



Teachers Association of Long Beach, CTA/NEA

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UPDATE

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STATE BUDGET UPDATE CTA MOVES FORWARD WITH LEGAL ACTION

The defeat of the initiatives spells dark days ahead for school funding. More cuts will come as the Governor and Legislature are forced to close an additional 21.3 billion dollar gap between revenues and expenses.

The new state budget will include deep cuts since it requires a two-thirds vote to pass and Republican legislators have made it very clear that they will not agree to increase taxes to close part of the gap – even to save schools. The final budget agreement will need to come in the next few months as the state is, once again, at risk of not being able to pay bills without a balanced budget.

Our state affiliate, the California Teachers Association, has gone to “plan B”, and will immediately go to court to attempt to restore some of the cuts in school funding, however, even if this is successful the resolution will not come for a very long time.

WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN LOCALLY? The School Board will likely begin the process of looking for more cuts very soon. The Superintendent has said that there will be no August layoffs of probationary and permanent teachers for next year. We will continue to work with the district to keep cuts as far away from the classroom as possible.

THANKS...A very special thank-you to everyone who volunteered to phone bank the past few weeks. Despite a very challenging election we had a great turnout. Teachers, administrators, and parents were evident each evening and on Saturday making calls to voters, supporting each other, and eating pizza.

LATE BREAKING NEWS FROM THE BARGAINING TABLE...

On Thursday, May 21ST, TALB and the District Bargaining Team reached a Tentative Agreement on the 2008-2009 contract. The agreement is a status quo agreement that protects existing provisions in the current contract, including health benefits and salaries. TALB members will be asked to ratify the agreement in the coming weeks. Details of the agreement are on the REVERSE side of this UPDATE.

QUICK HITS --

THE STANDARD DISABILITY OPEN ENROLLMENT: We succeeded in meeting our minimum number for open enrollment. That means that everyone who signed up will be insured and there will be no required health screening. THANKS to all of our Association Reps for the last minute push to make our minimum number by the deadline.

ASSOCIATION REP ELECTIONS: All Reps. should have received a packet of information to help conduct Rep. Elections for next year. If you have not received your packet, contact Eric at eric@talb.org or call 562-426-6433.

RETIRING? PLEASE LET US KNOW: If you are retiring (or know someone who is) please let us know so we can be sure they are invited to the annual TALB awards dinner on June 4. At this event we honor our retirees and others for their distinguished service. Association Reps. have received information about the dinner. Contact Vonnice Marino at vmarino@talb.org or call 562-426-6433, for more information and to let us know if you plan on retiring.

HAVE YOU COMPLETED YOUR SURVIVOR BENEFIT CARD? Please be sure your survivor benefit card has been completed and/or is up to date. Contact Ingrid Perez at ingrid@tab.org or call 562-426-6433.

SEE REVERSE FOR DETAILS ON THE TENTATIVE AGREEMENT

TENTATIVE AGREEMENT ON 2008-2009 CONTRACT 1-YEAR PACT PROTECTS HEALTH BENEFITS AND SALARY

The District and TALB have reached a one-year agreement that protects and maintains salary and benefits and all other protections in both the K-12 and CDC/Head Start contracts. In addition, the agreement provides several long overdue language improvements in the CDC/Head Start contract AND adds language in both contracts concerning protection of 403b plans.

SUMMARY DETAILS

Term: 1 year (2008-2009)

Takeaways: None – maintain all health, salary and leave language in current K-12 and CDC/Head Start contracts.

Changes to K-12 Contract: Add language regarding 403b plans (guarantee of employer fee payment for plan administration, and notification and consultation with TALB prior to making changes in plan administrator).

Changes to CDC/Head Start Contract: Change procedures for salary schedule unit verification to be consistent with K-12 contract; Eliminate “housekeeper” from calculation of class size ratio; 403b (same changes as K-12); Process clarifications in transfers; Miscellaneous clean-up language with no change in meaning; Clarify every other year evaluation of Head Start teachers (not every year).

The Tentative Agreement is notable for what it does not include...any rollbacks or takeaways in salary, benefits, or leaves. The complete tentative agreement can be viewed at www.talb.org. The Bargaining Team worked hard through hours of negotiations to maintain these important items. The District did make a proposal to limit health benefits while on family medical leave and withdrew it. They also made a proposal to cut the Head Start calendar (and salaries) by 5 days, and withdrew that proposal also.

TALB had hoped for a 2-year agreement to protect salary and benefits. Due to the gloomy news from Sacramento, the district was only willing to come to a one-year agreement. The TALB team determined that it was wise to go ahead and wrap up the current year and protect our contract given the pending cuts in the education budget (some of which may be retroactive to this year). While this means we will immediately begin bargaining a new contract starting next fall, it also restarts the bargaining clock and provides time for TALB and the District to seek the best solutions for a long term contract that protects salary and benefits. We will also pick up where we left off this year on a number of important issues such as improving the transfer process.

The Tentative Agreement must now be ratified by TALB members (you) and the LBUSD School Board. We will hold a General Membership meeting for all TALB members on Wednesday, June 3rd from 4-5:00 PM at Longfellow Elementary (3800 Olive Avenue.) The bargaining team will be available at this meeting to answer questions about the Tentative Agreement and for general discussion on the terms of the agreement.

On June 4th and 5th Association Reps will conduct a ratification vote at each school. A YES vote will approve the one year agreement. A NO vote means the contract will not be approved and the Bargaining Team will continue to negotiate on 2008-2009 terms and conditions of employment, including salary and benefits.

The Bargaining Team unanimously recommends a YES vote on the agreement. The team includes: **Barry Welsch** – Chair (Jordan), **Gina Bonetati** (Prisk), **Corrin Hickey** (Lakewood), **Patria Daliva** (King Head Start), **Patsy Williams** (West CDC), **Kecia Woods** (Madison), **John VanTress** (Jordan), **Martine Korach** (Millikan), **Mark Ennen** (Newcomb), **Kevin Quinn** (Edison), and **Joe Boyd** (TALB Staff). TALB thanks the Bargaining Team for their hard work and long hours spent in protecting our contract.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS about the TENTATIVE AGREEMENT

Is maintaining our contract a good deal in the current economic climate? *School budgets have already been slashed, and with the recent failure of the initiatives they are about to get another very big cut. Holding the line on our salaries and benefits is a good outcome in this environment.*

Why not agree to a two-year deal to protect salary and benefits? *This would have been desirable. The District was not willing to do so because of the additional funding cuts that are likely to be imposed by Sacramento. In that light, the TALB team believed it was best to get closure on this year right now – and then come back and deal with next year in the fall.*

Is a one-year deal helpful? *Yes. It protects salary and benefits and brings closure for this year. It also buys some time before the process starts again.*

Will the District go after our salary and benefits next year? *We don't know. This year, the District deserves credit for not even raising the question of cuts to the health care plans. They did propose cuts to health care coverage timelines under FMLA and a cut in Head Start calendars/salaries – but withdrew both proposals. The cuts from Sacramento could be severe – and the District may put everything on the table. TALB will continue to pursue a balanced approach that protects the classroom and the salary and benefits of our members.*

Will I get to vote on the agreement? *Yes. Your TALB Faculty Rep. will conduct a ratification vote at your site on June 4th and 5th. If you don't have a Rep. please elect one. Contact TALB at 562-426-6433 if we can provide assistance.*

Can we make new proposals next year? *Yes. One advantage of a 1-year contract is that we can now make new proposals. So, if there was something you didn't submit to us last year on the survey, please get it on there this year. We will do a full contract and calendar survey in September.*

THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT AND SOLIDARITY!