



Teachers Association of Long Beach, CTA/NEA

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UPDATE

March 8, 2010

BLOODY MONDAY

NEARLY 1,000 LAYOFF NOTICES DELIVERED THIS WEEK

This week the District will deliver hundreds, maybe even close to 1,000, layoff notices to TALB unit members. The effect this move will have on our schools will be felt for years to come. Responsibility partially lies with the State Government who is responsible for funding our schools. Voters/taxpayers also bear some responsibility for their refusal to support school funding measures such as Measure T. But the **depth** of layoff is also attributable to recent decisions made by our School Board.

VOODOO CUTS? The District already has slated many more teachers for layoff than is ultimately necessary, even with the severe drop in funding. Retirements, leaves, and the reported plan to partially restore Class Size Reduction in some schools using site based categorical money means that the final layoff tally will be less than the announced layoffs of about 700 teachers.

Now reports are surfacing that the District will issue nearly 1,000 layoff notices...far more than even their announced cuts can justify. We can only speculate on their reasons for such a massive issuance of layoff notices. It could be part of an attempt to secure salary and benefit reductions by over issuing layoff notices and then offering to "trade" salary reductions (e.g., furloughs) and benefit cuts for jobs they never planned on cutting in the first place. Or it could be because the layoff process is woefully disorganized and they are "over-noticing" teachers because their credentialing and seniority data is disorganized and they can't accurately pinpoint who really should get a notice, so they are casting a wide net.

Whatever the reason, it is simply wrong for the District to issue one more notice than is absolutely necessary. Putting as many as 500 additional teachers through this process if they are ultimately not going to be laid off is just not the way to treat people. It is also hard to escape the irony that at the same time they may issue nearly 1,000 notices, the District reported in January that they had just about 1,000 managers.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I GET A RIF (LAYOFF) NOTICE?

1. **KNOW YOUR RIGHTS:** TALB has published information and FAQ's on layoff rights in recent UPDATES. This information and more can be found at www.talb.org by going to the Announcements link and clicking on the "LAYOFF SURVIVAL KIT". Please read this information so you are informed, know your rights, and important timelines.
2. **REQUEST A HEARING and NOTICE OF DEFENSE WITHIN THE TIMELINES:** While not required, we recommend you request a hearing. You must do so within the timelines (usually 7 days) or you forfeit your rights to a hearing. Soon after, you will also need to send in a Notice of Defense. Forms and simple instruction for both of these forms are at www.talb.org under the "LAYOFF SURVIVAL KIT."
3. **GET HELP:** As announced in prior UPDATES, TALB will hold informational meetings for members who get a layoff notice on Thursday, March 11, at 4:30 pm at UAW Hall (3971 Pixie Ave, Lakewood) and Friday, March 12 at 4:30pm at Longfellow Elementary auditorium (3800 Olive Ave, Long Beach). We will provide information, answer questions, help with forms, and get members signed up for legal representation.

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WHAT ABOUT THAT SENIORITY LIST?

DISTRICT EVADES REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ON LAYOFFS

The best evidence that the District's process for conducting a layoff will be disorganized and chaotic comes from the fact that, as of this writing (Monday, March 8), no seniority list has been distributed. This process was botched from the beginning when the District decided to only prepare a "partial" seniority list and asked only selected employees to confirm their seniority and credential data. Then the District piece-meal asked a few hundred more for data. But they never made the effort to create an accurate list for all certificated bargaining unit members.

So it comes as no surprise that the District has evaded requests for information pertaining to layoffs, including a simple seniority list. TALB asked for critical information, including an accurate seniority list, to help our members with layoffs back on November 1, 2009. The District all but ignored the request. A second official request was sent to Board President Stanton on February 22, 2010 (go to www.talb.org and read the letter under "Layoff Survival Kit" on the left margin). The District again ignored most of the request and begged off saying they still needed "additional time".

The District says it intends to distribute an electronic list to each site this week. When TALB gets a copy of the list we will make it available at www.talb.org under the Layoff Survival Guide sections.

WILL "FLEXIBLE FUNDING" MAKE THINGS BETTER? *SB 1396 UNDER CONSIDERATION*

Against the backdrop of massive layoffs the District is making a pitch for full flexibility with all categorical funds. They are doing this via SB 1396 sponsored by Senator Alan Lowenthal. The District claims this will free up \$10 million dollars to save jobs.

Will it save jobs? We don't know. In **January** TALB asked the School Board to schedule a full hearing at a regular School Board meeting to explain the proposal and exactly how it would free up more money. If \$10 million is freed up from one part of the budget, it means another part will have less funding. This may be a good thing or it may result in other important programs getting cut. Whatever the case, it seems prudent for the District to have a transparent discussion and clearly articulate who will be the winners and losers under this proposal.

At this date, we have not heard from Board President Stanton regarding our request to explain this proposal at a regular Board Meeting. In fact, the Board has not included the proposed language of the Bill as part of a published Board packet. You can view the language by going to www.talb.org and the draft language will be under "announcements".

"NO CUTS, NO COMPROMISES" *KEEP UP THE FIGHT TO STOP THE CUTS*

The March 4 Protest Rally at Wilson was another effort to stop the layoffs and budget cuts. 2,500 attended the rally (over 1,200 were TALB members) Thanks to all the groups who helped to organize the rally program and provided logistics. This was a true coalition effort that included CSULB Faculty Association, LBCC Community College Association, the Long Beach PTA, and TALB.

We must continue to stop the proposed State budget cuts for next year and the additional layoffs that will result if the Governor's budget proposal is passed by the State. Contact your State Legislator by calling 1-888-268-4334 (you will be connected to your Legislator's office) and telling them "NO CUTS, NO COMPROMISES" and to support our schools.

FEBRUARY REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL REPORT

Elected TALB Association Representatives from each school met on February 23rd at the UAW Hall. Here are a few highlights from the meeting.

1. Bargaining Chair Barry Welsch provided a detailed update on negotiations (the last UPDATE included the information from Barry's report).
2. Executive Director Joe Boyd reported on the District budget status and layoffs.
(Barry and Joe both did a lengthy Q & A session at the end of their reports)
3. The Representative Council voted to endorse challenger Jeff Price in the April 13 District 1 School Board election. (TALB is prohibited by the District from communicating information about how to help in this race, so if you are interested in finding out more about the race you can go to www.talb.org, talk to your site Association Rep, or call TALB at 562-426-6433).