

Board Meeting: October 14

Leigh Elizondo – Staff Sign Language Interpreter

I am concerned by the lack of personal action by the administration of this board.

Currently the Administration is in negotiations with all 3 bargaining units seeking payroll deductions to close a \$700k gap.

1. Why is the administration waiting for the bargaining units to take payroll reductions first?

*DDAS, the administrative group, has met to discuss how it will make up its share of the shortfall for the FY 2009-10. A survey was sent out asking them to choose between pay reduction and furloughs, and as of last Friday they have chosen furloughs.*

2. Why are the administrators not paving the way with their own pay cuts effective immediately?

*Administrators were the only group not to participate in the “me too” pay raises resulting from growth, even though they play a substantial part in helping growth to be realized. The budget information presented at the last board meeting shows that the administration has not recovered from the last downturn to the extent that other groups have. Also, to simply impose “a pay cut effectively immediately” would not be treating them fairly as the Board had asked be done for all employee groups at the outset of this budget situation.*

3. What is the Board of Trustees contributing to the shortfall to immediately reduce the shortfall?

*Nearly all trustees contribute significantly to the Ohlone Foundation each year including 2009-10. Their contributions help offset College expenses in a number of areas including scholarships for students and College event support.*

4. The Board receives compensation for Travel (BP 2735). I have been informed that mileage for employees who commute between the Fremont and Newark campuses will no longer be paid.

*The Board, like all College employees, receives reimbursement for travel for College business if approved in advance. It does not receive any other compensation for travel.*

*Neither policies nor practices regarding pay for mileage between the two campuses have changed. Employees have been and will continue to be reimbursed for travel between the two campuses in accordance with established policies.*

5. The Board receives benefits for self and family (BP 2730). I am being told that the district wishes to pro-rate my benefits and wants to lift the floating cap.

*The District is in negotiations with the three bargaining units regarding how each will close its portion of the \$700,000 budget shortfall for the 2009-10 year. In discussion to close the gap are furloughs and salary reductions. Information on the impacts of these options is available from Human Resources, and individuals are encouraged to ask specific questions. Keep in mind, however, that it is not the role of the Human Resources staff to provide retirement or financial advice.*

6. The Board receives compensation for attending board meetings: Each board member: \$291.72/mo or \$3,500 per annually each – a total of \$31,505.76 – Yet I am being asked to take a pay cut.

*Compensation for Board members is the norm. Of the 72 California Community College Districts, 65 compensate trustees for their service and 68 provide health benefits. The level of compensation is determined in the Education Code Section 72024 by the number of FTES generated by the college, which in Ohlone's case is between 5,000 and 10,000. We are a relatively small college offering a small amount of compensation compared with other California Community Colleges. In addition, compared with other locally elected boards, California Community College compensation is generally low. For instance, compensation for members of local school boards ranges from \$240 to \$750 per month; local city council compensation ranges from \$13,608 to \$19,500 per year.*

7. The Board has an obligation to consider how the funds they receive for perks could better serve the college and students as a whole.

*See the response to #6.*

8. No one from the Board of Trustees to the Administrators should expect to come out unscathed

*See the response to #1.*

9. The Administration should take the first pay cut and it would be easier for the rest of us to follow.

*See the response to #1.*

Comments from April Rogers – Staff Sign Language Interpreter

In support of Leigh Elizondo's letter

Linda Evers, CSEA President

1. We have about 20% of our chapter who are 10 month employee or part-time employees whose retirement, benefits will be reduced by a furlough - they will not be considered to be full time when the hours are reduced.

*Ten-month employees will keep their "full-time" status for the district's purposes when it comes to health benefits.*

2. A furlough will reduce the hours of employees and cause them to no longer be considered full time and will affect their salary and affect every other reason that they work at Ohlone.

*See response #1. Salary will be reduced.*

3. They will lose their benefits, their medical benefits, their retirement benefits.

*See response #1 regarding medical benefits.*

*Regarding retirement benefits, if the bargaining unit chooses the furlough option, employees' service year will be slightly reduced--"slightly" as the option is 5 days of furlough. The employee's base pay will be reported the same to PERS, so "final" compensation would not be affected if the employee plans to retire soon. If the bargaining unit chooses the pay cut option, employee's final compensation would be affected, again only slightly, but service credit would remain intact. This is important information for employees planning to retire in the next year or so.*

4. Furloughs will affect our medical and retirement benefits

*See responses #1 and #3.*

5. We are not at the top of our pay scale compared to the Bay 10 – we used to be at the mid range – now we have slipped down again

*For fall 2008, classified support staff compensation compares much more favorably with the Bay 10 than any other employee group except faculty. Administrative compensation does not compare well.*

6. We stay for medical benefits now we are not going to have our medical benefits covered

*See response #1.*

7. This is a double whammy – a pay cut and not having our medical benefits covered.

*See response #1.*