

**Community Consolidated School District 15 Board of Education Meeting
October 11, 2006**

District 15 Concerned Parents is a grass roots organization formed in response to the current contract negotiations between the District 15 Board of Ed (District 15) and the Classroom Teachers Council (CTC). We are the voice for fiscal responsibility **and** quality education! As parents and taxpayers, we have a vested interest in the negotiations **process and outcome**.

Although we number in the hundreds, **most parents** who support our beliefs are intimidated and afraid to **speak out for fear of retaliation from CTC members**. That this fear even exists is contrary to the very definition of partnership. We ask that everyone **respect the democratic process and freedom of speech** that this country was founded upon.

I want to make it absolutely clear that 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 the classroom. We have, we do and we will continue to respect and value our teachers.

However, we **believe** District 15 teacher salaries are competitive with other districts in the area and that health benefits are significantly **better than** the health benefits of this community. We know District 15 has been burdened with escalating health care costs that have **not been** shared by the teachers. Retirement benefits are further **out of sync** with current economic reality! The quality education that District 15 is known for **will suffer** if fiscal health is jeopardized by compensation **and** benefit increases that outpace revenue. Deficit spending is not an option! District 15's outstanding debt of approximately \$50M costs several million dollars **each year in interest alone, and** further reduces the available funds for education.

We are uniform in our support of the Board's last published offer. **It is realistic, competitive and fiscally responsible**. Should the CTC choose not to compromise, District 15 will have no choice but to make cuts in educational spending. Quality education **will be** negatively impacted by staff cuts **and** larger class sizes. We expect the Board to hold firm and not give in to unreasonable demands. We trust that intelligent, well-intentioned individuals can come to an agreement that does not force undue burdens on this community.

It is important to note that the decision to strike is entirely in the hands of the CTC. We urge them to **stop using our children as a bargaining tool** and to withdraw their intent to strike, and continue good faith negotiations with the Board.

Sally Kim, District 15 Concerned Parents
Advocate4Kdz@comcast.net