



Manhattan Beach Unified Teachers' Association
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From the Table

The MBUTA Bargaining Team met to negotiate on Wednesday morning, February 6, and again Thursday evening, February 7, after the board met that night. This was the first session since our December 13 meeting when the district offered 3% full year and an additional .5% (for a total of 3.5%) if at least 15 members take advantage of the proposed Early Retirement Incentive Program. The district also offered to continue the 80/20 split on healthcare premiums through the 2008-2009 school year. At that time, MBUTA was basically unwilling to go below 4% and to connect members' pay to the number of retirees.

The Governor's Proposed Budget was released on January 8 and the following week three MBUTA representatives, along with two board members and the superintendent, attended the Governor's Budget Overview Conference in Ontario. What had been disappointing news in the fall regarding the California economy and potential state budget shortfalls was now becoming quantified as to the projected impact on each school district. While little, if any, new information has come during the state legislature's 45-day emergency session, initial projections would have our district receiving approximately \$1 million less in 2008-2009 than we received 2007-2008. A smaller amount may also be withheld from schools in the current year. These are proposals by the governor and tend to change during the state budget process in the coming months.

Last Wednesday, MBUTA proposed 3.5% full year with no connection to the number of retirees, reduce the Early Retirement Program threshold to 10 members, add some additional incentive for those potential retirees close to 65, and continue the 80/20 benefit program through next school year. The district returned the following evening with a revised ERIP that included a total of two years of health coverage and/or cash in lieu for retirees that were at least 64 years old. The retiree threshold remained at 15. The 80/20 benefit program would continue. There was no answer to our salary proposal and the district asked that they be allowed until the February 27 board meeting to resolve the proposed cuts' implications for both the current and next year's district budget.

Our next bargaining session will be February 28, the day after the next board meeting. Please enjoy some well-earned time off next week. We will keep you updated.

MBUTA Bargaining Team

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