

This PFT Update is going to all PFT Members

Dear PFT Members,

Hope you're gearing up for a fantastic week off!

Thanks to the 472 PFT Members who have taken the **PFT bargaining survey**. If you haven't taken the survey, your professional voice is valuable! You can find the survey by searching your inbox for an Feb. 6 or Feb 13 email from bkealy@powayteachers.org or member@surveymonkeyuser.com. If you do not see this email in your inbox, please follow the steps outlined at the bottom of this email. The survey closes the Wednesday we return from break, February 26.

The PUSD Local Control Accountability Plan (**LCAP**) survey is also on the home page of the district website. We should all be sure to weigh in on this survey as well before Feb. 21. It determines district priorities and funds are allocated to meet these priorities. Parents are taking this survey. Teacher voices are critical in this process!

Background info regarding PFT bargaining survey: Poway Unified implemented about \$12.5 million in budget solutions for the 2024-25 school year and is seeking a minimum of \$13 million in additional budget solutions for 2025-26.

Why is PUSD experiencing a budget deficit? Some of the main reasons include:

1. Declining enrollment: As compared to the 2021-22 school year, PUSD has experienced a loss of 753 students (as of the recent Board of Ed Budget Workshop). The Governor has been lowering the age of eligibility for Transitional Kindergarten (TK) students for several years, which has increased our number of TK students since 2021-22 by 565. Without these additional 565 TK students, PUSD's ADA losses would be far greater than 753 students.

- a. Why does this matter? We are funded on a per student basis. Being in declining enrollment is a huge hit to the budget.

2. Expiration of one-time funds provided in response to the COVID-19 pandemic: School districts were given a great deal of one-time monies during and in the years following the pandemic. PUSD received numerous grants, some of which have already been exhausted and others that will run out soon. Many additional programs and levels of support were able to be implemented with these funds. It is difficult to contemplate what to cut when these expenditures were all aimed at enhancing the student experience. That said, if items funded with one-time monies are maintained, and the funds are gone, these expenditures must be paid by the general fund.

3. PUSD's funding under the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF): We receive a base grant per student and additional supplemental funds based on the number of students in PUSD who receive Free and Reduced Meals, are English Learners, or are Foster Youth. Our district has a very low number of students who qualify for the supplemental grant funding. Many other districts like SD Unified receive a great deal of additional supplemental funding. In fact, they have so many qualifying students that they qualify for a "concentration grant" as well. Other districts, such as those on the coast, are considered "basic aid." This means their property tax revenues exceed the amount of money the state would provide, and their schools get to keep these funds. PUSD's funding is lower than most districts already because of the reasons mentioned, and declining enrollment and the expiration of one-time funds is making things even more challenging.
4. Governor's January State Budget Proposal: There is significant uncertainty about the budget impacts of the recent Los Angeles wildfires, as well as potential changes in federal revenues.

All that said, we will weather this storm and will continue to be strong advocates for the needs of PFT Members at the bargaining table! To best do this, I hope you will weigh in on the bargaining survey.

Please note that answer choices in the bargaining survey were taken from the most frequently mentioned Member ideas gathered by PFT Site Reps. Response choices also include ideas from our Facebook page and common themes from everyday issues brought to PFT. We don't want to see cuts made in any area and are committed to advocating for PFT membership. At the same time, some things will need to be cut, and we need to know what is most important to YOU, the professional educator. We are committed to fighting to keep cuts as far away from the classroom as possible!

1. Check your SPAM & inbox folders searching for emails from bkealy@powayteachers.org or member@surveymonkeyuser.com
2. It is possible that you may have previously opted out of receiving our surveys. Please opt back in at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/user/email-opt-in/> . Once you've opted back in, the survey should automatically resend to you.
3. If you are still unable to locate the survey, it is likely that your email provider is blocking our survey emails and we will need a new personal email address from you to re-send the survey to. Please contact Becky Kealy

at bkealy@powayteachers.org if you are still having trouble after following the steps above. She will get back to you ASAP when we return from break.

In Solidarity,
Kelly

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