



# Capistrano Unified Education Association

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January 2010

Dear Parents,

Capistrano teachers came into the teaching profession to make a difference for students -- to do whatever we can for them, to elevate their goals and give them the tools necessary to achieve those goals.

Despite obstacles and challenges, we have consistently proven that we are willing to do what is necessary to help our students succeed. We often work long after the last bell rings and tirelessly give of our time and spend out of our own pockets to help our students. We take pride in this, because it means our students are better served. The results of the commitment and dedication we bring to our work are evident:

- District's scholastic standing shot up 21 points this year!
- Fourth highest scores of K-12 districts in Orange County!
- Highest scores of California's 14th largest school districts!
- Scores at all district high schools over 800!

But what about the Capistrano Unified School District Board of Education? In an article highlighting the outstanding test scores, the *Orange County Register* negatively cites the Board for its "aggressive handling of employment contract negotiations."

Despite having a balanced budget for 2009-2010, the Board is demanding to slash the salaries of Capistrano teachers by a whopping ten percent. Acceptance of the Board's demands would relegate CUSD to the poorest paid district in Orange County, making it difficult to retain the quality educators we currently have or to recruit replacements when they are forced to flee the District.

Teachers understand that we are living in tough economic times; the decline in state funding for our public schools means sacrifice on everyone's part. And in current contract negotiations, teachers are willing to do their part when needed, but the school board is not listening. Reasonable people working together should be able to figure out solutions, but the school board would rather work against teachers than with us.

In an effort to help members of the Capistrano community comprehend the gravity of this situation, Capistrano's educators have made the very difficult decision to "work to the rule" beginning Tuesday, January 19 and extending through Monday, January 25. On these dates, CUEA members will begin working only their contractual hours. This means that any voluntary services such as unpaid tutoring after school, helping students during lunch, taking work home, calling parents after school hours, etc. will not be provided. We do this with a heavy heart, but with a sense of conviction that what we are doing will ultimately be beneficial to students in the long run.

On January 25, the bargaining teams representing CUEA and CUSD will meet in fact-finding. Please contact Capistrano School Superintendent **Dr. Roberta Mahler** at 234-9210 or [superintendent@capousd.org](mailto:superintendent@capousd.org) and the President of the Capistrano School Board **Anna Bryson** at [abryson@capousd.org](mailto:abryson@capousd.org). Tell them to take this opportunity to reach a fair contract settlement.