

October 10, 2006

To the Editor:

District 15 Concerned Parents has formed in response to the current negotiations between the District 15 Board of Education (D15) and the Classroom Teachers Council (CTC). We believe in **Fiscal Responsibility for Quality Education!**

D15 teacher salaries are competitive with other districts in the area. Health benefits are significantly better than the health benefits of the community it serves. Retirement benefits are completely out of sync with current economic reality! The quality education that District 15 is known for will suffer if the fiscal health of D15 is jeopardized by compensation and benefit increases that outpace revenue. Deficit spending is not an option! D15 outstanding debt of approximately \$50,000,000 costs several million dollars each year in interest alone and further reduces the available funds for educational spending.

Like other employers, D15 has been burdened with escalating health care costs. Unlike other employers, these costs have not been passed on to the teachers. As a result, D15 has had to, and will have no choice but to make cuts in educational spending. Quality education will be impacted by staff cuts and class size increases.

The members of District 15 Concerned Parents are uniform in our support for the Board's latest published offer. It is realistic, competitive and fiscally responsible and we encourage the CTC to accept it. We expect the Board to hold firm and not give in to demands that will force undue burdens on this community.

We have been contacted by many parents who support our position, but feel intimidated and afraid to speak out for fear of retaliation. We ask that everyone, including the CTC, respect the democratic process and free speech that are the foundations of this country.

These discussions and the effort by the Board to be accountable to the taxpayers who elected them, does not mean that the community does not respect or value the role of teachers in our education system.

The CTC holds the decision for a strike entirely in its control - we urge them to **stop using our children as a bargaining tool** and to withdraw their intent to strike immediately!

Sincerely,

District 15 Concerned Parents - Palatine

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