

## **SOME FACTS ABOUT THE TENTATIVE CONTRACT**

By now, most JCEA members have seen newspaper articles and letters to the editor about the tentative settlement between the JCEA and the Jersey City Board of Education. Additionally, Board of Education members have been around to some of the schools talking to JCEA members about the contract. Although the members of JCEA voted to ratify the contract back in the middle of December, the Board has not done their part. It appears that the vote will be taken at the next Board of Education meeting on March 18.

Here are a few facts that you, and the members of the Board of Education, should remember about the tentative settlement:

- The pact was recommended by a mediator, a neutral third party. The mediator made it clear in his report that both the union and the district had to “give” to create a reasonable settlement.
- The salary increases in the contract are prudent, and in line with the settlements in other school districts.
- The Board of Education had already budgeted for anticipated salary increases.
- More teachers retired at the end of last school year than were hired in this school year. That fact alone produces a multi-million dollar savings for the Board of Education.
- The contract creates immediate savings by ending the perfect attendance bonus.
- A health insurance opt out provision could create substantial savings in health insurance premium costs for the district, but only if the contract is ratified by the Board.
- The contract contains provisions that reduce prescription drug costs for the Board, but only if the contract is ratified by the Board.
- The tentative contract settles the outstanding issues of the move from the State Health Benefit Plan (with a Traditional Plan component) to the School Employees Health Benefit Plan (without a Traditional Plan component). Without a ratified settlement, JCEA will pursue the case before an arbitrator.

The tentative contract is a fair settlement in difficult times. It was negotiated in good faith by the JCEA and the Board’s representatives. However, it looks like it is going to take some work on our part to get the contract settled once and for all. Your JCEA officers and Executive Board are going to need some help from you, the members of JCEA. Stay in touch with your JCEA Building Director. Your Director will tell you what we need to do to finish the job.

Stay united!

Thomas J. Favia  
JCEA President