



**REDWOOD
CITY
TEACHER
ASSOCIATION
NEWSLETTER**

RCTA ALGEBRA

8% + NEW IDEAS = P.I.

For more information
go to our web site
<http://www.rcta.us/>

December 4, 2006

From the President....

By Sandie Hoover

As your new RCTA president I want to thank you for your vote and support. The transition from Bret to me will hopefully be seamless as we have the same priorities---doing the best we can for all of our students and empowering YOU, the teacher. I realize that there are many questions and concerns about PI status. Together, with CTA's help, we hope to educate all of our members regarding all of our concerns with PI status. I am proud to be the President of such a skilled and dedicated group of professionals. Remember **THIS IS OUR YEAR.**

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Negoti-8-tions

THE CASE FOR 8% NOW

By Bret Baird

According to November 27th's S.F. Chronicle, California public schools will receive a windfall of \$ 6 billion dollars over the next 5 years. This money, combined with the almost 7% COLA (cost of living adjustment) this year and the \$ 5,951,205 in unrestricted reserves from last year (this is money left over from last year's budget that can be spent on salaries) makes our 8% seem not only fair, but more than reasonable and here's why.

WHO DO WE TRUST?

Last year our interim superintendent, Don Gielow, told us that the reserves of 13% were too high and that our district should bring them down via "soft landing." This did not happen. We took a 3.3% raise last year and the reserves remained at almost \$ 9 million. Last spring we were given a take it or leave it offer of 4%. Could you imagine how we'd look now if we had taken that offer? **WHERE IS THE TRUST ?**

The DISTRICT'S CURRENT OFFER
(continued on the next page)

Negotiations, continued....

DISTRICT'S CURRENT OFFER

Our district's current offer involves a two year contract.

First year:

.05% Retirement Health and Welfare
(District picks up increase in cost of retirees
H & W until they turn 65)

.80% Health and Welfare

*****1.1%** Optional Days (90% of us work the
two optional days at a fixed rate of
pay)

This money would now be paid per
diem and put on the salary schedule.

This is not a raise because
we are already working those days.

6% On the salary schedule

Second year:

COLA minus .8% Health and
Welfare!!

Plus the adding of steps 18 and 23
which the district claims will cost them
.3%

We are leery of two year contracts
and given the 4% take it or leave it offer
last spring, we are wondering why now
a two year contract offer? The most
important number to look at is the **6%**
on the salary schedule number at the
end of year one. We are now half way
between the 4% they wished we had
taken last year and the 8% we deserve
this year. Getting from 4 to 6 was worth
the wait and getting from 6 to 8 will be
great. **THE DISTRICT WILL NOT GO
BROKE BY GIVING US THE 8%.**

OPPORTUNITY.....

Upcoming training's offered by CTA:

Jan. 19-21 Good Teaching Conference,
Burlingame - for both
new and experienced teachers.

Feb. 16-18 NEA Pacific Regional
Leadership Conference, Anaheim

March 2-4 Equity and Human Rights
Conference, San Jose

Look on the CTA web site for more info and / or
register with Ann Huff at Hawes.

www.CTA.org

Tenured bargaining
unit members are being
asked to delay
committing to Saturday
Houghton Mifflin training's
until after the Dec. 20th
negotiation meeting
results.

OPINION....

How Our Salary Compares

In the past, I had applied for
special education positions at
Sequoia High School District, but
four years ago, I left special
education after about 20 years and
became a 5th grade teacher. I
really liked it, so since the only way
I could go to a high school position
was in special education, I stopped
applying.

With all the pressure from PI
status, I thought about going back
to special education and contacted
Sequoia. I asked them about
placement on the salary schedule.
They said I could only get 12 years
credit. I thought, well it is probably
too late to change, but asked what
that would be and was shocked to
hear that it was more that \$10,000
more than I am making here....it
was \$84,811.

8%, It is our year!
Sanda Everette

The following is an edited version of what Brian Cagle, negotiations chair, wrote after the last round of negotiations . Members received this on red paper as part of RCTA's ongoing attempt to keep members in the loop.

