

Subject: TEA MESSAGE FROM TONY LUCCHI

Troy Education Association Communication - 2016-2017 - #8

The membership went through a very trying experience last week. In many ways, the vote on medical insurance was more emotional and divisive than a vote on a tentative agreement. Members have very strong opinions about medical insurance and what constitutes "good" coverage. The process of disseminating information, formulating and answering questions, and debating the merits of one plan over another is exactly what this Association needs to embrace and nurture amongst its membership.

As the costs of medical insurance continue to rise, and the subsequent introduction of new medical insurance products continue, the membership needs to rise up to the challenge of becoming knowledgeable consumers. Sometimes there will be no clear course of action. Sometimes you and a colleague may not agree on what product is the right one. Sometimes what you advocated does not prevail and you will be forced to accept a new medical product, or remain with the same one. This process may be difficult and seem divisive, but it is necessary, in order for everyone to be involved. There will be moments when someone's interests are not going to prevail, but individual voices will have been heard in the discussion, debate and decision. When the Association finally decides the question, we all need to move forward. We may not agree with the decision. We may be angry and feel hurt, but we must accept it and continue as an organization. No one is an adversary in this process – instead it is just another perspective that may not be shared by everyone.

The Association will move forward from its first, but not last, medical insurance inquiry and debate. The membership is more knowledgeable about medical insurance, and that is a good development. As the medical insurance industry and consumer landscape continues to shift around us, we will meet these new challenges together and support each other through this new process. The more we learn and help our colleagues learn the stronger we as a membership become.

Enjoy the weeks leading up to the holidays.

Best regards,

Tony