and Iftin charter schools have made that choice, choosing to collectively bargain for fair wages, benefits and working conditions.

“Due to recent nation-wide attacks on public sector unions, we as public employees have to be vigilant in protecting our unions,” said Peter Burrell, Serra High School AR. “If we aren’t, there are people who are going to try to take them from us.”

As SDEA members prepare for bargaining next year, the more united we are as teachers—charter and district—the stronger we will be to win the best contract for ourselves and our students. YOU can help make that happen. Contact Pat Alvarez at the SDEA office to learn how you can help organize charter teachers!

# Announcements

## Day of the Educator

Bring your colleagues and come celebrate with SDEA for the Day of the Educator Celebration! Join us on Wednesday, May 8 from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the SDEA office lawn area (10393 San Diego Mission Road #100, San Diego, CA 92108). There will be food, drinks (non-alcoholic), live music, and a raffle. We'll see you there!

## SDEA Budget Input Meeting

SDEA invites you to come and be a part of the collaboration to develop the 2013-2014 SDEA Internal Budget. The final of three input meetings will be held at the SDEA office on Wednesday, April 24 and will start at 4 p.m.

## SDEA Scholarships

The application deadline for SDEA member and dependent scholarships is Friday, May 3 at 5 p.m. The Dependent Application is for graduating seniors and current college-enrolled students who are dependents of a current CTA/NEA/SDEA member. The Member Application is for current CTA/NEA/SDEA members who wish to further their education. The applications are available in the SDEA office, or online at <http://www.sdea.net/membership/scholarships>.

# Contract Corner

**Strengthening  
our union by  
protecting our contract**

## Your excessing rights

The technical term in the union contract (Article 12) for excessing 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, he or she 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 (K-3 or 4-6) 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.

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Contact Jason Kelley at **800-718-4235** or [jkelley@graduateprogram.org](mailto:jkelley@graduateprogram.org)

Or Find Us Online: [http://is.gd/sdea\\_fa13](http://is.gd/sdea_fa13)



Concordia University Irvine is Accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. Programs arranged & made possible by the K-12 Teachers Alliance in cooperation with Concordia.



\*If using financial aid. The loan calculator used in this example is available at [www.finaid.org](http://www.finaid.org)



## Apply by 5/31/2013 to Get CTA-Endorsed Disability and Life Insurance

From April 1 through May 31, San Diego Education Association members have an exclusive opportunity to enroll in the CTA-endorsed Disability and Life Insurance plans provided by Standard Insurance Company (The Standard). Here's how you can learn more about the plans and apply for this important coverage:

- Attend an enrollment meeting (ask your site rep for details)
- Visit [www.standard.com/cta/sdea](http://www.standard.com/cta/sdea)

Call The Standard at 800.522.0406 (M-F, 7am-6pm) with questions.

Don't miss this special offer for SDEA members!



For costs and further details of the CTA-endorsed coverage offered by The Standard, including the exclusions, any reductions, benefit waiting periods or limitations and terms under which the policy may be continued in force, please contact The Standard's dedicated CTA Customer Service Department at 800.522.0406 (TTY). Standard Insurance Company, 1100 SW Sixth Avenue, Portland, OR 97204 SI 16480-CTAvol GP190-LTD/S399/CTA.1 GP190-LIFE/S399/CTA.3

# veba

VEBA is Making Health Care Better for Everyone

## Focus on Health: Take a Hike . . . or at Least a Walk

In our time-challenged schedules, we tend to neglect walking. That's why April is named "Get Moving" month. The emphasis is on building a walking routine that you can commit to and make a priority every day. Do it alone for calm in the morning, at lunch with a coworker, after work with a friend or after dinner with your family. It only takes 30 minutes and you'll feel the benefits immediately!



### Walking 30 minutes a day, for at least five days a week will:

1. **Reduce the likelihood of heart attack and stroke.** Walking helps lower blood pressure, and raise levels of healthy HDL cholesterol.
2. **Lower your chance for diabetes.** Walking makes your muscles more sensitive to insulin which allows glucose to work inside your cells instead of pile up in your blood stream (that's what happens when you have diabetes).
3. **Slim you down.** Walking helps you burn more calories than you eat. Before you know it, you'll be wearing one-size-smaller clothing.
4. **Reduce stress.** Walking improves your mood -- and may even reduce depression and anxiety.
5. **Boost your immune system.** Walking regularly can lower your risk of arthritis, macular degeneration, and even cancer by up to 50% compared to people who don't exercise.

"Focus on Health" is brought to you by VEBA. Celebrating 20 years of service to California school employees.

For more information about how to start a regular walking program contact:

**VEBA's Wellness Program**  
888-276-0250

**VEBA Health Coach**  
(619) 466-4386

