

# UTLA: District Offer Not What L.A. Students and Educators Deserve

*UTLA issued the following statement in reaction to the contract offer from LAUSD.*

LAUSD's offer of a two percent lump sum salary payment for the 2013-14 school year falls far short of what educators deserve after seven years without a pay raise and unabated increases in the cost of living. The offer fails to address UTLA and communities' calls for substantial across-the-board class-size reduction and fully staffed schools to support student learning and social-emotional needs—something the District's 640,000 students deserve.

Unfortunately, the District is using the offer as a backdoor attempt to change the teacher evaluation system and strip educators of their critical role in school improvement efforts. LAUSD wants to institutionalize its unilateral and punitive approach to evaluation—instead of engaging approaches backed by research and communities, such as mentor teacher programs. The District also wants to take away educators' rights to vote on changes in school site instructional schedules. Taking into account the view of educators, as professional experts, on what the instructional school day looks like is a critical piece of school improvement efforts.

On January 29, 2014, a salary increase demand letter was sent to Superintendent John Deasy, calling for immediate negotiations and bargaining for implementation retroactive to the beginning of the 2013-14 school year. UTLA's demand is for a 17.6% increase spread across multiple years. The superintendent waited months to respond; the two sides finally came to the bargaining table in April. While the District's offer is disappointing, UTLA is committed to being at the table to seek an agreement that reflects what students and educators deserve.

Like other school districts across the state, LAUSD saw an influx of millions of new tax dollars after voters approved Proposition 30 more than a year ago. LAUSD's base budget alone in 2013-2014 increased by almost six percent. UTLA members, long involved in struggles for educational equity, were key to the passage of Proposition 30 and have been deeply involved in advocating that those monies be distributed in a way that simultaneously supports all schools and targets resources to the highest-need schools. Millions more dollars will come in during the 2014-15 school year, and yet the District is offering just a two percent salary increase for teachers and health and human services professionals in 2014-2015.

As the California economy improved, other districts found a way to pay their educators back for the sacrifices they made during the recession years, and thereby recruit and retain quality educators for students. Why can't LAUSD do this?

Current UTLA President Warren Fletcher and President-Elect Alex Caputo-Pearl, who takes office July 1, are both dismayed that the District would believe this offer is acceptable to the 35,000 teachers and health and human services professionals in the UTLA bargaining unit.

Fletcher said, “Earlier this year, the LAUSD School Board saw fit to give Superintendent John Deasy the equivalent of a 15.8% raise. Now they offer classroom teachers a two percent one-time payment? This is nothing short of an insult to every teacher and health and human services professional in LAUSD. There is no question that there is enough money coming from the state to implement a multi-year class-size reduction and staffing plan to return District services to their pre-recession levels *and* to simultaneously fund employee raises—yet the District continues to make indefensible budget choices that shortchange students and educators.”

Caputo-Pearl said, “It is with a united membership, deep connections with parents, community, and high-needs schools, and solidarity with an emerging movement of teacher unions nationally that UTLA is doubling down on our Campaign for the Schools L.A. Students Deserve. We urge LAUSD to come to the table with the recognition that our educators are the essential backbone of our public schools and that real respect given to educators translates into meeting the needs of students, schools, and communities.”

UTLA is committed to fighting for the schools L.A. students, parents and educators deserve.