

The More You Know – February 9, 2018

Dear Colleagues,

Trust, but verify.

My recent messages describing the “glimmer of hope” was—as you could probably tell—cautiously optimistic. I have learned from numerous experiences that what looks like the light at the end of tunnel can be an on-coming train.

Again—*Trust, but verify.*

So, even with the rhetoric I heard about the District making a new proposal which sounded as though the YFA was about to make progress on negotiations, I knew I could only believe it once I saw it in writing.

And now I have seen—{ahem}—“A proposal” in writing. And this isn’t what was being sold to me in various conversations. Not even close.

What the District team considers “honoring the cohort agreement” is simply A LOT more work with no real, concrete promise to get us to median. . . .AND the timeline would take who-knows-how-long to even get there?!

A couple of highlights to illustrate the YFA negotiating team’s exasperation with the District’s latest proposal:

- Remember when the District wanted to set the class size standard at 40 and then all class sizes would use that as a baseline for comparison? Well, now the District wants 45.
- The District only inches in salary increases over the next few years—will halt increases if we don’t improve our FTES/FTEF ratio—and then {get this little gem}, gives the District a series of caveats whereby it has, essentially, “escape clauses” for (dis)honoring the agreement if the Board feels it needs to change direction based on a variety of internal or external factors.

Un—{%@#&ing}—believable.

So, as of this morning, the YFA negotiating team is meeting to prepare our response to submit to the District team. We anticipate submitting a final draft by this Monday, February 12th by 5pm. The next Board meeting is Wednesday, February 14th and gives the Board the opportunity to review the YFA’s response in closed session.

The YFA and the YCCD do not currently have any meeting dates scheduled for negotiations. I am following-up with our legal counsel regarding YFA’s filing for impasse.

Once again, I am asking that you attend the Board meeting this Wednesday, February 14th at 5:30pm at the District Office, 2201 Blue Gum Avenue, Modesto.

- Please show up in numbers. Bring your colleagues. Encourage faculty to attend. And if you have students who want to speak in our behalf, bring them along, too.
- Please wear your buttons.
- Please consider speaking during public comments. Maximum time is 5 minutes, but may be reduced depending on how many people speak. I suggest writing-out your speech and reading it to the Board rather than speaking without a script.

In short, I think you'll find today's edition of *The More You Know* to be an accurate description regarding the current state of negotiations.

As a side note, one of our colleagues created a GIF of the "HONOR THE COHORT AGREEMENT" button (see attached). You are encouraged to add it to your signature when you send emails.

Stay informed. Stay engaged. Stay united.

Jim Sahlman