



Why a school can cut funding to a program for materials, but not for teacher stipend:

Though financially, the end result is the same in the short run... the financial implication in the long run is the important thing to keep in mind.

First let me go over a few facts:

- Contractually, a school site or district cannot modify a teacher's stipend listed in the contract unless the association and district negotiate that at the bargaining table.
- A school program consists of the class, materials, and teacher.
- As an association representing the educators in the Livermore District, it is our obligation to protect the educator.

Due to budget cuts, the district has provided less money to the school sites. The district has the ability to allocate how much money they want to go to their sub-accounts (school sites, staff salary, benefits, maintenance, etc.) In turn, the principals at the sites have the ability (within reason) to allocate how much money they want to go into their sub-accounts (department budgets, sports and extracurricular activities, additional sections or staffing, etc.)

A principal cannot eliminate an educator's salary, benefits or stipends because that is contractual. The principal can however reduce or eliminate a program's budget for materials or a program all-together. They have that choice and they have to deal with any parental concerns about the cutting of a program.

How does this benefit the teacher?

- In the short run, it doesn't. The resulting need to raise money is the same. If a teacher wants or absolutely needs those materials for their program, they'll need to ask parents or the community to donate funds to provide materials for the classroom. If your program can run without those materials – don't purchase them.
- In the long run, it does. If the association allowed the district to force educators to raise money for their stipends, it could also force educators to raise money for their salaries. If the community values the program and wants it to continue, it will assist in raising the money for it. We have seen this historically with Boosters and LVEF. It puts educators in a difficult place when they have to go out into the community to ask for money to "pay their salary" or "pay their stipend." The community is much more willing to pay out-of-pocket for programs than it is to pay for salaries – we know that.
- As funding cycles change and money returns to the district, the stipend for the educator is still guaranteed by the contract. Educators can go to the board and advocate why their program needs additional funding anytime. If it were the other way around and educators had to go to the board and advocate why they need to receive their stipend, they would have a more difficult time doing so.