



BEVERLY HILLS EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Educational Employees Working Together

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CONSENSUS

A Newsletter for BHEA Members
December 18, 2007



Bargainers Make Progress on Total Compensation

On Dec. 11, certificated bargainers narrowed options and came closer to reaching agreement on salary and benefits negotiations, even as the media reported a widening state budget deficit in California. Total compensation talks slowed last month after Supt. Kari McVeigh said publicly that the district administration was putting negotiations with BHEA and CSEA “on hold” pending more concrete information about the state of California’s economy. Since then, more information has emerged...some of it good and some of it bad. For example, Proposition 98 locks in baseline funding for public schools in California, so education funds generally enjoy better protection from cuts than do other areas of the state budget. However, extremely large deficits in the state budget may put pressure on lawmakers to suspend Prop. 98. Such a suspension is difficult, but not impossible, to carry out.

The fact that bargainers were able to move closer toward agreement in their last meeting is an indicator of the relatively good health of our district budget compared to that of California’s. District and BHEA members of the joint Budget Subcommittee will meet on Jan. 18 to digest a flurry of updates on the state budget that are expected earlier in January—not the least of which will be Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger’s 08-09 budget proposal.

Both BHEA and BHUSD hope to weather the current woes of California’s economy and will continue working in January to reach agreement on a fair compensation package for members.

Today, BHEA and BHUSD jointly issued a more detailed summary of the events of our Dec. 11 bargaining session.

9th Grade Parent-Teacher Social A Hit

The Celebrity Vault in downtown Beverly Hills was filled to capacity as parents, teachers, and administrators gathered on Nov. 28 for a social event aimed at bringing together parents and teachers of 9th grade students. Several teachers and counselors from BHHS were introduced by Principal J Guidetti. High school PTSA co-presidents Kathi Rothner and Cindy Burrows addressed the crowd, as did Supt. Kari McVeigh.

Attendees enjoyed themselves as they sipped beverages, viewed artwork, and conversed with each other in a low-key, pleasant atmosphere. Thanks go out to PTA Council co-president Franny Rennie for her efforts in organizing this successful event.

How Much Money Does BHUSD Spend on Its Human Resources?

The California Teachers Association has performed an analysis that compares how much, in percentage of total expenditures, BHUSD and eight other local school districts spend on their employees. The categories analyzed are: certificated unit member salaries, administrative salaries, classified unit member salaries, all employee benefits (health, pension, workers compensation, etc...), and health benefits in isolation. The eight other districts in the comparison are Arcadia, La Cañada, Las Virgenes, Manhattan Beach, Redondo Beach, San Marino, Santa Monica-Malibu, and South Pasadena. BHUSD’s figures are shown in large, bold font in the table below. Note that the data analyzed are from the 2005-2006 school year, the most recent data available. Also, the data are self-reported from each district with no requirement for accuracy.

As mentioned in the Nov. 27 joint communication from the BHEA and BHUSD bargaining teams, this and other information from the analysis are being discussed as negotiators work toward a fair agreement on salaries and benefits. Both of our organizations are committed to attracting and retaining quality staff as well as staying competitive with regard to total compensation. These core principles are enshrined in our mutual bargaining interests. Data such as those shown below assist our teams in 1) assessing where our district stands at present and 2) developing long-range plans for increasing our future competitiveness.

PERCENTAGE OF DISTRICT BUDGET SPENT ON EACH CATEGORY FOR 2005-2006 (Beverly Hills Unified—shown in large bold font—compared to eight other local districts)

Certificated salaries	Administrative salaries	Classified salaries	All employee benefits	Health benefits only
50%	6.6%	16%	19%	9.2%
49	6.4	16	19	9.1
48	5.2	16	18	8.3
47	5.1	14	17	7.6
45	5.1	14	17	6.9
45	4.7	12	16	6.3
44	4.6	12	15	5.4
44	4.5	12	14	5.2
43	4.4	12	14	4.3

IMPORTANT DATES

- Dec. 21: Last work day in 2007
- Jan. 7: First work day in 2008
- Jan. 10: BHEA Exec. Board meeting, 3:45 pm, Room 118
- Jan. 17: BHEA Rep. Council meeting, 3:45 pm, Room 118
- Jan. 21: MLK Day (no school)
- Jan. 22: Certificated bargaining
- Feb. 1: Pupil-free day
- Feb. 11: Local holiday (no school)
- Feb. 18: Presidents’ Day (no school)

Rep. Council Discusses Many Items

The Dec. 13 Rep. Council meeting is chock full of news. In the meeting, it was reported that:

