



WASHINGTON TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Statement to the WUSD School Board 8/25/16

The major stumbling block at the bargaining table is salary. Here's the short version. Over the last two years, the District's budget has increased 20%. WTA's last salary proposal is 7%. Given this, our salary proposal is reasonable, and WUSD can afford it - especially since we're still so far behind neighboring districts.

I want to discuss something from a recent WUSD bargaining update:

"From the outset, we have presented our best possible offers choosing not to engage in the all too traditional form of back and forth negotiating, prolonging the process and leaving both sides in a state of uneasiness."

..."choosing not to engage in all too traditional form of back and forth negotiating"...

Negotiating is the process of presenting proposals back and forth between parties, eventually coming to an agreement. There is no traditional vs. other negotiations. Back and forth is negotiations. What this statement says is that the District never had any intention to bargain in good faith.

..."prolonging the process and leaving both sides in a state of uneasiness"...

The fact that we're here 10 months after bargaining started with no end in sight tells us that the District's strategy actually has extended the process.

Also, the fact that you [The School Board] feel the need to have a police presence at all public meetings tells me that perhaps you are in a state of uneasiness.

I don't know what alternative reality the person or persons who wrote this update live in, but clearly, the District's bargaining strategy has been an abject failure.

In any case, even though the update was unsigned, it was posted on the District website with District letterhead. Since you are the Trustees, that means you own the update, it's yours.

The Superintendent has been here for a year. In what started with positive communication and hope has turned into anger and mistrust. And, we've had a 15% staff turnover. If that was the District's goal, then you have succeeded admirably. Regardless of what happens, it will be hard to regain that trust. Again, you are the Trustees and you own that.

There are so many good things going on in our District: We have great kids, we have great staff (though missing a number of veteran teachers). Dual immersion, Farm to Fork, MESA, robotics, and on and on. I would hate to see that all go to waste.

But at this time, it all seems to be going down the toilet.

If that happens, I blame you.

- Don Stauffer