

# United Faculty

NORTH ORANGE COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT  
CYPRESS COLLEGE · FULLERTON COLLEGE · NORTH ORANGE CONTINUING EDUCATION



To: Irma Ramos  
Vice Chancellor, Human Resources NOCCCD

10/28/2019

A budget is a moral document. Whether it is the budget of an individual, a family, a business, the nation, or an institution of public education, a budget tells us what we prioritize and value. When United Faculty voted to turn down the most recent Tentative Agreement, it was because what NOCCCD offered its faculty did not reflect the values that faculty provide to their students, campuses, and the district.

NOCCCD's 2019-20 beginning balance reserve is well over one hundred million dollars, over 90% of which are unrestricted funds. When a district, with the second highest beginning balance reserves among all community colleges in the State of California, offers its faculty a salary increase that is less than half the Cost Of Living Adjustment, the values and priorities of that district become clear; it says that our faculty are not a financial priority. When the purchasing power of our faculty is diminished, while the district hoards money at unprecedented levels, faculty is getting the message that their devotion and contribution to their classes, campuses and the district are not valued.

Fullerton College continues to have the highest transfer rates to CSUs. Cypress College has twice been rated the number one community college in the state, and NOCE continues to prepare students to enter the workforce and be productive members of their communities. These results are constantly advertised by the individual campuses and the district in their promotional and recruitment campaigns. Still, faculty salaries continue to fall behind in comparison to surrounding districts, even as faculty's commitment and work ethic continue to produce such recognizable and measurable results. The disparity between results produced by faculty and what the district offers to compensate those efforts sends a clear statement that faculty and, by extension, their students are being devalued.

There is a very real threat of this corporate attitude and fiscal approach toward an institution that is publicly funded to serve the public; the corporatization of our community colleges is very concerning, as it goes beyond the budget and permeates the campus and district culture. Community colleges are meant to be sites of liberation, critical thinking, and resisting systems of oppression. The individual campuses and the district as a whole espouse rhetoric that purports to value service, respect, integrity and equity. A culture of corporatization undermines these values. Not paying faculty justly and fairly for the work they do is in stark contrast to these values.

There is a great deal at stake. Seasoned faculty want their experience in the classroom and dedication to their campuses and the district to be recognized and properly compensated. They are devoted to their students and to these institutions of public education; many have waited a long time for salary increases that will better prepare them for future retirement.

In addition, over the past few years, our district has significantly increased its diversity. Unfortunately, this has coincided with a continued slipping back in salary comparability. We have seen tenured and tenure-track faculty leave the district and potential new hires turn down positions for better compensated positions elsewhere. If our budget does not reflect a valuing of our senior and junior faculty, then claims of inclusivity, diversity and equity ring hollow and statements regarding the appreciation of faculty dedication are only words on a pamphlet.

At this point, negotiations have gone for too long. Our faculty is very frustrated, our patience is running thin, and the overall morale is at risk. NOCCCD faculty expects the 2018/2019 negotiations to be completed by the end of 2019. We request that the district fulfill its promises to us and do so as soon as possible. Our negotiations team is willing to meet on a weekly basis, and multiple times a week if necessary, to make sure that we arrive at an agreement. Our faculty is paying close attention. We hope that you will take our call of urgency seriously.

Mohammad M. Abdel Haq  
Lead Negotiator, United Faculty