



HEMET TEACHER'S ASSOCIATION

Date: March 16, 2010

To: HUSD Board Members

From: Jerry Hall, President *JH*
Hemet Teachers Association

HUSD has taken an unfortunate and misdirected approach in dealing with its employees this year. The relationship between District administration and teachers, which took several years to develop, has been destroyed in 2 short months. Why has the District chosen such a destructive path? You may have read in the local papers that several surrounding districts have taken a similar approach. Many of these districts use the same law firm, so you can draw your own conclusions about where this strategy originated.

The strategy is to cut off the bargaining process early on by going to impasse and then laying off large numbers of teachers to force a settlement at the bargaining table. This tactic is nothing short of blackmail. They are using the current fiscal situation to "muscle" teachers.

While such sleazy tactics may be common in Los Angeles or Orange County, Hemet is unique. Most of you live here in town. You and your spouse, and in many cases your children, may be employed as teachers. Dr. Pendley and the HUSD board have miscalculated the damage this strategy will cause and the hard feelings that may never go away.

Talking to board members, it has become clear that they not only hold different opinions of the situation, they appear to have been given different information. To be clear, the HTA bargaining team submitted an **initial proposal** that included 3 furlough days and language that included seniority for transfer and reassignment. HTA Bargaining Chair, Holly Guntermann, made it clear to the District's team that we were willing to show movement, but also wanted to see movement from the District. Rather than negotiate, the District chose to declare impasse.

Vince Christakos, Assistant Superintendent of Business Services, stated during negotiations that the District could get through next year with five furlough days. Why then is the District demanding a long term fix and demanding 6.5%? They have no crystal ball to tell them the future. As we have seen year after year, what the Governor proposes in his January budget rarely looks like the final budget adopted by the California Legislature.

Let's get everyone back to work, get through next year, and deal with years two and three when we have facts, not conjecture.

HTA wants to bargain in good faith, but does HUSD? It is time for the District and the HUSD board to return to the bargaining table and to stop their power plays with the lives of their employees.