

# THE ADVOCATE

## No excuses for District in state budget

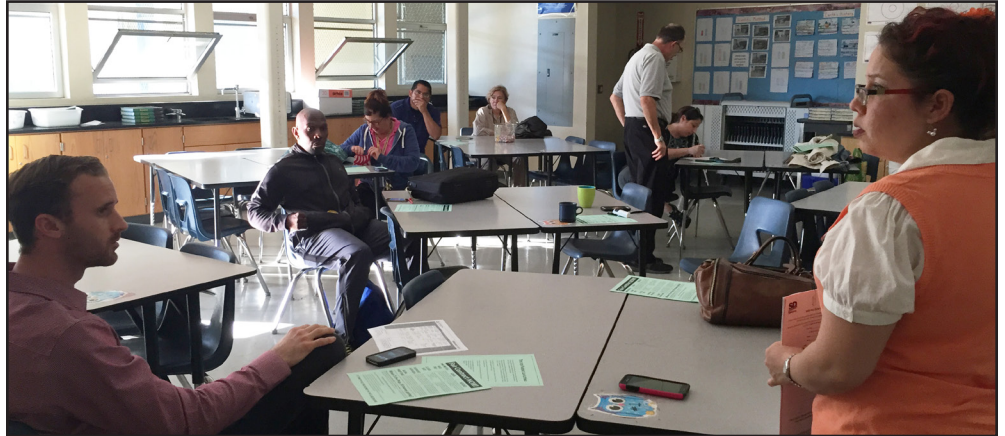
Since California's voters passed Prop. 30 in 2012, funding for education and classrooms has finally become a state budget priority. Continuing the efforts begun in 2013-14, Governor Brown's state budget proposal for 2015-16 provides greater increases to ongoing funding than anticipated back in September when SDUSD developed their budget.

SDUSD received an increase of \$75 million in ongoing funds in 2014-15. The District Finance Department in December 2014 projected an additional \$30 million for 2015-16. The fact is projections are merely a best guess estimate at the time—and in January 2015, only one month later, the new projected estimate for increased funding in 2015-16 is up to \$54 million. In terms of new dollars for every student, that is an increase of about \$514 per ADA over last year!

The Governor has also proposed a one-time \$183 per student increase (\$19 million for SDUSD) that may be used for any one-time purpose. For example, the monies could be used for the purchase of textbooks, thus freeing up general fund monies to be used for funding our *Fight for 5!* priorities.

There was even *more* good news days after the release of the Governor's budget. The independent state Legislative Analysis's Office (LAO) released a statement that billions of dollars will likely be included in the state budget impacting Prop 98, the education funding formula.

The LAO suggested there "is a strong possibility" that revenue for the second half of the current fiscal year will be "significantly above" projections used by the Brown administration to build its 2015-16 budget that was released last week.



**Memorial AR Kevin Haman (left), SDEA Vice President Michelle Sanchez (right), and a team of teachers planned the logistics of Memorial's FFS! rally. When is your rally?**

Barring a substantial change in the trend of the stock market, the LAO said the revenues could jump up another \$1 billion to \$2 billion—or perhaps even higher if the economy continues to improve.

While almost every single school district across the state reacted positively to the funding increases, SDUSD continued with the message of gloom and doom. At the Jan. 20 School Board meeting, they still made excuses about addressing our *Fight for 5!* priorities. Resorting to scare tactics, the SDUSD Finance Department had PowerPoint slides warning *Balanced Budgets Have Been Quickly Followed by Huge Deficits, State Budget is Precariously Balanced, and State Year to Year Fluctuations, Risks and Cost Pressures*. It is important to ask if these same assumptions were thought about when granting many central office administration double-digit raises the past two years.

In negotiations, there is a distinction between a district's ability to pay and

willingness to pay. Based on the last SDUSD Board meeting, the Superintendent and School Board are posturing and confusing the public about the Governor's budget, and setting the stage for their *unwillingness* to show respect for our *Fight for 5!*

While other districts are coming forward with reasonable settlement offers for their educators, with the County average running at about a 3.5% raise for this year, what did our School Board send to the table? A 0% raise this year, two 1% raises next year, and another 0% the year after that!

If we are going to see the tens of millions of dollars pouring into our District spent on the classroom and not the central office, we need to put major pressure on the School Board now. This week, SDEA members are launching a wave of rolling school-based rallies to stand up for our *Fight for 5!* We're inviting parents and the community to stand with us. See your site Association Representative to get involved!



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# Letters in Solidarity

Lindsay Burningham  
SDEA President



Michelle Sanchez  
SDEA Vice President

## Bargaining: It's about POWER!

Bargaining is about power. That power does not come from how smart our team is and how good our arguments are. The strength of our *Fight for 5!* bargaining campaign will come from the power we generate as a union. As we build alliances with our parents and community, and as we continue to put pressure on the School Board and Superintendent, that is how we will build the power we need to settle the *Fight for 5!* contract our members and students deserve. To win a FAIR CONTRACT NOW it is important that we are in front of schools and at school events talking with and standing united with our communities. Our School Board members—all five endorsed by SDEA!—listen to the constituents that elect or un-elect them from office. It takes three School Board members to vote and approve a FAIR contract now!

