

Christie Diep, United Faculty President
Statement to Board of Trustees November 26, 2019

The MOU agreeing to move faculty to the 75th percentile includes BOTH salary and benefits. However, we are consistently forced to rank salary and benefits against one another and ultimately, we have not moved forward as a result.

The truth is that faculty who need dependent health coverage NEVER get a raise. Any salary increase goes directly to offset the dependent coverage cost.

Many faculty HAVE to teach overload, summer school, and even in other districts or the CSUs in order to pay the \$10,000 or more that comes directly off the top of our yearly earnings for dependent health coverage.

Faculty who need dependent coverage will never reach salary comparability with their own colleagues in the District, in spite of attempts to inflate fringe. Inflated fringe simply perpetuates the ongoing salary divisions.

Salary and health benefits impact morale and our sense of equal treatment as professional public servants. When we faculty look around at our comparable districts and see that our colleagues in these districts are receiving dependent health care coverage and COLA plus a percentage, we can't help but wonder why our own district is unable to deliver the same to us.

These issues also impact the future stability of the departments and programs to which we have dedicated our lives. Our ability to recruit, hire, and retain highly qualified faculty hinges on the salary and benefits that our district offers. These are life decisions that can have significant, detrimental financial impacts over the course of many years.

Please take a look at the current settled negotiations from some of our agreed upon comparable districts. Imagine if you were a 20 year veteran teacher in this district and you watched your earning power diminish right before your eyes as you begin to plan for retirement. Imagine how you might feel as a newly tenured faculty thinking about how the comparable salary and dependent health care coverage will exponentially impact you in the next ten years.

Faculty are not tin soldiers. Faculty are the heart and soul of this district.