

# THE ADVOCATE

## SDEA bargaining campaign off to a strong start!

The first and most powerful step in a bargaining campaign is to engage members around important issues and identify priorities. SDEA members are taking on this work site by site and program by program, strengthening SDEA in our workplaces and union-wide. Between October and December, more than 100 bargaining input sessions have either been held or are scheduled to occur prior to the winter break.

With high levels of participation at these sessions, members are having substantive conversations and debate around issues that impact compensation, benefits and working conditions.

Fifth-grade teacher and Johnson Elementary Association Representative (AR) Casey Hickenbottom shared why he organized his colleagues to attend

the bargaining input session.

“As frontline educators we know better than anybody else how our jobs and schools need to be improved,” Hickenbottom said. “I went to a bargaining input session to make sure that the issues that are important to me and my coworkers are on the table.”

The SDEA Bargaining Commission, along with the Bargaining Team, will be compiling the input from all sessions to determine membership priorities and develop our initial proposals for bargaining in spring 2014.

SDEA ARs have a crucial role in the bargaining input sessions this year, in many cases co-facilitating these important meetings (*see page 3*). To learn when your site’s meeting will occur, contact your site AR.



**Clockwise from upper right: 1. Tierrasanta Elementary. 2. La Jolla Elementary. 3. San Diego H.S. 4. Early Childhood Educators. For more photos from bargaining input sessions, go to [www.sdea.net](http://www.sdea.net) and visit the SDEA Flickr photo page or the SDEA Facebook.**



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# Letters in Solidarity

Bill Freeman  
SDEA President



Lindsay Burningham  
SDEA Vice President

## District puts central office over students

There's a saying on Capitol Hill that goes, "Show me where you spend your money and I will show you your priorities."

Educators know that the District's priority should be students and the classroom, and have echoed this sentiment through dozens of bargaining input sessions conducted in the past few weeks.

Yet, many question the District's priorities when you look at recent budget decisions. In the past few months we have seen the human resources and legal departments reorganized, the CFO's contract bought out, the size of the Superintendent's cabinet increased and other costly central office increases.

We know that one of the quickest and easiest ways to boost student achievement is by restoring the final two days to the school year. Eliminating those two furlough days would cost the District less than a half of a percent of their \$1.1 billion budget, yet the priority has been to increase staff at Normal Street.

We also know that lowering class sizes tremendously benefits our students. The District should make our students a priority rather than

significantly increasing class sizes in primary grades. It doesn't make any sense to spend money at the District office when Kindergarten classes have as many as 35 students in them.

The implementation of Common Core Standards, and the significant amount of funding coming from the state, should be an opportunity to focus more on students. With bargaining over the impacts and effects of the implementation of Common Core Standards underway, our goal is to bring additional training and funding to the classroom.

We all share the responsibility of educating our students. As educators we must all advocate for students and let the School Board members, the Superintendent, and cabinet members know that our student must be a priority in our District. As administrators, those in charge of the budget should always be reminded that the classroom and students should come first.

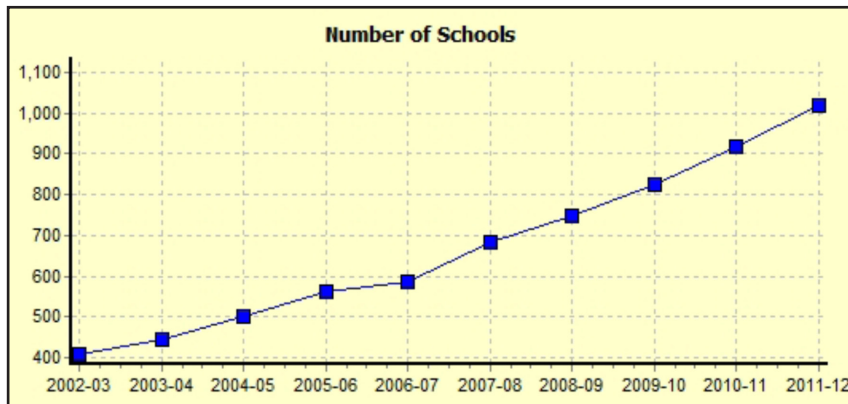
*Bill Freeman*  
Bill Freeman  
SDEA President

*Lindsay Burningham*  
Lindsay Burningham  
SDEA Vice President

## Number of California charter schools skyrockets

In the October Advocate, we looked at the growth of charter schools within the borders of SDUSD. There are currently forty-nine charter schools in San Diego, five more than last year. Only four of them are unionized. Similarly, the number of charter schools in California has more than doubled in under a decade.

Educators working in non-union charter schools are permanent at-will employees with no due process rights, and usually



Source: Ed-DataPartnership: CDE, EdSource and FCMAT.

have no salary scale or dependent health care benefits. Raising their standards by helping them unionize is the best way to protect the

contract standards for which we have fought so hard, our profession and our students. SDEA members are signing up to help with outreach

to non-union charter teachers.

