



Remarks from LIUNA to the Carlsbad Unified School District Board of Trustees - 1/11/2012

Thank you for the opportunity to address you on behalf of the classified employees. Our classified members were encouraged recently to finally hear some 'happier' news from Sacramento, and are hoping that the small signs of economic recovery will continue to grow, and help the District deal with next year's budget woes. We will continue to do our part to help the district come to some resolution in the current year, even though the budget crisis is still several months away.

We know that the board and the Carlsbad community are very concerned about the potential for budget cuts to adversely impact our students. We just wanted everyone to know that cuts to classified members DO impact our students, in many ways. From transportation to nutrition, from clean and safe classrooms to caring for diabetic and other medically fragile students, our classified staff interacts with students on a daily basis, and forms a backbone for all the learning that goes on in the classroom.

We also want to be sure the Carlsbad community knows that, unlike some other surrounding school districts, Carlsbad Unified classified employees pay the entire employee portion for our retirement plans. In addition, we contribute substantially to our medical benefits, with proportional payments required for employees working less than full time. Unfortunately, the sad fact is that the pay scales for our classified employees are among the lowest in all of San Diego County, and has been slowly edging lower each year. With no COLA or other increases for the past several years, and with increases to both the employer and employee portions of our medical benefit plans, our members' take home pay has been steadily decreasing.

Still, throughout all these challenges, we remain committed to helping the district identify cost savings in order to reverse the deficit spending the district has been forced to do. However, we strongly feel there are still ways to creatively solve these challenges without the much talked-about across-the-board pay cuts.

We share the Board Members' concerns with the Early Retirement programs that were offered years ago. We feel those annuity-style plans will never generate the cost savings that other, one-time incentives will, like the one we are proposing. In fact, the recent experience with the San Diego County Office of Education plan for Classified Staff demonstrates this point.

We urge the Board to consider our latest counter proposals that were presented to your negotiations team this week, and look forward to hearing your feedback.