



Teachers Association of Long Beach, CTA/NEA

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UPDATE

August 27, 2009

Welcome Back!

A YEAR OF CHALLENGE...A YEAR OF UNITY

The State has passed a budget...it cuts our school funding and shortchanges our kids. Schools are receiving almost 19% below what they would otherwise expect to get under Proposition 98. In practical terms, this means that millions of dollars of additional cuts will be made in LBUSD and thousands of dollars will be taken from each classroom (a summary of the budget is at www.talb.org and a good overview of the entire budget can be found at www.cbp.org).

The statewide effort to protect school funding in Sacramento has, for now, largely failed. Now the fight to protect our students, our members, and our schools will be fought out at the local level...a fight nobody wants or deserves, but one that **will** occur district by district and union by union, as we all struggle to reach consensus on what should be our priorities in a time of diminishing resources.

This year, the LBUSD will be able to weather much of the storm by spending down reserves and using categorical "flexibility" to subsidize spending shortfalls in critical areas. While we will certainly feel the cuts this year, there were no layoffs of probationary or permanent teachers and much of the core program survived.

Looking forward, the School Board and Administration now appears to be taking an approach more common in other districts; and has already made bargaining proposals to cut salaries and benefits for teachers, nurses, and librarians (the District's bargaining proposals can be found at www.talb.org). Also, layoffs (for 2010 – 2011) are predicted by District administration if there is no additional revenue to mitigate the budget cuts.

It is unfair and unrealistic to expect teachers, nurses and librarians to subsidize education funding reductions by cutting their salary and benefits, in an attempt to avoid program cuts and spare the public from the impact of reduced school funding. Nobody wants to see programs eliminated or reduced, especially teachers, but there are simply no amount of salary cuts, unpaid furlough days, or health care caps that can make up for the program funding cuts that have rolled down on us from Sacramento. Proposals to cut salaries and healthcare amount to a levy on the very teachers, nurses and librarians who are making due with less in their classrooms and holding an already fragile education system together with their extraordinary effort and sacrifice.

If we are united we can stand up for our classrooms, our kids, our working conditions and fight the School Board's proposals to cut salaries and health benefits...cuts that will harm morale and the LBUSD's ability to recruit and retain the highest quality teachers, nurses, and librarians. If we are united, we can also work with the School Board on issues of common interest such as raising local revenues for our schools and fighting for better funding from Sacramento.

One immediate way to defend against proposed cuts to our salaries and benefits may be to work together on a local parcel tax. The parcel tax, requiring a difficult two-thirds vote, will be an uphill effort in these tough times. TALB members are the best messengers in this effort. ***If it does succeed it won't replace all of the lost state revenue, but it will save many of our jobs and may help to avoid a fight over cuts to our salaries and benefits.*** (NOTE -- TALB has not yet taken a position on the parcel tax. Site Association Reps will consider the matter at the August 29, Representative Council meeting. If we do support it, remember that we are prohibited by District policy from advocating for political campaigns by using school mailboxes, so expect your site Association Rep to communicate with you via short meetings during duty free time, the TALB bulletin board, or hand-distribution of materials on duty free time.)

Whatever the challenges of this coming year...organizing volunteers for the parcel tax; fighting cuts in our salary and healthcare; electing school board members...we can succeed if we are unified and we all stand as one voice.

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PRIORITY SURVEY

YOUR INPUT IS NEEDED FOR BARGAINING

You should have a “Negotiations and Calendar Priority Survey” already in your box. If you don’t have one, please ask your site Association Representative for a survey. Please fill it out immediately and return it to TALB as directed on the survey. You can also complete the survey by going to www.talb.org. We often hear from our members over the phone, email, and site visits...but we need to hear from each and every member this year so we know where you stand and what you are willing to do with your fellow TALB members to defend our contract.

SITE REPS MEET AND ORGANIZE

TALB Association Site Representative will meet all day on Saturday, August 29. They volunteer their time in the summer each year to help get all of us organized for the coming year. They will consider an endorsement of the parcel tax. And this year is especially critical as your site rep may be asking for your support in getting organized and united around a parcel tax, proposals to cut our salaries and benefits, December and April school board elections, and the possibility of more education cuts from Sacramento.

If your site does not have an Association Representative please work with your colleagues to elect someone as soon as possible. Your “Rep” has been asked to schedule regular site TALB meetings (at least one per month, more as needed)...please attend these important meetings. If asked to volunteer, please consider doing so. If we all do a little bit, it will add up to a lot.

TALB ORGANIZING TEAM GEARS UP *BIG YEAR...PARCEL TAX FIRST CHALLENGE*

The TALB Organizing Team will be meeting early in September to start organizing around the contract, the November parcel tax election, and the December School Board election. This year, the PAC (political organizing) and Contract Organizing will work as one team so we remain coordinated in our efforts. They will immediately begin work on nuts and bolts issues such as communication clusters, phone trees, voter registration and volunteer recruitment. It will be a busy year, so please read the UPDATE (they come out every two weeks), attend school site TALB meetings, and support our organizing efforts when and where you can. The Bargaining Team will also be meeting early in September to review surveys and draft proposals.

QUOTABLE... *“When it comes to protecting our students, our workforce and our schools from these kinds of unfair attacks, sometimes you have to draw the line, and sometimes that line is a picket line.”*

Pixie Hayward Schickele, President of the United Teachers of Richmond, urging her members to authorize a strike in the wake of the District’s attempts to cut health care and other contract provisions.

**IF YOU HAVE QUESTION OR NEED MORE INFORMATION
CALL US AT 562-426-6433
OR
GO TO WWW.TALB.ORG**

THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT AND SOLIDARITY!