



# Sweetwater Union High School District's Update on Negotiations

Volume I, Issue 2  
Negotiations with SCGA

August 19, 2015

To promote transparency, community awareness, accountability and open communication, the Governing Board of the Sweetwater Union High School District (SUHSD) has directed that its team provide regular and factual updates following negotiation sessions with the Sweetwater Counseling and Guidance Association (SCGA). This is the District's third update on its negotiations with SCGA.

## **August 19, 2015 Session**

The District team invited Ana Maria Alvarez, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning, and Dr. Joe Fulcher, Assistant Superintendent of Equity, Culture, and Support Services, to join the discussion regarding counselor caseloads.

SCGA presented Alex Santana as a new member to the SCGA team.

The teams spent the entire session on caseload. After considerable discussion, the District presented a proposal and SCGA then presented a counterproposal.

## **District's Caseload Proposal**

The District proposed to reduce the 7-12 counselor staffing ratio for 2015-16 (from 400:1 to 360:1) and 2016-17 (caseloads ranging from 360 to 400:1). The District also proposed to establish a "working group" during the 2015-2016 school year to study and make recommendations on the effectiveness and benefits to students resulting from reducing caseloads to 360:1. Recommendations from the "working group" would be considered by both teams during 2017-2018 reopeners. The framework for this pilot program would be set forth in a written Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

The District team shared its preference for an incremental approach to this issue to allow for consideration of data, benefit to students and other options. For this reason, the District has proposed a two year pilot program rather than permanently changing the contract.

## **SCGA's Response**

SCGA counter proposed that the caseload be permanently reduced to 360:1. SCGA agreed with the "working group" concept proposed by the District, and reopening caseload (Article 13) during 2017-2018 negotiations.

SCGA has not yet responded to the District's wage and benefits proposals.

## **Next Session**

Negotiations will resume on September 9, 2015.