



# Sweetwater Union High School District's Update on Negotiations

Volume I, Issue 1  
Negotiations with SCGA

May 7, 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 first SUHSD Update on Negotiations.

## **First Meeting—May 7, 2015**

The District and SCGA teams met for about two hours on May 7 to begin "reopener negotiations" for 2015-2016. Unlike successor contract negotiations, these reopener negotiations are more limited and primarily focused upon wages and health and welfare benefits.

The first session began with team introductions. The District's team members are:

Sandra Huezo, Assistant Superintendent Human Resources  
Jonathan Pearl, Attorney  
Karen Michel, Chief Financial Officer  
Mary Wager, HR Operations Manager  
Pam Tipp, Labor Relations Specialist

SCGA team members are:

Caryn Hoffman, Bargaining Chair  
Lorraine Almendarez, Bargaining Representative  
Alfredo Cendejas, Bargaining Representative  
Verenice Hernandez, Bargaining Representative  
Rick Silva, Bargaining Representative  
Lian Shoemake, Executive Director

## **Information Requested and Initial Proposals Shared**

After introductions, SCGA requested additional financial information and asked follow-up questions about information previously provided to SCGA by the District. The teams devoted the remainder of

the session to preliminary discussions about wages, health and welfare benefits and caseload. Both teams asked and answered a number of questions, which helped both teams better understand key interests.

Both teams recognized that more information is needed regarding the State's 2015-2016 Budget. Next week the Governor will issue a revised State Budget ("the May Revise"), which will help to inform negotiations about compensation. The teams are also awaiting important information from VEBA regarding health benefit premiums for the coming year. This information is relevant to health and welfare benefits negotiations.

## **Next Session—May 12, 2015**

The teams will meet again on May 12, 2015. The teams will continue to explore caseload issues and provide current District budget information.

## **District to Regularly Communicate with Stakeholders about Negotiations**

The Board has asked its team to publish regular and factual updates about negotiations sessions. The District team explained that these updates are intended to promote transparency, community awareness and open communication. Updates will be published and posted on the District's website.