



## **Transparency, Dishonesty and Misinformation Regarding Unionization Efforts at Alliance Schools**

On April 8, 2015, in the *Los Angeles Times* and in flyers given to Alliance teachers, UTLA accused Alliance of unfair labor practices. We are deeply sorry for the confusion caused by UTLA's misinformation and outreach to the press.

As we have said repeatedly, we welcome this conversation about the very important issue of teacher voice, and we will be active participants in the conversation to ensure that our Alliance community has complete and accurate information. We also want to assure you that everything that the Alliance is doing in regards to UTLA's unionization effort is legal and well within the confines of state and federal law. Every communication and action we have taken over the past three weeks has been reviewed and approved by our legal counsel.

We strongly believe that it is our responsibility to share facts about unionization so that teachers can make an informed decision. The union calls this "coercion." It is not. It is simply providing straightforward information to our Alliance community and answering your questions about an issue that would have serious implications for our teachers, our schools, and our students. We have an obligation to the families we serve to take part in this conversation.

Promises made by UTLA -- an organization that for years has fought the expansion of charter schools and tried to limit the choices available to Los Angeles families in underserved communities -- are only promises, nothing more. UTLA cannot guarantee teachers anything -- not higher salaries, not better benefits, not additional job security. All that unionization guarantees is that UTLA will negotiate to be able to take automatic payroll deductions from teachers for dues and fees. And some of those monthly dues will likely be spent on supporting political officeholders and candidates who are vehemently and aggressively anti-charter. We encourage you to continue to get the facts before signing anything. If you do not want to sign anything, you do not have to do so. A signed authorization card can result in unionization without an election.

We are troubled by some of UTLA's recent tactics:

### **UTLA has no legal footing to challenge Alliance.**

The statutes UTLA has named to file their unfair labor practices apply only to "recognized bargaining agents". So it only applies to active union-management agreements. UTLA is not our union. They, therefore, do not have property access rights at Alliance schools.

**UTLA has fanned patently false rumors**, suggesting through press statements and in their petition to the Public Employee Relations Board that teachers will be fired or retaliated against for supporting unionization. **THIS IS ABSOLUTELY UNTRUE.** That type of action would fly in the face of the core values we have as an organization.

**UTLA has not been upfront with teachers about its own position on charter schools.**

On March 26, 2015, two weeks after UTLA launched their organizing campaign at Alliance schools and six days after Alliance produced a well-documented fact sheet highlighting UTLA's longstanding opposition to charter schools, UTLA removed over 25 links and pages on the UTLA website that reference the union's policies, practice and rhetoric opposing charter schools.

**UTLA is continuing to promote anti-charter bills in Sacramento at the same time they are attempting to organize charter teachers.**

As recently as March 25th, UTLA participated in a press conference in Sacramento to unveil four major anti-charter bills. A UTLA spokesperson voiced strong support for these anti-charter bills at the press conference. Our community should be aware that UTLA is aggressively fighting and opposing charter schools. This latest set of bills seek to reduce the autonomy, independence and flexibility that have been the hallmarks of Alliance's ability to meet the individual needs of both teachers and students.

**Alliance's goal is to retain great teachers, and no attempt by UTLA to mischaracterize or malign us will change that.**

Per our formal agreement with our charter authorizer (LAUSD), our teachers have due-process rights. We value the expertise and commitment of our teachers highly and take staffing decisions very seriously. There is nothing "arbitrary" about any decisions involving the people who serve our schools and our families. In 2014, six of 468 Alliance teachers (or 1.2%) were let go for cause or poor performance. Alliance teachers have a voice when there are concerns about staffing decisions and a formal means for teachers to express any concern or file any complaints about any aspect of their job or work environment without fear of harassment or retaliation.

We are troubled by the tenor of UTLA's unionizing campaign and by the distraction this has meant for our teachers and families. We have heard from so many teachers that you want to remain focused on our highest priority: continuing to deliver the best education possible for our students. We want that, too. For 11 years, Alliance has been a beacon of hope for students in some of the most underserved communities in Los Angeles. This is our social justice mission. Our exceptional academic results prove that great teachers, who are respected, developed and supported as professionals, make all the difference. We stand committed to continue – and improve on – our record of success for students. At the end of the day, that is why we are all here.

For more information, please visit [www.ouralliancecommunity.com](http://www.ouralliancecommunity.com).