If you can help, contact SDEA Charter Organizer Pat Alvarez at 619-283-4411.

## ARs kick off bargaining campaign at Fall Leadership

Roughly 100 member leaders attended the SDEA Fall Leadership conference on Saturday, Oct. 19 to kick off the bargaining campaign. Participants were trained on how to co-facilitate their site's bargaining input session, as well as how to address potentially divisive bargaining issues with fellow union members, parents and community members.

Attendees spent the first part of the day engaged in a bargaining input session. Members of the SDEA Bargaining Commission helped lead the training, both co-facilitating the input sessions and serving as "plants" to raise potentially divisive topics so members had a chance to practice how to address those

topics in a way that would value all members' input while emphasizing the importance of staying united during a bargaining campaign.

In the afternoon, participants broke into small groups to practice talking through hot issues that might come up in the spring, including merit pay, tying teacher evaluations to student test scores, and eliminating fully-paid family healthcare.

CTA Vice President Eric Heins addressed participants at lunch, underscoring the importance of educator unions in defending public education. Members left Fall Leadership ready to do some heavy lifting in support of our bargaining campaign this spring!



Bargaining Commission member and Zamorano AR Kisha Borden co-facilitates a bargaining input session.



From left: Nurse AR Juliet dela Paz, Nurse CR Pat Robbins, Riley AR Sarah Rodondi and PBMS AR Ashley Duren.



From left: SDHS-MVPA AR Gabriel Senteno, Tierrasanta site organizers Sonia Kiman and Melissa Hughes, Twain/Garfield site organizer Shane Parmely and SDEA Secretary Michelle Sanchez.



Members of SDEA's new charter project Member Organizing Team participated in a special training track at Fall Leadership to prepare them for outreach to charter school educators. From left: Iftin Charter School teacher Maya McClure, SDEA President Bill Freeman, Iftin Charter School teacher Michelle Jackson and CTA Vice President Eric Heins.



SDEA October 2013 Annual Fall Leadership Conference: ARs, CRs and site organizers know that together we are stronger!



## Start protecting what's important through this special opportunity.

CTA members newly hired by their districts have an exclusive opportunity to protect their incomes and loved ones. If you apply for coverage within 120 days of starting work, you have a special opportunity to get CTA-endorsed Disability and Life Insurance from The Standard.

This is a great time to get Disability Insurance. You can also get up to \$200,000 of Life Insurance without proof of good health. Plus, there are family Life Insurance coverage options with your Life Insurance. This offer is only available for a limited time. Protect what's important to you by enrolling today.

For more information, call **800.522.0406**. To apply online, visit **standard.com/cta/newhire**.



For costs and further details of the coverage and this enrollment opportunity, including exclusions, benefit waiting periods, any reductions or limitations and the terms under which the policy may be continued in force, please contact Standard Insurance Company at 800.522.0406 (TTY). Standard Insurance Company, 1100 SW Sixth Avenue, Portland, OR 97204  
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Making Health Care Better for Everyone



### Focus on Health: Quit Smoking in November

Tobacco use is still the single largest preventable cause of disease and premature death in the US. Nearly 1 in every 5 adults still smokes cigarettes. That's why November is *Smoking Cessation and Lung Cancer Awareness month*. The American Cancer Society marks the Great American Smokeout on **November 21, 2013** by encouraging smokers to make a plan to quit, or plan ahead and quit smoking that day.

#### Use your VEBA benefits to help you quit smoking:

- **The Employee Assistance Program (EAP)** offers information, support, and resources to help you quit smoking. You can develop a plan to quit that meets your lifestyle needs.  
**Visit:** [www.liveandworkwell.com](http://www.liveandworkwell.com) • **Type:** access code: veba • **Click:** "Tobacco" under Addictions
- **Cafewell®** offers great tips on how to quit smoking, as well as discussion groups dedicated to smoking cessation topics. Visit [www.cafewell.com/code/veba](http://www.cafewell.com/code/veba) to log in.
- Talk to your doctor about quitting smoking to find out which medications, if any, may be right for you. Visit your health plan's website for Quit Smoking resources.  
Kaiser Members: [www.kp.org](http://www.kp.org)  
UHC HMO Members: [www.uhcwest.com](http://www.uhcwest.com)  
UHC PPO Members: [www.myuhc.com](http://www.myuhc.com)

#### Other Quit Smoking Resources

EAP:	888-625-4809
Kaiser:	800-464-4000
UHC HMO:	800-624-8822
UHC PPO:	800-377-5154
American Cancer Society:	800-227-2345

[www.vebaonline.com](http://www.vebaonline.com)