



Facts from the Table

A Report from the Long Beach Unified School District Negotiating Team ■ February 24, 2006

Besides a Raise, State COLA Pays For Higher Step & Column, Benefits

The school district has received questions about TALB leaders' proposal to spend all of the state Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for teachers' salaries alone. Their proposal creates the erroneous perception that the COLA exists only for increases in teachers' salaries in the Long Beach Unified School District.

Besides a raise for teachers, what else does the state COLA pay for? Many things. For example, teachers earn step and column increases on the salary schedule for additional degrees and units, and for annual longevity increases. Teachers also earn career increments after 19 and 24 years of service. These increases are paid from the state COLA. Increases in teacher health care costs and workers' compensation costs also must be paid for by the COLA.

A major problem with the proposal to sweep the entire district COLA exclusively into an increase in

teachers' salaries is that it would leave nothing for increases for other employees. This includes all classified personnel in units A and B; non-represented personnel such as school counselors, college aides, recreation aides, nutrition service workers and substitute teachers; and supervisors, managers and confidential employees.

Some of the state COLA also must be used to increase reserves from 1 percent to 2 percent as required by law, an approximate cost of \$7 million. The COLA also covers increases in the cost of maintenance, school safety and emergency preparedness, technology support and other important work that must be done to keep schools open and operating.

The reality is that the COLA is there to allow all employees and many crucial services to keep up with higher costs. To allocate all of the COLA solely to teacher salary increases would shortchange other employees and services and district-paid benefits on which all employees depend.

Negotiations continue at the TALB Office today and Tuesday, March 7 and at the district Thursday, March 16.

Still On the Table: An Immediate Salary Increase of at Least 4 Percent

Had TALB accepted the raise offered by the school district in January, teachers would have seen the following increases. These increases are stalled until an agree-

ment is reached. The district proposal increases teacher salaries at least 4 percent but provides higher raises to the most experienced teachers with advanced degrees.

Teacher Category	Proposed Salary	Annual Salary Increase	Benefits*	Total	Percent Increase
Minimum—New teacher with bachelor's degree and no experience	\$44,956	\$1,729	\$16,860	\$61,816	4.0%
Average Long Beach Unified School District Teacher	\$57,860	\$2,225	\$18,848	\$76,708	4.0%
Master's degree with 30 years of experience**	\$82,857	\$5,514	\$21,872	\$104,729	7.132%
Doctorate degree with 30 years and National Board Certification**	\$92,692	\$6,815	\$23,387	\$116,079	7.94%

*Benefits include district-paid health, dental, vision, pharmaceutical, mental and life insurance; district contributions to State Teachers' Retirement System, workers' compensation, unemployment insurance and Medicare. Benefits are based on districtwide averages. Individual costs may vary.

**This includes a 30-year annual career increment of \$2,500 and, for the doctorate, a \$2,000 annual stipend.