So, you may ask, "How do we get this fair contract now?" Get involved! The first step is to make sure each one of our 7,000+ members is educated and knowledgeable about our *Fight for 5!* bargaining campaign, where we are in the bargaining

process, the progress that has been made thus far and where we need to go. SDEA's Board, bargaining team, organizing committee and staff have set a goal of visiting every site in our union during February and March to ensure all of our members have the information they need to have the conversations with parents and community members, and to launch a wave of District-wide actions to pressure the School Board to settle a fair contract. Already we have visited dozens of schools, and it has been a great experience listening to and talking with our members to ensure your voices are heard during the process. The second step is scheduling *Fight for 5!* rallies, petition signing events, and leafleting parents about our *Fight for 5!* We are looking forward to participating in the rolling rallies across the district and standing united with our members, parents and the community. Together, let's build the power we need to win!

*Lindsay Burningham*  
**Lindsay Burningham**  
SDEA President

*Michelle Sanchez*  
**Michelle Sanchez**  
SDEA Vice President

## Site Governance Team revival continues!

Throughout the District educators are enforcing our contractual right to shared decision-making at our schools.

Section 24.4 of the contract mandates that each school site have a Site Governance Team (SGT), which allows educators, parents, and other stakeholders to be a part of the decision-making process at their school. The contract gives SGTs the authority to make decisions or give input for a number of important topics, including the elimination of positions, changes to elementary prep time subject emphasis, student discipline plans, non-classroom supervision schedules, and other changes regarding the instructional program.

At Jones Elementary School, SDEA members saw the need to create their school's SGT as a way to foster a better working environment and to give educators more input on the operation of their school. With the leadership of Jones Association Representative Aaron Solomon and alternate-AR Melissa Sanders, members started the discussion of

creating their SGT at a union meeting just prior to the end of the school year in July. Once members returned to work at the end of August, a committee was created to start working on the creation of draft bylaws for their SGT, which were returned to the members in October for feedback.

With SDEA members on board with the draft bylaws, the group presented them to administration and began the ratification and representative election process in November. Jones Elementary held their first SGT meeting with educators, parents, classified staff and administration on Dec. 16.

Other schools have followed suit over the past several months, with new SGTs having been formed or in the process of starting at Millennial Tech Middle School, TRACE, Rodriguez, and several other schools. With the contract requiring that important decisions be made by an SGT rather than just the principal, SDEA members are making our voices heard and becoming a part of the decision-making process.

# Lessons from St. Paul: There's no place like home

by Nick Faber

Vice President, St. Paul Federation of Teachers

Until we came across the Parent/Teacher Home Visit Project, started in Sacramento, California, 15 years ago, we had never seen an idea that was such a win for everyone—students, families, district, teachers, and union. The idea is that teachers can teach students better when we know them better and have a functional partnership with their parents.

Started by parents, teachers, and community members, the project in Sacramento saw increases in

achievement and attendance and decreases in suspensions in buildings where a majority of teachers were doing home visits.

Despite the fact that this was a win for all, our district refused to consider the idea when members proposed it. Luckily, our union leadership saw the value and sponsored pilot training, and our bargaining team brought the idea—and funding for it—to the table. Participation by teachers and families is voluntary and teachers are compensated for visits outside their workday. The visits are meant to build a

relationship—no talking at the parent—and no paperwork is brought.

Today the project is fully run by the union and has grown considerably—from only six teachers doing about 15 visits three years ago, to more than 350 teachers trained today and more than 200 home visits conducted last year.

Teachers visit the homes of their students with another teacher from their building. The discussion is around hopes and dreams that both the parent and the teacher have for the child, expectations that parent and teacher have for each other,

what the student does outside of school, and the parent's own experience with school.

Sacramento's project is becoming a national nonprofit and SPFT is a regional training site for it. This summer our union was contacted by two other districts to train their teachers in our model and we have also put on a series of other trainings for teachers on building parent/teacher partnerships.

*Excerpted from Labor Notes October 2013 issue. See more at [www.labornotes.org/2013/10/bringing-community-bargaining-tables](http://www.labornotes.org/2013/10/bringing-community-bargaining-tables).*

## SDEA Elections

The Elections Committee has announced the Spring 2015 General Election. Nominees are currently being solicited for SDEA Board of Directors, SDEA delegates to CTA's State Council, and SDEA delegates to the NEA Representative Assembly. If you would like to run for any of these seats, please visit the elections tab on the SDEA website and download the Declaration of Candidacy and Candidate Statement forms: <http://www.sdea.net/about/sdea-elections>. Voting will take place March 24-April 6, and will be online with an in-person option, so make sure SDEA has your personal email address on file.

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