Media Release

For Immediate Release

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FUSD, FTA and JHMB Call on Community Medical Centers to Continue Patient Care

Today in a news conference led by Fresno Unified Superintendent Misty Her, significant steps were announced to counter the stalled negotiations between Aetna and Community Medical Centers. The failed negotiations have disrupted insurance coverage for Fresno Unified retirees. The news conference also included the FUSD Board of Education, Fresno Teachers Association (FTA) and Joint Health Management Board (JHMB).

From Superintendent Misty Her

Superintendent Her announced that JHMB would convene this Thursday, Jan. 15, to vote on alternative options to ensure retirees receive the care and stability they deserve. Superintendent Her expressed the district's deep frustrations about the disruption's effect on retirees, noting that retirees have told her about doctors abruptly discontinuing their care, delays or denials in accessing medications, and being turned away from essential services. These experiences are deeply troubling and unacceptable, Superintendent Her said.

From FTA President Manuel Bonilla

Fresno Teachers Association President Manuel Bonilla called for Community Medical Centers to restore retiree healthcare access immediately and accused Community of using Fresno Unified retirees as "bargaining chips" in its contract dispute with Aetna. He also corrected erroneous information, noting that this is a contract dispute between a healthcare network and a healthcare provider, and that neither the district nor JHMB have been part of those negotiations or are at fault.

From FUSD Board President Veva Islas

Veva Islas, president of the Fresno Unified Board of Education, called on Community Medical Centers/Community Health Parters to do the following in the interim for affected retirees:

- Stop turning away retirees
- Allow retirees to keep and secure medical appointments
- Community Medical Centers/Community Health Parters allow members to continue seeing their CMC/health parters providers, as they will still be reimbursed with the Medicare allowable amount, regardless of whether they are in-network or out-of-network
- Grant a contract extension to continue negotiations

Request video or photos of this event here: Media Request Form

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