

GARDEN GROVE EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

NEGOTIATIONS UPDATE



October 17, 2007

The Association and District Negotiating Teams met on September 28, October 5 and October 13. The topics discussed included staffing ratios, posting of openings, jury duty, increase in dental plan coverage, hearing plan, evaluation frequency, stipends for Special Education teachers, other stipends, combination classes, school site budget information, salary increases, modification to the salary schedule for pre-school teachers, credit for prior teaching experience for new hires, the increasing number of job shares and the shortage of substitutes. So far, the District has not agreed to accept any of our proposals.

Several of the surrounding districts have already reached an agreement on salary for this year. However, you cannot just look at the "number" of the pay raise alone. Many districts calculate their raise on "total compensation", which is new money added to the salary schedule plus additional money the district has put towards health care premiums. In other words, the percentage reported is the combined increase in teacher pay and insurance benefits.

The rising cost of health benefits has greatly impacted salary settlements in some districts. Most districts pay premiums to insurance companies or trusts. GGUSD is one of the few remaining "self-insured" districts. The alterations made to our plan in 2004-05 have helped slow the increase in the cost of the plan as a whole. Teachers in Orange are now paying \$865 monthly for their Blue Cross PPO family coverage. The cost in Placentia/Yorba Linda is \$485 monthly for family coverage. Our rate of \$95 hasn't been changed in several years. In addition, many districts have placed a "cap" on their coverage and are charging teachers monthly for cost over-runs from last year in addition to the monthly costs for this year.

Teachers in some districts have not had any salary increase for one or more years and are making up some of that deficit this year. For example, Santa Ana teachers will receive an 11.20% increase. However, their salaries went down .5% in 2003-04 and down 3.5% in 2004-05. Also, they did not receive any increase at all in 2005-06. Westminster teachers will receive a 7% increase, after having no salary increase at all in 2003-04, 2004-05 and 2005-06. Los Alamitos teachers will receive a 6.69% increase, after having no salary increase in 2005-06.

Bargaining dates have been scheduled for October 26, 30 and November 2.