From the Table

November 8, 2006

The district's last proposal was a two-year deal; '06-07 would include a 6% salary schedule increase, 1.1% salary schedule increase for changing two optional staff development days to mandatory days (retroactive to 7/1/06), 0.8% for maintaining the status quo for health benefits, and 0.1% (roughly) for paying for future retirees health benefit increases, and also a retirement incentive based on the number of retirees (which does not affect percentage of salary offer). For '07-'08 the district offered COLA minus the health benefit increase (COLA defined as revenue limit COLA + deficit reduction + equalization) and the insertion of a step 18 and 23, which they claim will cost 0.3%

RCTA's last proposal was also a two-year deal; '06-07 was the same as the above district proposal. The real difference came in the second year where we wanted a 4% "floor" for the salary schedule increase and a compacted salary schedule, which allows teachers to reach the top salary in 16 years versus the current 25 years. The district's cost analysis for compacting is 0.8%. So, you can see that the difference in proposals is in the second year, especially the 4% floor and compacting.

Some important notes. We came down quite a bit in our offer for the first year of our proposal and were disappointed that the district did not acknowledge this by agreeing to the second year of our proposal. These settlements may seem good to some but all settlements are relative to the new money coming to the district each year. There is a lot of new money coming in this year, so it doesn't help to compare this settlement to years when there was very little coming in. Next year's estimated COLA (as defined above) is at 4.7%. CTA's financial analyst calculated that the district has 10.42% over the required reserve in unrestricted funds, this is an increase from 9.16% the previous year. So last year when RCTA agreed to a 3.3% increase to the salary schedule, the district turned around and gave an incredible settlement to the principals and were still able to increase their reserve. Reserves are very high compared to other districts. Declining enrollment and low attendance rates have adversely effected the COLA received this year.

The two teams will meet on December 20 with the hopes of reaching a settlement for compensation. ***We have yet to reach an agreement on the following topics; evaluations, waivers, class size, transfers, RCTA Presidential leave, special ed, and meetings.***

2006-2007 Negotiation team

Brian Cagle

Nancy Bloomquist

Bill Crow

Carolyn Olive

Bret Baird

Ara Prigian (CTA Field Representative)

Impasse was mentioned by the district at our last negotiations. It is a natural part of negotiations. The following article from CTA describes the process should we end up there.

IMPASSE IN A NUTSHELL

IMPASSE: When a teachers' association and a school district are unable to reach an agreement on a new contract, they go to "impasse". The law provides third-party assistance from the state. Here are the basic steps of impasse.

1. MEDIATION: The Public Employment Relations Board (PERB) officially declares an impasse and begins the mediation phase. PERB appoints a state mediator to work with the parties. If the mediator is not able to bring the two sides together, he/she certifies the dispute to fact-finding.

2. FACT-FINDING PANEL: Three people are selected to form a panel that will consider presentations made by the two parties.* The panel has one representative from each side, plus a "neutral" whom the parties select from a list provided by the state.

* The two parties present to the panel their respective bargaining proposals, their facts and analysis about the district's "ability to pay", and comparisons with other districts. When the panel concludes its meetings, the neutral will issue a written opinion. The association and district representatives may choose to agree with the neutral or write dissenting opinions.

* The neutral fact-finder is usually an attorney/arbitrator who has a general understanding about school finance. He/she may not be a financial expert or even an accountant.

* The neutral's time and energy are mostly devoted to mediating the dispute: pressuring the parties to agree on a contract.

* The neutral's written opinion is not binding. However, the parties are obliged to consider it.

* The mediation and fact-finding procedures are nothing more than a continuation of the bargaining process.

3. "SELF-HELP": After the parties complete the fact finding phase, if no agreement is reached in post fact-finding negotiations/mediation, each side may then engage in its own form of "self-help".

* The district could choose to "ram its proposal down the throats" of the unit members. However, the district would still have to negotiate a written agreement.

* The teachers are free to strike.

We will keep you posted...

WANNA HELP???????

The RCTA Action Committee will meet at Kennedy in Merrily Robinson's room this Wed.. Dec 6 after school (3:30)if you are interested in helping to keep the movement for 8 % going..... this is the place you want to be!!!!