- The schedule of Wed. morning K-8 late-start meetings will become more uniform starting next month. The schedule will adhere to a monthly rotation of four kinds of meetings: 1) staff/professional development, 2) “looking at student work,” 3) team (e.g. grade level/department) with agendas determined by the teams, and 4) school-wide personal professional.
- These same meetings occur at the high school, but not necessarily on Wed. mornings.
- Both high school and K-8 representatives reported a high degree of student tardiness on late-start Wed. mornings.
- Our district creates “independent study” plans for some students who have scheduled short-term absences. One of the motivations for doing this is so that our district can collect money from the state as if the students were actually in attendance for the days missed. (In California, if a student is absent, the local school district does not receive funding in proportion to the number of days absent.) Our district has created these IS plans for students who plan to be absent so that they can go on vacation. Some RC members expressed concern that this practice encourages students to take off from school to go on vacation. Other RC members said that parents would go ahead and schedule the vacation anyway, so why not recapture the money?
- BHEA could implement an online election/survey procedure for about \$2,000/year. This would allow BHEA to conduct an unlimited number of elections and member surveys by issuing its members usernames and passwords. There was some concern about the price tag, but the RC wants to move in this online direction. Discussion will continue in January.
- A new mentoring program has been started at El Rodeo. The RC discussed the similarities and differences between advisory and mentoring in the past and the nature of this new mentoring program at ER. No other K-8 representatives reported implementing a new mentoring program.
- Horace Mann distributed a safe school survey that asked questions about teachers’ behavior toward students.
- The RC asked for more communication between the leadership teams and BHEA representatives at each site.
- BHEA and BHUSD are still negotiating items that arose last school year related to the compensation of our independent study teacher and three resource specialists.
- The Healthy Kids survey will appear as a discussion item on the Jan. RC agenda.

Rep. Council Election in January

• Deadline to submit candidacy form is this Friday.

Next month, BHEA will conduct an election for all seats on the Representative Council. An informational memo on the election along with the declaration of candidacy form may be accessed online at BHEA.org/News. The deadline to submit a declaration of candidacy form is Fri., Dec. 21.

BHEA encourages you to consider giving back to your union by representing your colleagues on the RC.

UPDATES AND BRIEFS

- There are three CTA conferences that are available for members to attend: 1) Urban Issues, Feb. 29-Mar. 2 in Santa Clara, 2) Good Teaching, Mar. 7-9 in Anaheim, and 3) Equity & Human Rights, Mar. 28-30 in Irvine. There are limited BHEA funds available to assist members with registration and transportation costs. An informational brochure is available online at BHEA.org/Conferences. Please contact BHEA if you’re interested in attending. Registration deadlines are fast approaching.
- Newly installed Board of Education members Steven Fenton and Brian Goldberg visited several school sites over the last few weeks to interact directly with BHEA members and to thank them for their support during the fall election cycle.
- BHEA Pres. Chris Bushée recognizes and thanks the members of our certificated bargaining team for their hard work and dedication. These members are: Anita Naiman, Josh Schmidt, Richard Waters, Mark Frenn, and Rachel Pearce. Our contract continues to be strong due to the efforts of our current and past bargaining team members.

New Board of Education Seated

On Dec. 11, newly elected Board of Education members Brian Goldberg and Steven Fenton took office alongside reelected member Myra Lurie and continuing members Myra Demeter and Nooshin Meshkaty. Highlights include:

- BHEA Pres. Chris Bushée gave a speech on opportunity. His speech is accessible online at BHEA.org/News.
- Outgoing Board member Alissa Roston thanked family and friends.
- Outgoing Board member John Millan pointed to recent facilities accomplishments; talked about school bonds; thanked superintendent, curriculum specialists; said Board members work together, not as individuals; admonished BH community for racism on permit issue.
- Lurie said she “trusts” the community; said being a Board member is “hard work;” offered “cooperation” to Fenton and Goldberg; talked about district’s math initiative, technology; said we can’t bring back the “old days,” that our district needs to “adapt” and be “open-minded” to change.
- Fenton said he is “humbled” to be a Board member. He thanked his family. He was visibly overcome with emotion.
- Goldberg said it is an “honor” to be a Board member; said he’s a “lifetime student” and that public schools are great; said he will continue dialoging with teachers and parents.
- Demeter was elected president and Meshkaty vice-president.
- Demeter talked about our district’s “rich curriculum,” “accountability,” and “courageous” dialog; said she has respect for children’s learning potential.
- Meshkaty talked about tolerance and mutual respect; she proposed infusing tolerance through a required 9th grade class.
- In general, there was a lot of thanking of Board members that occurred at this meeting.

*** THE TICKER ***

ADDITIONAL EARNINGS ALREADY RECEIVED AS A RESULT OF SALARY & BENEFITS NEGOTIATIONS FOR 2007-2008

	Superintendent Kari McVeigh	The Other 500 Employees
As of Today, Dec. 18	\$2,597.26	\$0.00