

Why Berkeley Teachers Are Outraged

Berkeley teachers have been working without a contract since June of 2003. Yet despite our efforts to negotiate in good faith with the Board of Education for two full years, we remain far apart on key issues, including **a fair cost of living raise, health benefits, and class size limits**. Nevertheless, during these last two years of contract negotiations we have continued to work well beyond the mandated contractual hours for which we're paid. We pride ourselves on donating these countless extra hours to provide a quality education for Berkeley's students.

We did not stop putting in **countless extra unpaid hours** when:

- Class sizes increased dramatically over the past three years because the Board of Education used taxpayers' BSEP class size reduction monies to supplement the BUSD general fund.
- Hundreds of teachers unnecessarily received layoff notices in recent years due to egregious miscalculations by the BUSD Personnel Office.
- The last cost of living raise we received was in September 2002. Currently many districts across the State are settling on cost of living raises retroactive to September 2004.
- Many of us have been forced to shoulder increased health premiums in recent years.

Now the Board of Education reports that **BUSD expects to receive over 4% in increased revenues** from the State next school year. Outrageously, the Board of Education refuses to commit any of those projected increased revenues to pass on a cost of living raise to us next school year. Instead their priorities lie elsewhere.

The Board intends to:	Net Effect:
Refuse to commit to reasonable class size limits, despite the BSEP/Measure B parcel taxes.	No guarantee on lower class sizes. Loophole still exists allowing Board to dramatically raise class sizes in future.
Reject BFT's call for teachers' fair share of the increased revenue.	No basic cost of living increase for teachers in three years.
Dramatically increase the cost of health benefit premiums paid by teachers with no associated cost of living raise.	A pay cut for teachers.

For Berkeley Unified **to be able to recruit and retain quality teachers**, our teacher compensation levels must stay competitive with surrounding districts. Research and personal experience tells us all that teacher quality is the number one determining factor in student achievement. **We can no longer continue "business as usual"** while the Board of Education marches Berkeley Unified toward the downward spiral of low teacher morale and high teacher transience our community suffered just a few short years ago.

If these developments trouble you, contact the Board of Education and let them know!
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