
Faculty Association

Santa Maria Joint Union High School District



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Welcome Back to School from your Faculty Association Leadership Team! We hope you had a restful few weeks, or at least were able to get a few long-needed projects started or finished. We wanted to thank everyone for your past input and to share our current concerns and hopes for the upcoming FACT FINDING day to be held on January 30, 2019, between our FA negotiators and the District's team of negotiators. Fact finding is a process required by the state once mediation has failed and we have entered CONTRACTUAL IMPASSE. In fact finding, a three-member panel hears the factual rationale from both sides, tries to mediate a settlement, and finally issues a report recommending a settlement if one is not reached. The recommendation of the panel is not binding.

WHERE WE HAVE BEEN:

In the past few negotiation cycles, the negotiators heard that unit members clearly want to maintain a contract with integrity that ensures that teacher "voice" is not only heard, but is also listened to, and acted upon, when appropriate. In addition, teachers have spoken often and loudly that they want to maintain the rate of salary increases to a reasonable level for OUR district. Neither the leadership nor the membership of our FA want to cause fiscal hardship to the district or compromise quality of education, and no one wants to hurt the district or sites' ability to complete the continuous process of educational improvement.

The teachers who have given input on various surveys are united in that they want to ensure that OUR DISTRICT has the opportunity to hire and retain the most qualified, engaged, and empowered teaching staff that is available. Attracting and retaining qualified candidates can only be accomplished when the culture of the school and district value the input of stakeholders, including teachers. Fostering teacher leaders means that teacher input must come from a variety of sources - with many different perspectives and interests - and that maintaining those guarantees within the contract is the only way to ensure that both individual and collective interests are upheld.

A few key points to keep in mind regarding fair compensation and protecting teacher agency (lost or imperiled rights):

- Our percentage of a raise has become a sticking point because the district's negotiating team contends that our negotiators should "sell" our transfer rights in order to receive an equitable and fair raise. The membership has made clear that TEACHER AGENCY IS NOT FOR SALE.
- Over the past five years, LCFF revenue to the district has increased, on average, nearly 11% per year. Over those same five years, spending on educators - which includes new hires, benefits increases, increased STRS contributions, everything - has increased by about 7.4% per year.
- During that same period, the growth of spending on Classified staff was about the same as new spending on Certificated staff. The growth in spending on Administration was 10% per year on average, which is much closer to the growth of the revenue.
- The District likes to say on its website that your pay is the highest in the area, although that is not quite true (Santa Maria-Bonita's top pay is higher). What is true, according to the State of California, is that our student-to-teacher ratio is the highest of all of the districts used in the District's comparison group.

During the January 8, 2019 Board meeting, hundreds of letters written by our member's were presented to the SMJUHS Board and Superintendent. These letters contained teacher sentiments and accomplishments from faculty members, including coaches, advisers, department chairs, and others. Each letter listed the many ways that our work and our teacher engagement impacts students in their learning and their development as healthy, resilient community members with economic opportunities for all. The letters were simple, but powerful, and thank you to everyone who participated! If you didn't get a chance to turn yours in, we have opportunities to show your teacher pride in the near future, too!

In the next day or so, you will be receiving an email, at home, to request your help to demonstrate in a respectful, but visible way, that YOU believe TEACHERS MAKE IT HAPPEN! Jennifer Dolan has agreed to work as an Organizing Committee Chair for the Executive Board on tasks related to communication and ACTION for our members. We appreciate how busy everyone is and we promise not to ask you to do anything we do not feel is necessary to maintain the integrity of our contract, both in terms of compensation and teacher voice, but sometimes we have to take action to bring about necessary improvement.

With that said, we would like to send our best thoughts and support to the members of UTLA, who began a legal strike action Monday. For more information, go to <https://twitter.com/UTLANow> or <https://www.utla.net/news> for the most updated information.

Thank you,

Executive Board - Matt Provost, President; Tanya Guiremand, Vice President; Mike Emerson, Corresponding Secretary; Rebecca Masuda, Recording Secretary; Patty Peinado, Treasurer

Negotiating Team - Lorene Yoshihara, lead negotiator; Mike Glenn, Tanya Guiremand, Aaron Nesper, Patricia Peinado

For questions or concerns, contact jdolan1969@gmail.com.