



Faculty Association Negotiations Update

STRONGER TOGETHER!

To: All Faculty

From: Sandra Esslinger, Lead Negotiator

Date: 07/29/2024

We met with the District team for the **17th time** on Monday, July 29, 2024.

Team members in attendance:

District: Sokha Song, Francisco Dorame, Delana Miller, and Morris Rodrigue.

FANT: Sandra Esslinger, Joshua Christ, Benjamin Vu, David Mrofka, and Robin Devitt (CTA)

Overview: The tension in negotiations is increasing. The District received handsome increases to its budget for the 2023-24 academic years and our financial requests were easily affordable and reasonable. However, the District has predictably complained about an imaginary future financial catastrophe as justification for not negotiating with us fairly. Our proposals are equity-based and were designed to begin addressing the fact that faculty salaries have descended below the state average and are the lowest professional salaries of all professionals at Mt. SAC (see Table 1), while the minimum qualifications require advanced degrees in their fields.

Table 1

		Educational Administrators	Classified Administrators	Classified Professionals	Classified Support Staff	Full -Time Professors
Fall 2023	Avg. Salary	\$205,744	\$166,742	\$121,690	\$97,916	\$121,058
	% over State Avg.	8%	10%	18%	23%	-1%

Datamart Source: https://datamart.cccco.edu/Faculty-Staff/Staff_Annual.aspx

WE NEED YOU AT THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING ON AUGUST 7TH to express your unwillingness to accept yet another affront from the district!!

Unresolved Issue #1: 15-year Longevity Step

Currently, we are the only bargaining unit that does not have a 15-year longevity step, AND we are the only bargaining unit that has a stipend as opposed to a percentage, which is the more financially advantageous formula (see Table 2). This disparity is NOT equitable. The only way we can close this gap is by paying for it ourselves. **THE DISTRICT REJECTED OUR 15-YEAR LONGEVITY UNLESS WE ARE WILLING TO PURCHASE IT BY USING A PERCENTAGE DEDUCTION FROM OUR COLA.** Even though every other employee group has a 15-year longevity step, and their longevity steps are advantageously compounded percentages, the District claims it does not have the money to make longevity equitable. **This is an equity issue—they have the money; they just don’t want to prioritize us. They are not opposed to the idea; they just want faculty to pay for it out of their Cost-of-Living Allocation!!!** We will never recover the financial ground we have lost if we continue to accept the bare minimum of COLA.

Table 2

Longevity Steps	10-year	15-year	20-year	25-year	30-year	35-year	Total Compounded Percent
Faculty	\$4,360	NO	+\$4,360	+\$4,360	+\$4,360	NO	NO (14%*)
CSEA 262 Confidential	3.5%	5%	3.5%	3.5%	3.5%	No	20.49%
All Management	3.5%	5%	3.5%	3.5%	3.5%	3.5%	24.71%

*Appx 14% of the average salary (\$121,058) as reported for 2023 for Mt. SAC:

https://datamart.cccco.edu/Faculty-Staff/Staff_Annual.aspx

Unresolved Issue #2: Increases to Health Care Benefits

The Faculty Association has been negotiating for an increase to health benefits allowances. Currently, Mt. SAC faculty do not get equitable health insurance coverage. We are not fully covered in our health benefits like the other bargaining units (see Table 3). Without these increases to our health benefits, any gains we make in COLA disappear into purchasing our health benefits. **THE DISTRICT ONLY INTENDS TO INCREASE FACULTY HEALTH INSURANCE IF WE LEAVE CALPERS HEALTH INSURANCE.** This is a bad-faith attempt to leverage us out of the health insurance that best serves faculty. This take-it-or-leave-it approach is not respectful or good faith negotiations.

Table 3

Fully Covered Insurance	Single Party Kaiser	Two Party Kaiser	Family Kaiser	Dental HMO	Vision	Life
Faculty	Yes	NO	NO	NO*	NO*	NO*
CSEA 262, 651 Management	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
BoT, President/VPs	yes**	yes**	yes**	yes**	yes	yes

*"No" applies to 2-Party and family, single party is fully covered for Kaiser and Dental HMO with their current allowance this year only.

