



**Healthcare increase unacceptable,
UTD declares impasse**

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UTD President and Chief Negotiator Karen Aronowitz declared impasse at Thursday's healthcare bargaining session with MDCPS officials, after learning there was no money left in the district's budget to cover the \$36 million needed for employee healthcare benefits.

"The situation is not that we didn't put money aside, but that there is no revenue (left)," MDCPS' Deputy Superintendent of Business Operations Ofelia San Pedro explained. The district had cuts imposed on them in early October as a result of the state's \$1.1 billion budget shortfall. "It's only going to get worse," she said, referring to the proposed Property Tax amendment which will bring even more cuts.

During two consecutive days of bargaining, the district presented six different employee contribution scenarios for each healthcare plan offered – all showing an increase in dependent coverage, ranging anywhere from 35% to 76%. Most proposed plans would require employees to pay a portion of their individual healthcare premium previously covered entirely by the district.

"What we are seeing here is that the burden is being shifted to those who are the least able to pay," Aronowitz said.

UTD's counteroffer was clear: Maintain status quo benefits and employee contributions as well as flex benefits for the life of the contract. (All offerings, plan design, benefits and employee contributions amounts shall remain the same.)

"We must declare impasse because we are so far apart, we have no other choice," Aronowitz announced.

The two sides must now meet again to decide on a date to appear before a special magistrate.

The District will be presenting [Proposed Contribution Scenario 5](#) as the best option for MDCPS employees.

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