

PRPE Executive Director Comments for the PRJUSD School Board Meeting 4/27/21

Comments Related to Agenda Item G 5

Hello All, I have been a part of certificated negotiations since the unification of the separate K-8 and 6-12 districts in 1996 when Dr. Julian Crocker was superintendent. The topic of Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB) has always been part of those negotiations from then until now. The employee unions have agreed to compromise and address this issue many times. Employee unions agreed to relinquish lifetime medical benefits and relieve the district of that expensive obligation by becoming part of Medicare when retirees reach 65 and eligibility despite the fact that many employee unions throughout the state continue to receive lifetime medical benefits for not only the employee but their families. The PRJUSD employees unions further addressed this issue when they agreed to establish a medical benefits payment CAP (or fixed amount provided by the district) for retirees between the time they retire and age 65. This has provided a more stable projection of district OPEB costs going forward that I hope is clearly explained in the proposed DFA actuarial study when it is completed.

Finally, through that spirit of compromise your employee unions established a district fund to mitigate OPEB costs going forward in the early 2000s. That fund at its highest amount contained approximately \$600,000. However, during the financial crisis of 2008-2009 the Chief Business Officer at the time, Gary Hoskins, with superintendent and school board approval swept that \$600,000 into the General Fund for district "crisis" expenses. I would suggest that the \$600,000 be taken from the current and/or future reserve amounts (that should necessarily come from one-time funds) to replenish that OPEB fund as a first priority after any excess above the 3% level is achieved. Jim Lynett
PRPE Executive Director

111A Finally, the most important reason to reject this idea is that again from the legal opinion, "the reduction in the number of trustee areas would reduce representation." So the board would have to authorize an expensive taxpayer (i.e. voter) funded process with no guarantee of success in order to reduce the representation of the community on their elected school board. Perhaps this is why Lozano-Smith also notes that, "it is especially rare to see a reduction in the number of trustees contemplated here."

Please focus on the students of this district and the best return to the normal school year possible and reject political machinations that reduce the community's voice. Thank you for all your service. Jim Lynett PRPE Executive Director