



Poway School Employees Association
August 22, 2014

Negotiation Update No. 4

After taking a hiatus during the summer, PSEA and the District resumed reopener negotiations on August 12, with a half day of bargaining. Unfortunately, while we made some progress on Professional Learning, we did not make any progress on the major outstanding issues, such as: Health & Welfare, Wages, Vacation, or Restoration of Hours and Positions.

Professional Learning. The District provided PSEA with its counterproposal on Professional Learning. We are narrowing the remaining differences and anticipate reaching a tentative agreement soon.

Health & Welfare. In our last update, we described the various ways in which classified employees are given lesser health and welfare benefits than others at the District (for example, PSEA members receive 1/100th of the amount of money that certificated staff receive for “premium supplements,” which is used to mitigate rising health care premiums, and classified employees are the only ones whose District contribution for benefits is tiered based on the number of hours worked), and we discussed PSEA’s efforts to remedy this unfairness. On August 12, the District admitted that our analysis was correct and that classified employees are given lesser benefits than APSM and PFT receive, but said it nevertheless wanted to keep the current contract language. When challenged as to why it was not making any effort to close the gap between our benefits and those of APSM and PFT, the District responded that “we don’t have that authority from our school board.” While disappointing, this response is not entirely surprising – and it highlights the importance of PSEA being involved in our school board races this November.

Restoration of Hours and Positions. We once more pushed the District to restore hours and positions lost in the Great Recession, particularly in light of the Superintendent’s statement of June 2 to the community that “we continue to work on staffing schools to the levels they were staffed prior to the budget cuts begun in 2007-2008.”¹ The District continues to oppose any restorations, however, and incredibly tried to argue that the Superintendent’s statement was *not* intended as a commitment that staffing would be restored! This appears to be another instance in which the District is telling the community one thing (that school staffing will be restored) and doing another.

Vacation. As we have shared in previous updates, the District agrees with PSEA that the rate of vacation accrual for new employees lags behind other Districts. In fact, PUSD is the only District in the County that provides its new classified employees with only 10 days of vacation per year – the bare minimum allowed under the Education Code. At negotiations on August 12, the District informed us that the cost of increasing the vacation accrual rate for new classified employees by two days (to 12 days per year) would be only \$93,000/year. To put that figure in perspective, the District has \$10.5 million in reserves for the 2014-2015 fiscal year. In other words, even with today’s paltry interest rates, the District could pay for the cost of increased vacation accruals with the interest it earns on its reserves! Despite the

¹ http://www.powayusd.com/doc_library/2014-15/SUPT'S_WRITTEN_DAC_DELAC_RESPONSE.pdf

minimal cost of this improvement for classified employees, however, the District indicated it wanted to maintain the current substandard vacation accrual rates for new classified employees.

Wages. In early June, PSEA proposed equalizing the pay of the School Administrative Assistants, so that those working at elementary and middle school sites would have their range increase to match that of the highest paid School Administrative Assistant (which is actually classified as a School Administrative Specialist II). Under the current system, the School Administrative Assistants working at elementary schools are paid the least – despite having the greatest workload among the School Administrative Assistants due to the understaffing of elementary school sites – and those at middle schools are also paid less than their counterparts at high schools. The District has still not responded to this proposal. The District did, however, indicate that it was authorized to offer a 1% increase in compensation – although it is proposing that any progress PSEA makes on remedying the various inequities we have identified (such as on Health & Welfare, on vacation accrual, or on salaries of School Administrative Assistants) would be charged against this 1%. PSEA has made it clear to the District that our members should not have to pay to fix the unequal treatment which the District has perpetuated over the years, and that we need to see some real progress on fixing these inequities.

NEXT STEPS

Immediately after negotiations on August 12, PSEA's Board of Directors held its monthly meeting. At this meeting, PSEA's Board considered the recommendation of the PSEA Legislative Committee regarding the upcoming elections to the PUSD Governing Board. Our Legislative Committee was very impressed with the qualifications and perspectives of three of the candidates, and felt that their voices on the Governing Board are needed at this time. After hearing the recommendation of the Legislative Committee (which was unanimous), and after gathering feedback from our membership in attendance, our Board of Directors unanimously voted to adopt the Committee's recommendation to support these three candidates for Governing Board positions, and to devote our resources to get them elected. Because this update is being distributed via District channels, we cannot tell you here *which* candidates PSEA has endorsed (we cannot use District resources to campaign), but we encourage you to visit the PSEA website (www.poway-psea.org) or the PSEA Facebook page for more information.

Our next negotiation date is not until September 3. We will continue to discuss at that session the remaining issues of Vacation, Health & Welfare, Professional Learning, Wages and Restoration of Positions and Hours. For now, however, the single most important thing each of you can do to ensure a strong contract is to make sure that all of your co-workers have become PSEA members by filling out a PSEA membership application.

*The PSEA Negotiation Team is continuing to advocate for the interests of classified employees in a determined yet respectful manner, and we are pleased that the atmosphere of mutual respect which PSEA has been working on building with the District has continued into these reopener negotiations. As always, however, our ability to win improvements for classified employees depends on having an active and engaged membership. If you have not yet signed a PSEA membership application, complete the below application and mail it to **Mary Jo Stollfuss, c/o PSEA, 13378 Poway Road, Poway, CA 92064.***

Membership Application and Salary Deduction Authorization



PLEASE PRINT

Name: _____ Employee ID No.: _____
(Full Legal Name)

E-mail: _____ Job Title: _____
(List e-mail you want to receive PSEA information)

Alternate E-mail: _____ Work Site: _____

Home Address: _____ Home Phone No.: _____

_____ Cell Phone No.: _____
(City/State/ZIP)

I hereby apply for membership in the Poway School Employees Association (PSEA), agree to abide by the governing documents of PSEA, and authorize it to be my exclusive representative for the purpose of meeting and conferring with the Poway Unified School District (PUSD) over hours, wages and other terms and conditions of employment.

I hereby further authorize PUSD to deduct from my salary and pay to PSEA the periodic dues for services provided by or through PSEA. If PSEA, **by vote of the membership**, subsequently adopts a decrease or increase in dues, this authorization shall include the then-established dues and no new authorization shall be required. I understand that this authorization shall remain in effect during any period in which I am on a leave of absence or on a 39-month reemployment list.

Signature: _____

Date: _____