



A Joint Communiqué from the ARE and RUSD Bargaining Teams



***Negotiation Sessions: February 21, March 2, and March 10
Training Session: February 22***

Participants:

Steve Barber, Facilitator	Dennis Bixler	Mitch Brunyer
Miguel Espinoza	Eileen Fetters	Alex Flores
Zepure Hacopian	Derek Hollingsworth	Miriam Kim
John Martinez	Carlos Ochoa	John Peterson
Greg Pryor	Vanessa Ramirez	Sharyn Sigler

Training

The ARE and District teams continued their training in the collaborative problem-solving approach for negotiations on February 22. During the training day, the teams analyzed our organization in terms of missed versus realized opportunities. The group also examined the process of encouraging innovation and how diverse viewpoints contribute to innovation. The teams discussed differences in the positional and collaborative negotiations processes and received training on the current statutes respecting leaves: illness, industrial, jury service, family, parental leave, etc.

Looping Out Process

In February, representatives from both teams -- Dennis Bixler, Carlos Ochoa, Sharyn Sigler, and Vanessa Ramirez -- worked together to jointly update the Board of Education and the ARE Rep Council on negotiations in a process called "looping out." The looping out discussion with each constituency included description of the articles open for discussion, how interests and issues were identified at the table, summary of the interests and issues discussed at our first day of negotiations. The four presenters also fielded questions. These included questions about how the process this year differs from previous rounds of negotiations. Questions were also posed regarding current budget and reserves, timing of when salary, health, and welfare will be discussed at the table, gathering data and background information to support discussions at the table, and how teams are accountable to each other for being prepared for each session. In March, members of both bargaining teams will meet with the RUSD Board on Tuesday, March 14 and with ARE Rep Council on Thursday, March 16. March looping out will cover negotiations sessions on February 21, March 2, and March 10.

Negotiations Sessions

Article VII: Hours, Duties and Work Year

Continuing the focus on Article VII prior to other topics, the teams reviewed the following on three additional bargaining dates since the last communiqué:

- High School Working Conditions
- Elementary Music Teachers – schedules and working conditions

- Special Education Working Conditions

Working Conditions at the Comprehensive High Schools

High school topics have received a significant concentration of time. The teams explored in detail the history of bell schedule development at the two high schools, including how staff/site leadership teams have been involved in the process. In order to understand the complexity and distinguishing characteristics of our two comprehensive high schools, the team reviewed documents including:

- Bell Schedules
- Instructional Minute analysis
- Master Schedules
- Reports related to:
 - 0/1st period course offerings and student participation
 - Course load analyses
 - Student athlete participation statistics
 - Final Exam schedules
 - Nutrition/2nd Chance Breakfast

Solutions under discussion have centered on equity of opportunities for all students, as well as equivalent working conditions for staff. Staff at both high schools will provide input into the development of bell schedule options for 2017-18.

Elementary Music Schedules

The teams continued discussions on the topic of the Elementary Music Teachers' working conditions. The teams reviewed the work schedules for music teachers, discussed logistical variables including travel time and music instrument distribution, and discussed the impact of the music program on elementary site schedules. The teams also received information related to an initial planning meeting for the 2017-18 school year. This topic will be discussed further in future bargaining sessions.

Special Education

The teams discussed a number of concerns related to the Special Education Program including:

- Caseload information related to Speech and Language teachers, RSP teachers, and other Special Education staff
- Planning time for Special Education teachers
- Impacts of lengthy IEP meetings on all participating teachers
- Substitute availability for Speech/Language teachers
- Implementation of the new IEP software and its impact on staff
- Impact of the Special Education program on the General Fund budget
- Staff development related to co-teaching model and SIRAS

The teams have requested additional data and will continue this discussion at a future Session.

Our next negotiations session will take place on Thursday, March 23, 2017.