

UTLA BARGAINING



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School Board rejects fully funded health benefits

UTLA and the eight other employee unions will soon begin joint negotiations over health benefits for 2008. The move comes after the LAUSD School Board rejected the union-led Health Benefits Committee's recommendation to retain the current health care package. The cost is estimated to increase by \$72 million next year.

The Health Benefits Committee's proposal was made after 12 months of study and was approved by all of the employee unions. Only the District member of the committee rejected the plan and instead offered up a "minority report" proposal that would cut our benefits.

After the School Board rejected the union-approved plan, the Health Benefits Committee had the option to return to the Board with a revised plan or to go into coordinated bargaining with the District. The committee opted to stick with the original plan for fully funded benefits, so bargaining should begin soon. We expect a tough fight and will need your participation in an effort to maintain health benefits.

Health benefits: our plan vs. theirs

The District's plan: Cut health benefits and force employees to enroll in an HMO or pay higher out-of-pocket expenses.

- LAUSD would fund the cost of the Kaiser plan (HMO). Employees would not have to pay premiums if they choose Kaiser.
- Employees who chose Blue Cross would have to pay a new premium for their health care (\$44 a month for HMO and \$165 a month for POS, with similar or higher out-of-pocket expenses for retiree).

The District's proposal would provide a small monthly rebate to those people who enrolled in the PacifiCare HMO, which is similar to the Blue Cross HMO (the rebate would be higher for retiree). In addition the yearly maximum limit for the Delta Dental plan would rise to \$2,000.

The unions' plan: Maintain current level of benefits to keep our families healthy and to help attract and retain qualified personnel to our schools. Because of the work by the Health Benefits Committee, our plan is one of the most cost efficient packages in the state.