

Alliance Charter Educators Charge Alliance College Ready Public Schools with Interference and Coercion in Organizing Effort and Urge Fair and Neutral Process

Alliance Educators United are charging Alliance College Ready Public Schools, the largest charter management organization with 26 schools in Los Angeles, with using coercive tactics and interfering with educators' right to form a union.

The first set of unfair practice charges were filed last night against Alliance College Ready Public Charter Schools with the Public Employment Relations Board (PERB), alleging that school officials are interfering with the educators' right to form a union.

Educators formed Alliance Educators United, affiliated with United Teachers Los Angeles, on March 13, 2015, to have a real voice in advocating for both themselves and their students. The teachers, counselors and other professional staff are seeking genuine due process and "just cause" rights, and the right to bargain over conditions of employment.

"When teachers announced we were organizing a union, Alliance publicly stated that we, the teachers would be able to decide for ourselves free of coercion. But since that time they are trying to persuade teachers against unionization" said Elana Goldbaum, World History/AP European History teacher, Alliance Gertz-Ressler High School.

Alliance is using the funds that could be used for student education to hire high-priced PR consultants, to create an anti-union website, and are sending a steady stream of anti-union letters and emails to educators, parents, and alumni. Even students have been exposed to the anti-union campaign through Alliance's web site. Alliance is using its supervisors, school email accounts and even using professional development time and /or meetings attached to professional development to run anti-union meetings while restricting the use of facilities and school email accounts for pro-union activists.

"Former Alliance CEO Judy Burton recognized California state law in her memo dated March 13th, stating that '***all unions have a right of access at reasonable times, to any employee work area in order to communicate with School employees regarding organizing a union.***' Since then, Alliance principals have stopped union organizers from

entering school property, at reasonable times, on several occasions. This is a violation of EERA 3543.1(b). This is just one example that shows that the Alliance needs to agree to a fair and neutral process, in which the employer does not coerce and /or interfere, in the educators' deciding whether or not to unionize" says Sam Taylor, History teacher, Alliance College-Ready Middle Academy #7.

Timeline of Alliance Anti-Union Activity:

Friday March 13th – Almost 70 teachers at Alliance announce that they want to form a union at their schools. Alliance Chief Executive **Dan Katzir told the Los Angeles Times** that "We acknowledge the rights of our teachers to undertake this effort. We also recognize that our teachers are under no obligation to participate."^[1]

Judy Burton, former Alliance CEO and Dan Katzir send their first communication to staff regarding union activity stating, "To be clear, we do not endorse or denounce any particular union or unions generally. Regardless, we will support any decision by employees to join or not join a union."

Monday, March 16th – Alliance sends a letter to teachers under the guise of facts about organizing. It says that teachers have a right to join a union free from coercion. The letter, sent to every teacher from their supervisor, then attacks unionization and unions.

Wednesday, March 18th- Alliance, despite legal right to have union meetings on non-work time tells teachers and union organizers that they have no right to meet on school property.

Friday March 20th – Alliance purchases a domain that will house their anti-union website.^[2]

Friday March 20th—Alliance distributes another letter to certificated staff under the guise of more facts about UTLA and the union. The letter expands on the March 16th the attack on unionization, unions and UTLA.

Monday March 23rd—Dan Katzir sends an email to all staff encouraging staff to "give me a fair opportunity to prove that commitment to you—in not just words, but action—before you make any decisions on the unionization question."

Monday March 23rd – Alliance management sends a letter to parents attacking the teacher's decision to form a union signed by Dan Katzir and former CEO Judy Burton.^[3]

Wednesday, March 25th- Alliance illegally blocks email newsletter to Alliance educators from Alliance Educators United.

Thursday, March 26th- Alliance, despite legal right to have union meetings on non-work time tells teachers and union organizers that they have no right to meet on school property.

Thursday March 26th – Alliance website attacking the union goes online.
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Thursday March 26th—Alliance sends a memo to all certificated staff outlining the benefits Alliance offers its teachers and stating “We respectfully disagree with the assertion that unionization with UTLA would help advance educational opportunities with our students.”

Friday, March 27th- Alliance does an automated phone call to parents and families at one or more schools criticizing the unionization effort of educators. ###

[1] <http://www.latimes.com/local/education/la-me-charters-union-20150314-story.html>

[1] Follow <https://www.whois.net/> - search ouralliancecommunity.com – registration date is 20-March-2015

[1]https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/alliancecommunity/pages/33/attachments/original/1427349218/Letter_to_Parents_English.pdf?1427349218

[1] <http://www.ouralliancecommunity.com/>