**Full coverage for all plan options.

Continuing Problem: A Complete Lack of Respect for Faculty

Negotiations are now about equity and the lack of respect that the District has shown us for the last ten years, which has increased in this last negotiation cycle. This lack of respect extends well beyond the longevity steps. Faculty are consistently and unfairly overlooked in terms of how the District compensates us. The District continues to withhold benefit increases needed to keep up with inflation, but **only for faculty**. The District's continuous delay tactics and refusal to budge on the monetary issues took us well into the summer when **the District knew faculty would not be available to attend Board meetings.**

Not surprisingly, the District has no problem finding money to support administrative bloat and wasteful spending. **The growth in management over the last 11 years is disproportionate to the growth of the college overall, which has increased by 88%** (see Table 4). The District is not willing to reallocate the funds saved from the over 50 managers and faculty who retired early, which saved the district millions of dollars. It is time for the district to right-size management!

Table 4

	2012	2023	Difference	11 year Growth %
FTES	28,701	30,410	1701	6%
Faculty	395	463	68	17%
Managers	86	160	74	88%

Furthermore, while the District argues that it cannot afford to pay us EQUALLY to the other bargaining units, it continues to pay the other units above and beyond what faculty receive. The District is funding CalPERS AND Social Security for other bargaining units, which benefits them, yet the District refuses to increase our health benefits or give us the 15-year longevity step (see Table 5).

Table 5

Employer Contribution	Social Security	CalPERS (24-25)	CalSTRS (24-25)	Totals
FACULTY (STRS Retirement)	\$0	\$0	19.10%	19.10%
CSEA (CalPERS Retirement)	6.2%	27.05%	\$0	33.25%
Difference in Faculty Post-retirement Contributions				-14.15

What can YOU do???

If the way the District treats faculty outrages you, and it should, then show up at the Board of Trustees meeting on Wednesday, August 7 to demonstrate your indignation at what has now become a standard mistreatment of faculty!

FA Responses:

Article 10.B.5–Adjunct Office Hours: New legislation increases the percentage of office hour compensation districts may receive for adjunct office hours, but the legislation failed to increase the actual funding for the program. As a result, the FA has responded with a contingency plan where if the funding is available over the next few years, the district will increase the office hour rate until it achieves the non-teaching rate. In our response, the contingency was reduced from the district-proposed 75% to 65%, which is easier to reach but still covers the district expenses.

Appendix A.5–Longevity: The Faculty rejected the district's offer that the FA could purchase the longevity schedule out of their negotiated COLA. The faculty maintains this is an equity issue, as all other units have this benefit.

Appendix C–Adjunct Longevity: As stated above, the Faculty rejected the district offer that the FA could purchase the longevity schedule out of their negotiated COLA.

Appendix A.6–PGH: The faculty responded to the district that they would not take money negotiated in other parts of the contract to pay for this proposal. However, the pool for the six paid professional growth hours is under-utilized, and the Faculty has proposed up to 12 hours of compensation on a first-come-first-served basis,

which is out of the existing pool. We are not asking for increases in district contributions; it is just those faculty who participate in professional development that can at least be compensated for the equivalent of our two flex days.

Appendix A.4.1—Initial Placement: There have been issues regarding whether a faculty member should be placed on a vocational or academic track for salaries. The Faculty is working on a fair process that determines the track before the position is offered.

Article 8—Benefits: The Faculty has returned the district's response to them with a single question, “Is the district refusing to increase the health insurance allowances for faculty?” We proposed a formula to self-adjust around Kaiser premiums like the other units. The district offered us SISC again, breaking their promise and trust with us since they promised never to leverage us out of CalPERS to increase our health and welfare contributions. This is a bad faith effort to leverage us out of CalPERS and [PEMHCA](#).

District Response:

Article 20—Grievance Procedure: We are making progress on this, but we have a few issues regarding clarity and process that we need to agree upon.

Tentative Agreement (TA):

Appendix C—Faculty Overload and Other Than Contract Salary Rates: The FA and the District agreed that column placement review may take a primary term. All professors, including adjunct professors, shall be paid accurately at the start of their employment and per the contract language in Appendix A according to their educational achievements.