

# FROM THE TABLE

## A MBUTA NEGOTIATIONS BULLETIN TO TEACHERS

MANHATTAN BEACH UNIFIED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION • 3551 VOYAGER STREET, SUITE 105 • TORRANCE, CA 90503 • (310) 921-2500

March 1, 2019

The Union bargaining team met with District representatives from 1:00pm to 4:30pm on Wednesday, February 27. At this meeting, the District responded to our salary proposal and our class size proposal. We responded to their calendar proposals.

The Union has on the table an opening proposal of 9% over three years. We have indicated that we are open to a discussion over how that 9% is allocated to each of the three years (2017-18, 2018-19, 2019-20). Current COLA for those three years is estimated to be about 7.73%. The District initially came back with no proposal for a salary increase and then came back with a proposal of 1% retroactive only to the beginning of school year 2018-19, with reopeners for the next school year. In the face of that wholly unacceptable offer, we maintained our insistence that 9% was a reasonable number. The District countered on the 27th with a 2% offer, again, not retroactive to the end of the previous contract (June of 2017), but only to the beginning of the current school year. We responded very clearly that COLA, questionable District spending priorities and poor fiscal management made the 2% offer totally unacceptable. Both sides caucused. Upon returning to the table, we entered into a discussion about increased LCFF funding coupled with increased costs especially for the District portion of STRS payments. We mutually went through the numbers and seemed to be in general agreement over the amount of money potentially available for raises. Although no written proposals were offered, the discussion was positive and seemed to reflect broad areas of agreement. We are cautiously optimistic about the prospects for common ground.

On class size, we had proposed a system based on the Redondo model that created a cap in class sizes and allowed the District to exceed that cap ONLY IF the affected teacher was compensated at an agreed to rate. The District countered on the 27<sup>th</sup> by proposing a maintenance of the current formula for figuring averages, but they incorporated a small teacher compensation system for those who have average classes that exceed 35. Although it was a slight movement in a positive direction, we remain far apart on this important issue. We are, though, guardedly optimistic that some agreement that moves the issue in a positive direction for our members can be had.

Finally, the calendar that we proposed reflected the most common concerns expressed by our members on the recent survey. Calendars are notoriously difficult to negotiate since every member has an ideal calendar that works for them but does not meet the needs of others. Members that made comments on the survey most often said that they wanted to start later, end about the same time, balance the semesters at the high school and keep "Ski Week" and the full week at Thanksgiving. That's a tough order. What we proposed was a start date after Labor Day with mandatory staff development days the Tuesday and Wednesday of the week prior. We balanced the semesters at the high school, with a first semester end date of January 31. Additionally, we maintained Ski Week. The ending date would be June 18. Unfortunately, to get a reasonable end date, we had to give up the full week at Thanksgiving. Instead we would revert to having Wednesday, Thursday and Friday of Thanksgiving week off. We were able to maintain all the other holidays, including the days off corresponding to the Jewish holy days. We recognize that no calendar proposal is going to satisfy everyone (or even a majority of members). We believe, though, that based on the survey results this calendar has elements that are acceptable to most members. The District, after a few clarifying questions, took this proposal under consideration and will respond at the next negotiating session on March 19<sup>th</sup>.

As always, your bargaining team and Union leadership appreciates your support. YOU are the Union. Your support creates the unity that makes the UNION effective.

In Solidarity,

Your Bargaining Team: Adam Geczi- Chair, Stacey Cooke, Bill Fauver, Daniela Olson