



Saint Paul Federation of Teachers

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May 16, 2016

The Honorable Senator Sandra Pappas
95 University Avenue W.
Minnesota Senate Building, Room 3205
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Senator Pappas,

In response to your letter, we feel a need to provide more clarity. You seem to imply that by not agreeing to QComp we are not acting in the best interest of our students and families because the only other option are the cuts currently being discussed by Saint Paul Schools administration. This is not accurate.

To assert that we either accept QComp or accept the cutting of staff directly serving our students is a false choice that assumes there are no other options. It is a choice that focuses solely on dollars, not outcomes. It also asserts that QComp dollars can be spent directly on the supports our students need, which they cannot. Budget decisions should be grounded in finding the best ways that our resources can meet the needs of our students and create equitable learning environments for all our learners.

During our negotiations with district administration, we were very clear about how we can better meet the needs of our students and create more equitable schools and the district agreed to these— through the reallocation of funds to increase staff who directly serve our students and families and a more unified effort toward implementation of restorative practices in our schools. We gave clear recommendations regarding cuts that could be made to pay for these positions; cuts that left our students and schools unharmed. We would hope these would be considered.

We look forward to future discussions concerning budget priorities that meet the needs of our students, but have been disappointed that the administration has not taken a serious enough look at its own budget to fill shortfalls. We are also disappointed that past boards have not looked seriously enough at revenue generation through levy referendum which has the flexibility to be used directly toward serving our students, providing equitable learning environments, and creating the outcomes we all desire for Saint Paul Public Schools.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Denise Rodriguez".

Denise Rodriguez
President

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nick Faber".

Nick Faber
Vice President