

PRESS RELEASE

AFT Local 1828, which represents 1,200 full-time and part-time faculty members of the Ventura County Community College District, today sent the following request to the Board of Trustees for the Ventura County Community College District with whom they are currently in contract negotiations. On March 18, the District filed a request with the California Public Employee Relations Board for immediate certification to fact finding in the current contract dispute.

To Chancellor Gillisepe and the Board of Trustees,
NEGOTIATIONS UPDATE - REQUEST FOR BOARD SUPPORT OF FACULTY

On behalf of the Ventura County Federation of College Teachers, we would like to thank the district for your efforts to help us protect students in this very difficult health emergency. However, we are appalled at your demonstrated lack of regard for the health and wellbeing of your faculty.

On Wednesday March 18, the mediator released AFT Local 1828 and the VCCCD from mediation without a contract settlement. In a move that is beyond our comprehension, Dr. El Fattel, on behalf of the Board of Trustees, immediately petitioned P.E.R.B. for an order to immediately proceed to fact-finding. This was five days after the President of the United States declared a national state of emergency, and only two days after Governor Gavin Newsome issued an order for all non-essential workers to stay home. All three campuses were stretched beyond their breaking points in order to ensure our students' success and safety. Despite this crisis, Dr. Fattel and the board had the time, and desire, to turn their attention to a matter which, frankly, has far less immediate impact on the district and our students than the current COVID-19 crisis. These actions demonstrate not only a lack of leadership, but a callous lack of regard for the faculty on whom they are currently relying to steady the ship.

During this historic crisis, the faculty have gone above and beyond the call of duty in service to the students of the VCCCD. Conversely, the district's ruthless push to fact-finding during this unprecedented state of emergency has added to the stress levels of every faculty member in the district and reaffirms our perception that you believe faculty are nothing more than replaceable widgets.

Therefore, on behalf of the faculty of the VCCCD, we are formally requesting that in the name of the health and well-being of our faculty and students, the B.O.T. direct the district negotiating team to temporarily suspend all negotiations, including fact-finding, until the beginning of the fall 2020 semester in order to allow everyone to focus our limited resources on ensuring the success of our students.

Everyone is beyond the point of exhaustion both physically and emotionally including the faculty negotiators. The added stress of negotiations only makes it worse. You have praised us for rising to this challenge: Now we are pleading for your support. It is the humane thing to do and solely within your power. We support our students, please support us by agreeing to suspend negotiations.

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AFT Local 1828 Negotiations Team

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ABOUT THE AFT LOCAL 1828

The Ventura County Federation of College Teachers. AFT, Local 1828, is a labor union representing over 1,200 faculty members of the Ventura County Community College District who serve approximately 32,000 students enrolled in the district's three colleges - Moorpark, Oxnard and Ventura.

The Federation is an affiliate of the American Federation of Teachers, the California Federation of Teachers, the California Labor Federation and the AFL-CIO.

The American Federation of Teachers was founded in 1916. We are a Union of Professionals. We are more than 1.4 million teachers, paraprofessionals and other school-related personnel, higher education faculty and staff, government employees, healthcare workers and early childhood educators.