



February 4, 2010

Dear SDUSD Trustees:

The attached proposal represents the voices of the dedicated women and men who are responsible for the education of San Diego's children: the bargaining unit members of the San Diego Education Association. As you read this proposal, it will be clear that SDEA members unquestionably understand the current fiscal circumstances facing the San Diego Unified School District, and have once again stepped to the plate to ensure that public education in San Diego remains secure. But make no mistake: we firmly believe that the District, through its lack of leadership and poor management, has exacerbated its fiscal problems and has failed to live up to its responsibility as the steward of the educational and economic health of our schools.

During positive economic times, the SDUSD Board of Education time and again refused to acknowledge the value of its front-line educators, and rejected every effort by our union to raise salaries to even the County median. As our own families' purchasing power remained well below that of most other San Diego County educators, we watched in disbelief as the District ignored (or denied, when we called it to your attention) the growth of a top-heavy, expensive, and excessive central administration. You added insult to injury by going on spending sprees for outside consultants, and squandered repeated opportunities to use the fair process of natural employee attrition (including two early retirement programs) to correct organizational excesses and structural budgetary problems.

With the downturn of the state and national economies, and as confirmed by your most recent contract proposal on January 19, 2010, you have once again chosen to balance the bulk of your troubled budget and irresponsibly-ignored structural deficit on the backs of the educators who teach our children every day. We are the same educators who collectively spend millions of dollars out of our own pockets each year to ensure that the children we teach have the necessary supplies and resources to learn. And, yes, we are the same educators whose backs' have long borne the weight of expensive, excessive, and ill-advised educational experiments, most of which have been simply dropped after a few years in exchange for yet another time-consuming and costly venture.

In response to your January 19<sup>th</sup> proposal, SDEA members came together as a union in meetings around the city to discuss the problems facing the District. The results of those meetings were resounding: We will continue to do more than our share for our children

and our community, as evidenced by the content of this proposal, but we will not allow the District to continue to abdicate its responsibility to guarantee that teaching and learning remain the priority of our school district.

To that end, SDEA seeks an overall settlement of the current round of negotiations through June 30, 2013, with a two-year contract covering July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2010, and a three-year contract covering July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2013. The District indicated in its January 19<sup>th</sup> proposal to SDEA that it is committed to “restoring and enhancing unit member compensation above and beyond current levels.” Unlike the District’s proposal, SDEA’s counter proposal provides contractual guarantees that the restoration of any reductions to our compensation will take place, that promised increases beyond the initial reductions will occur, and that any unnecessary reductions will be reversed if new and/or additional revenue or moneys are received by the District.

SDEA members now call on you, our elected Trustees, to honor our families’ sacrifices and the money SDEA members are giving to you by ensuring that it is spent where it is needed the most: in our classrooms. It is the District’s turn to step to the plate, as we have so often done throughout our careers. We stand with parents and our community in urging you to embrace fiscal responsibility, and to accept our fair and reasonable proposal so that we can all get back to the critical work of teaching and learning.

Sincerely,