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## **PRESS RELEASE FOR MAY 25, 2010**

After five months of negotiations with the Association of Coronado Teachers, the Coronado Unified School District has reached a tentative contract agreement for the 2010-2011 fiscal year. Teachers ratified the agreement Monday. The Agreement will be brought to the Governing Board for approval at their regular meeting on May 27<sup>th</sup> at 3:30 p.m.

“While the circumstances have been difficult because of the complete lack of financial support from the state, the teachers have been collaborative and supportive throughout negotiations,” said Jeff Felix, Superintendent. “We both listened to the community and did the right thing for the children.”

The Agreement lessens the number of days students will attend school and also decreases the number of days teachers will work. Because of the state’s financial crisis, legislators have allowed school districts to reduce student attendance by five days to 175 total. The agreement establishes student days in Coronado at 175 and teacher work days to 178. Decreasing the total work days will reduce teacher salaries by 3.78%. The same reduction will also be given to the salaries of administrators, managers, and confidential employees.

“But let’s be clear– these are real cuts,” said Bruce Shepherd, Board President. “Our outstanding teachers have made this District one of the best in the county and now they will be going home with smaller paychecks next year. Our community must come together to find a solution to these funding shortfalls.”

Class size in grades K-3 will also be increased from 22 to 25 based on District average. The teachers have agreed that this number may be increased to 27 as a District average beginning in the 2011-2012 school year. The net effect on the budget will reduce expenses by \$50,000 in the next school year. Felix was quick to point out that although class sizes could increase in 11-12, the Board has no wish to do so. The Board’s position is that class sizes will only be increased as a last resort to address further shortfalls in funding.

Professional development opportunities for teachers will also be reduced by \$160,000 per year. The calendar for the 10-11 school year was also a part of the agreement.

“Effective communication with all stakeholders was the key to our mutual success. Although we are not pleased that the wages of our employees were reduced, the extent of the reduction was much less than it could have been given the funding mess within the state,” said Shepherd.

District revenue has been reduced by over 20% over the past three years because of the state financial crises. District leaders began conveying the severe depth of these cuts early in the process. Regular monthly budget study meetings were conducted, newspaper and website articles were written, special Board workshops were held, and countless face-to-face meetings took place to assist in the understanding of this complicated issue.

Felix noted that although this was the most severe revenue cut in District history, both sides worked hard to understand the numbers and the full implication of any expense reduction. Felix said that while no one likes the result, he is very proud of the collaborative dialogue used in approaching these problems.