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**From:** SOCCCD Faculty Association [socccd\_fa@cox.net]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 11, 2008 1:40 PM  
**To:** Bill Billingsley; Bill Hewitt (Bill Hewitt); Carolyn Gillay; Lee Haggerty (Lee Haggerty)  
**Subject:** Negotiations Update: Trouble with Salary and Benefits  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
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The Faculty Association representatives have been at the table with the District for almost nine months now, and although we have made good progress through the contract up to this point, negotiations have broken down on two significant points: salaries and benefits.

Although, nine months ago, the Chancellor and members of the Board promised a quick resolution to the negotiations, it has become obvious that they meant that the negotiations would be resolved quickly, if we were willing to settle the contract on their terms. What they really meant was, as long as we were willing to accept whatever they offered, regardless of whether or not it was reasonable, we could resolve the contract quickly.

However, in salary negotiations, what they offered was no more than the state funded COLA for each of the three years of the contract. This was their initial proposal, to which they have stubbornly clung throughout negotiations. The Faculty Association has several objections to the District's offer:

- **COLA is not a raise, but an adjustment to compensate for increases in the cost of living.** In the absence of COLA, our salaries are actually decreasing with the loss of purchasing power, and therefore, an increase of state COLA provides only the same inflation adjusted salary as before, and is not a raise.
- **COLA does not reflect the actual increase in the cost of living;** it's a politically determined figure which begins with an arbitrarily chosen economic index, and then is subjected to all sorts of political machinations. If the state does not offer a COLA, it does not mean that there was no increase in the cost of living that year.
- **Faculty salaries over the last decade have not kept up with increases in the actual cost of living.** Although the faculty received a salary increase of five percent per year over the three years of the previous contract, which was good under the circumstances, that raise covered not only those three years, but also the previous four years, during which there was no raise or COLA. Amortized over seven years, fifteen percent doesn't sound quite as good, especially when considering the actual increase in the cost of living during the period (remember gas under a buck a gallon?), and when compared to SOCCCD administrative salary increases over the same period.
- **The SOCCCD salary schedule is not competitive with other districts, even if you leave out the much higher cost of housing in south Orange County.** When you factor in the local cost of living, our real, cost-adjusted salary schedule is abysmal. Although the District is fond of pointing out that our average salary hovers around fourth among California community colleges, this is true only for the highest levels of the salary schedule, and because we have so many experienced faculty members. For most of the steps on the salary schedule, our District hovers between twelfth and eighteenth. Many of our experienced faculty members anticipate retiring within the next few years, and we will have a very difficult time replacing them when prospective candidates can find a better salary at another college, especially one in an area in which they can afford homes. Many of the candidate pools for the current hiring process are very small, and this