

# FROM <sup>T</sup>HE <sub>E</sub> TABLE

## A MBUTA NEGOTIATIONS BULLETIN TO TEACHERS

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### *Message from the President*

You deserve more than a pat on the head and a cookie.

The climate of negotiations continues to reflect the administration's negative view of your value to this district. MBUTA left a proposal on the table at the last session—notwithstanding the fact that it had been in the district's court to return with an offer for us.

### **STAFF DEVELOPMENT**

We asked the district to provide 4 days of training to teachers. From our first proposal in September, we have been asking the district to commit to full day, professional rate training for our members. The state has already sent funds to our district for this purpose; the school board has approved \$800,000 of \$1.2 million dollars for "staff development". One day of staff development for 100% of our members at our professional daily rate will cost the district roughly \$135,000.

Their current offer of 2 voluntary days commits only a quarter of the Common Core money to teacher training—leaving the other 3/4 for discretionary spending on anything from high-priced consultants to novelty technology which becomes obsolete the minute it is purchased.

Our members have been willing to attend partial day trainings paid at the hourly rate. Our members have offered to serve on committees which meet during class time—time when you must prepare a sub plan and return to papers generated in your absence. Our members have begun the work of creating the curriculum which our Director of Curriculum has yet to flesh out over the course of 3 board meetings starting in October. Her "plan" to spend the 1.2 Million dollars is a rough allocation into three categories:

We estimate the funds will be allocated during 2013-14 and 2014-15 as follows, with the understanding that the amounts indicated may be re-distributed among the three categories as needed:

- **\$800,000:** Provide professional development for certificated and classified classroom staff on the new content standards and develop curriculum aligned to the new standards
- **\$271,514:** Adopt and purchase common core standards-aligned instructional materials for English language arts and mathematics
- **\$250,000:** Upgrade the technology infrastructure to provide robust Internet access and meet Smarter Balanced Technology Strategy Framework and system requirements specifications and/or purchase additional devices and software for technology-based instruction

Note that reallocation to other categories "as needed" allows funds not used for staff development to be used for iPads, for example.

**We must firmly reinforce our need for staff development days at our professional rate—the district's current offer of only two days is an unacceptable offer.**

## **Health and Welfare**

At our previous negotiation session, we made it clear to the district team that we could not accept cuts in the current health and welfare package. Our 80/20 plan is a reasonable cost-sharing plan which functions beneficially for both sides. The district has already navigated the difficult years when healthcare costs were increasing rapidly and with less predictability. In those years, we accepted lower salary increases in order to maintain the 80/20 plan. The district's reserves skyrocketed during those same years, peaking at about 46% in 2012-13. By all accounts healthcare costs are rising at a fraction of the rate they were over the last decade. Considering where we've been, for the district to claim that uncertainty about rising costs is an argument that has very little credibility at this point.

The district has proposed a plan which places a cap at spending levels for this year. Increases to benefits would be covered by the district up to 3%; additional increases in health care costs would be borne by the members.

**This proposal by the district is an unnecessary and unfair risk for us to accept on your behalf.**

## **Elementary Preparation Time**

The language put forward in the district's proposal offers "planning time" for grade 4 and 5 teachers; with the caveat that it be used solely for purposes of Common Core training.

It is outrageous to suggest that "planning time" for members be used in a "required manner". Our proposal to the district is for 4 days of Staff Development which would adequately prepare our teachers for Common Core and thus afford the opportunity for the district to offer true "planning time" to our elementary colleagues. Many currently have virtually no planning time each day.

## **Salary**

While the most recent proposal by the district of 3% plus a 1% one-time off-schedule "bonus" (with contingency language that this could be ongoing based on the adoption of the current governor's budget) sounds like a "reasonable offer"—however, this proposal is a numbers game—designed to distract you from the deficits elsewhere in the offer.

Our district will be gaining 11% this year as a result of increased funding due to LCFF--; we continue to boast a bloated reserve; our administrators continue to increase their car allowances, receive raises and "work from home". The marketing campaign heavy on fiscal doom and gloom scenarios is the work of those who would keep the increase in funds as far from your families as possible. The money sent by the state to support teachers will be used for pet projects and wasted on frivolous expenses for which district administrators continue to be unaccountable.

The dismissive attitude implicit in an offer of this kind reveals the true intentions of district leadership. The Local Control Funding increases will enhance our coffers this year by 11%. The district acknowledges that as the Governor has proposed it, next year's increases will approach 28%. Without a commitment on the part of the district to ongoing teacher education, fair working conditions across all grade levels, and monetary compensation in line with the benefit our efforts afford the district in prestige and stature, MBUTA members cannot continue to give of their free time willingly.

**Please come to a meeting at Mira Costa High School in room 200 at lunch on Wednesday February 12 to discuss our plans for the remainder of the school year; an afterschool meeting will be held that same day, Wednesday February 12 in the gym at MBMS.** New information regarding elementary PE and other budgetary matters will be discussed in those meetings as well as the most recent negotiation details. The time to secure a fair contract in a climate of trust and goodwill has passed. The district's offer ignores the personal sacrifices you have made to create the climate of MBUSD. It is your consistent daily efforts which garner the praise for which our administration takes credit.