



BEVERLY HILLS EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Educational Employees Working Together

Web: BHEA.org

241 Moreno Drive, Beverly Hills CA 90212

Phone: (310) 277-9364

Speech on layoffs and compensation increases delivered by BHEA Pres. Chris Bushée at the May 6 Board of Education meeting:

Good evening. First, I'd like to thank Board President Myra Demeter for a good conversation last week. I enjoyed it and I hope we may continue these conversations in the future. I'd like to thank Board member Brian Goldberg for his leadership on identifying available funds within our district budget to minimize negative impacts to the classroom. I'd like to thank Board member Steve Fenton for his innovative, outside-the-box ideas on generating new, sustainable revenue streams. I'd like to thank Board Vice-President Nooshin Meshkaty for her interest in creating stronger bonds of communication with teachers. I'd like to thank Board member Myra Lurie for supporting BHEA in its efforts to create a unified voice of teachers, parents, and administrators in opposition to Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger's proposed cuts to the state education budget.

Tonight I bring you 223 signed copies of a letter that asks you to do two things. One, rescind layoff notices and two, help us move compensation negotiations forward. The signatures on these letters are from BHEA members who stand in solidarity on these important matters. While we are cognizant of the budget situation in Sacramento and while we are cognizant of projected declining enrollment, we also offer you other information to consider. Consider that this Board cut \$1.2 million more than the projected revenue loss from Sacramento next year. The decision to close positions is yours, even if that results in larger class sizes. We're asking you to *not* make employees suffer the pain of layoffs to correct any sort of overstaffing that you may perceive. Use natural attrition instead.

Consider that many political analysts believe that Schwarzenegger is using the threat of an enormous budget cut as a bargaining chip, not as a non-negotiable position. Consider that our district enjoys the generosity of our PTA, BHEF, and City through fundraising efforts and the Joint Powers agreement. Consider that Beverly Hills must remain competitive if we are serious about attracting and retaining the highest quality staff. Consider that our per-pupil state revenue, our ADA, will increase by 10% between now and the 2010-2011 school year using the current Prop 98 formula. Consider that you will continue to have the opportunity to reduce expenditures through ongoing, prudent analysis of our budget. No less than 21 districts in our region have already settled their compensation talks for this year, including Arcadia, Claremont, Las Virgenes, Long Beach, Pasadena, and San Marino. It's time for Beverly Hills to join this group. You have a wonderfully dedicated, motivated group of employees working in our district. BHEA believes that a fair settlement is both within reach and financially doable this year. Achieving a fair settlement is in the interests of all parties.

Finally, I want us to stay united in opposing cuts to the state education budget. I will be in Sacramento on May 20 lobbying legislators to *not* suspend Prop 98 and to invest in public education. I hope to carry a unified message from teachers, parents, and administrators. Tomorrow, BHEA will start its signature gathering campaign on a letter addressed to our leaders in Sacramento. I will deliver these letters on May 20. Let's stick together on this one.

Thank you.