



## **Frequently Asked Questions Alliance Parents**

### **Who is UTLA?**

- UTLA is the union that represents the teachers who work in Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). Almost all aspects of a teacher's work at LAUSD are controlled by the union contract. Everything from the hours teachers work, to how teachers are required to communicate with their principal, to how many hours teachers are allowed to teach, are all part of the UTLA contract.
- For many years UTLA has been funding and supporting efforts to interfere with the freedom and flexibility that charter schools like Alliance have to tailor our programs to the needs of our students. The union regularly works to limit the public-school choices that families have and to oppose flexibility in areas such as staffing, compensation, and teaching time. UTLA has supported politicians and legislation that have tried to close Alliance schools and that would make it much more difficult for Alliance to operate high-performing schools that serve the specific needs of our students.

### **Who is Alliance Educators United?**

- Alliance Educators United is a group formed by the Los Angeles teachers union with some Alliance teachers at some Alliance schools. They do not represent Alliance. Their materials are paid for by the union.

### **They have tried to call me/talk to me at home. Do I have to talk to them?**

- Absolutely not. You are under no obligation to talk to them or to sign anything. We do not support the positions set forth on their petition.

### **Why is UTLA trying to organize a union at Alliance?**

- That is a great question, especially since UTLA does not want charter schools to exist
- It could be because UTLA wants to increase their membership. Union teachers typically pay \$689 each year per person. Union dues often are automatically deducted from union teachers' paychecks and under circumstances where they cannot opt out. Unionizing Alliance schools would bring in more than \$400,000 per year in membership dues to UTLA.
- We have built a strong culture of collaboration at Alliance, and we are committed to finding ways to improve it. If teachers have concerns at Alliance schools, our school leaders are committed to addressing those concerns. We hope our teachers to work directly with their principals to solve problems together and not bring in an outside force that slows down our decision-making and ability to serve students.

### **My child's teacher told me they do not have a say in what happens at the school. Is that true?**

- No. Alliance teachers are consulted directly on many aspects of what happens in their schools, including on curriculum and even their own evaluation. Teachers are free to share their opinion with their principals and work collaboratively with them to solve problems.
- We believe that our collaborative relationship among teachers and between teachers and school leaders is why we have been so successful, and are one of the highest performing public school

networks in the country. We are proud of our shared commitment to serving our students. We think this is much better than having an outside organization like UTLA get in between teachers and their principals, and create divisions in the school.

### **My child's teacher told me they don't get paid enough. Is that true?**

- Our goal is to recruit and keep the very best teachers for your child. We know they are the heart of our schools' success.
- Last year, all Alliance teachers received an 8% raise. In addition, 99% of teachers received bonuses. Teachers represented by UTLA at LAUSD schools have not had a raise in 8 years. Teachers unions also generally opposed efforts to link performance and compensation. They favor a rigid compensation based on a formula of years of experience and education credentials, with no way of rewarding teachers who are doing a great job helping kids learn.
- In the coming year, Alliance teachers on average will receive a minimum of a 12% increase in their salary and make more than equivalent teachers in LAUSD.

### **Do all the teachers want a union?**

- So far, only a small number of teachers have told us they want to form a union with UTLA. Some teachers who came out publicly in favor of the union have since changed their position after learning the facts. We actually have many Alliance schools where no teachers have stated they want a union and many teachers have vocally opposed a union.

### **What would happen if there was a union? Would it be good or bad for our students?**

- We believe having a union would not be good for our students or our teachers.
- Alliance runs some of the best schools in Los Angeles, the state and even the country. Almost all of our students graduate from high school and are accepted to college. We have done this without a union.
- Having a union brings with it uncertainty and the risk of disruption to your child's education. Indeed, UTLA recently announced that a strike was possible for the teachers working at LAUSD. If a strike occurs, then instructional days will be missed and with it, critical learning opportunities for the students. We don't want to have the risk of disruption and other uncertainty that comes from having a union.
- One of Alliance's core values is to work closely with and support our teachers so your child receives the best education possible. With a union, that kind of collaboration and working together with teachers to support students is seriously limited. We don't think that is good for students or teachers.

### **Why doesn't Alliance have a union?**

- Alliance is a community of choice for students, parents, faculty and staff. We exist as a non-unionized charter school because the traditional public schools which are heavily influenced by rules of the UTLA union are too rigid and have been unable to meet the needs of individual students.
- Alliance's focus is on students first. Our success rate with students is significantly better than schools where there is a UTLA union. We believe that UTLA's 359-page contract with LAUSD would create a barrier between teachers and their principals, limiting our ability to meet the needs of individual students.

For more information, go to **[www.ouralliancecommunity.com](http://www.ouralliancecommunity.com)**. Where there are bilingual resources and information.

**Additional FAQ for Parent Engagement Specialists & Office Managers:**

**Can Parent Engagement Specialists and Office Managers Express their opinions?**

*Yes, all Alliance staff are allowed to discuss the following:*

Facts - Alliance has produced several a Fact Sheet about UTLA and Unionization at Alliance which can be found at [www.ouralliancecommunity.com](http://www.ouralliancecommunity.com).

Opinions – We can all express our opinions in a respectful manner.

Experience – We can express our experience working with unions at other schools or organizations.

*What Alliance staff cannot do:*

Threaten any other staff, student or community member.

Intimidate or interfere with another person’s legal right to express him or herself.

Promise or bribe someone to change his or her opinion or position on unionization.

Spy or conduct surveillance on teachers.