



Sweetwater Union High School District's Update on Negotiations

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Negotiations with SCGA

July 28, 2015

To promote transparency, community awareness, accountability and open communication, the Governing Board of the Sweetwater Union High School District (SUHSD) has directed that its team provide regular and factual updates following negotiation sessions with the Sweetwater Counseling and Guidance Association (SCGA). This is the District's second update on its negotiations with SCGA.

July 28, 2015 Session

The District and SCGA teams met today. These reopener negotiations are limited to wages and health and welfare benefits and one additional article. SCGA has also reopened caseload.

District's 2015-16 Proposal

The District team presented a comprehensive written proposal to SCGA.

The District team proposed a three percent (3%) salary schedule increase, effective July 1, 2015.

As part of the proposed 3%, the District team shared that the Board is open to allocating a portion of the 3% to increase the District's maximum contribution to employee health and welfare benefits costs.

The District also proposed, consistent with the Board's LCAP, to enter into a memorandum of understanding with SCGA to lower the 7-12 school counselor staffing ratio to 360:1 (from 400:1, as set forth in the Contract) for the 2015-16 school year.

The District team pointed out that in implementing the LCAP for this year, the District is investing more than \$2.2 million dollars for additional counselor FTE at the sites, learning centers and Palomar Continuation High School.

The District also proposed to work with SCGA on contract language regarding dental and vision coverage eligibility for prospective retirees under the age of 65.

Board's Interest in Sustainability

Based on the Board's LCAP and current budget, the District team explained that the 3% proposal would require significant budget adjustments, but that the Board was prepared to do so.

The District team shared the Board's concern regarding deficit spending.

The three percent proposal would add to a string of recently negotiated total compensation increases. Employee salary schedules increased by more than five percent (5%) over the past two years, which does not account for step and column increases or unprecedented increases in the District's required contribution to teachers' pension costs (as required by applicable law and the State Teacher Retirement System). Plus, the District's maximum contribution to employee health and welfare benefits increased from \$7,792 to \$12,068 in 2013-14 and to \$13,130 in 2014-15.

SCGA's Response

SCGA responded to the District's caseload proposal with an emphasis on permanent contract language. The remainder of the day was devoted to discussion of options regarding caseload. The District anticipates a complete response to its proposal at the next session.

Next Session

Negotiations will resume on August 19, 2015.