**STA FACT SHEET**

**The STA has had many requests from supportive town meeting members asking what the STA’s reaction is to the Town Manager and Fin Com handouts that were distributed at the town meeting attacking the teachers’ contract settlement:**

**In a nutshell, here are our thoughts:**

**This is not about the money. It’s political.**

**On April 8th, Stoughton voters voted for change.  Those who lost the election and their supporters are still working behind the scenes to stay in control.  They are defying the will of the voters.**

**Those who lost the election on April 8th want to stay relevant so they have an interest in insuring that the dysfunction continues.**

**Joe Soares and Dr. Erdem Ural went to the bargaining and picked up where the previous team (Husseini and Dolinsky) left off.  They worked with the mediator who had been selected by the previous SC team.  They did NOT give the teachers more than they were asking for.  When Dr. Ural and Mr. Soares came to the table, the teachers were asking for  2.5%, 2.5%. 2.5% across the board over 3 years.  The math is the math.**

**Some elected town and school committee officials want to finance their new building projects on the backs of the employees.**

**The town and the school committee consciously and deliberately unlawfully withheld step increases due to employees last September.**

**They stole this money from employees to use as leverage to extract a concession at the bargaining table on the salary schedule.**

**They bought off or intimidated the smaller unions.  The larger unions (teachers, firefighters, police, town hall and DPW) refused to give up salary schedules that have been in existence for over 40 years.**

**The unlawful withholding of steps has exposed the town and school committee to a class action lawsuit on behalf of 177 teachers that could cost the town $1.5m  in triple damages, attorneys’ fees and litigation cost.  This is not about anyone being greedy.  This is the Law.  The Massachusetts Wage Act was enacted to protect employees from unscrupulous employers who unlawfully withhold salary payments.  The penalties are very severe.  Although there are 4 plaintiffs listed on the lawsuit, the judgment will apply to all 177 teachers in the class.  We do not believe that a liability policy will cover intentionally illegal acts**

**The town and school unions have filed an unprecedented number of unfair labor practice charges in the last 2 years.**

**The cost of legal representation to defend these charges and to engage in protracted negotiations is astronomical and out of control.**

**The labor board continues to issue complaints against the school committee and the town for the ULPs that have been filed.**

***(over)***

**The analysis done by Superintendent Rizzi on the future impact of the teachers’ contract is riddled with errors that inflate the impact:**

* **A nurse and her salary were double counted**
* **A teacher was counted twice – once with maiden name and once with married name**
* **Part-time employees were counted with full-time salaries**
* **2 teachers who are retiring in June 2014 are listed through 2017**
* **4 teachers and 1 administrator who have submitted irrevocable letters of intent to retire in June 2015 are listed through 2017**
* **All of the retirements above were known  at the time Superintendent Rizzi did her analysis**

**The STA analysis was done with actual employees, not projections.**

**It appears that the Town Manager and “auditor” simply accepted Superintendent Rizzi’s spreadsheet without question or scrutiny.**

**There are reasonable assumptions and there are silly assumptions.  The future impact assumes that there will be no new hires for the next 3 years.  Every time there’s a new hire, it’s a chance to save money on salaries**

**Actual new hires**

**FY ‘ 11                   29**

**FY ’12                    34**

**FY ’13                    37**

**FY ’14                    57**

**Projected new hires**

**FY ’15                    0**

**FY ’16                    0**

**FY ’17                    0**

**As part of the settlement to the teachers’ contract, the STA agreed to withdraw all pending unfair labor practice charges and not pursue the class action lawsuit. When the ratification vote was deadlocked, the cases went forward.**

**The School Committee attorney did not resign because of the new chair of the school committee.  There were 3 unfair labor practice hearings scheduled for the week of June 2nd . The lawsuit was filed on June 6th.   The School Committee attorney resigned on June 2nd.     Although an attorney is not permitted to state the reason for withdrawing representation, perhaps the reason is because she had a client who would not heed her advice and because she did not want to defend the indefensible.**

**In a survey conducted last October, 54% of Stoughton teachers said that the unsettled teachers’ contract has caused them to consider seeking employment in another school district.  An unprecedented number of midyear resignations have occurred this school year.  Staff turnover is detrimental to educational progress.  Our students and their families deserve stability.  If the survey were conducted today, the STA knows that the percentage who would seek employment elsewhere would be much higher.**