

Bargaining Update

Pittsburg Unified School District



January 24, 2024

The bargaining teams for PUSD and PEA met on Monday, January 22, 2024, in a confidential negotiating session with a mediator appointed by the State. We have not yet reached an agreement, and have another mediation meeting scheduled for February 6, 2024.

Important Budget Information to Consider in Regards to Negotiations:

School Districts are funded based on enrollment and Average Daily Attendance (ADA). The main factors negatively affecting our multi-year budget are our current ADA and our declining enrollment. Before the pandemic, PUSD had an ADA of approximately 95%. Since returning from distance learning, our ADA has been much lower, with last year's ADA being 89.5%. We have been focused on efforts to increase our ADA, with a goal of 92.5% for this year. We have met that goal and then dropped during December to approximately 91%. We are required to submit a three-year balanced budget to the County Office and the largest impact to our budget is this decrease in our ADA.

The State's Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for this year is 8.22%; however, the actual new revenue that the District received for COLA in the 23-24 school year is 4.92% when you take into account our declining enrollment and daily attendance. Another way to look at it is, if you look at our LCFF funds for 2022-2023 and for 2023-2024, our funds increased by 4.92%, not by 8.22%.

COLA is also utilized to pay for increases as follows:

- Step and column increase for employees that occur each year - approximately the equivalent of 1.45% salary increase.
- Pension fund increases - approximately the equivalent of 1% of salary for this year
- Medical cost increases (rates for our fully funded Kaiser plans increased by 11% in January 2024); this is approximately 1.71% of a salary increase for certificated employees
- Increased cost of utilities (water, electricity, gas, sewer, garbage)
- Increased costs of contracted services and out-of-district programs for students with disabilities

Additionally, another major factor in our budget is the estimated COLA for the 24-25 school year, which is projected to be 0.76%, a significant decrease from prior COLA estimates. Any salary increase given this year will be an ongoing cost that has to be sustainable. The current projection of 0.76% for next year has the effect of a 2% reduction in funding for us, which we have to start planning for now. Another factor is a large amount of the one-time funds that all districts received expire in Sept, 2024. We have positions in that funding that we all agree are core to our district.

Our Commitment and History

PUSD has consistently been in the top third of the County for total compensation since 2014. Annually, School Services publishes a Salary and Benefit Report on teacher salaries throughout the state, which shows our district in comparison with other districts in our county, region, state, and districts that are comparable to us in California. The recently released report, based on salary and benefits for the 2023-24 school year, shows that PUSD comes in 2nd for beginning teachers, 3rd for teachers in their 10th year, 6th at the highest step in the salary schedule, and 3rd in total contributions for medical benefits. In addition, when comparing all districts in our county for total salary increases over the last 10 years, PUSD comes in 2nd with 40% in salary increases over the last 10 years. For detailed information, please click on the link below.

[Salary Comparison Report 22-23.pdf](#)

We have maintained a fiscally responsible district and, to date, we have not had to do the massive layoffs that have impacted others or had to face State monitoring of our budgets. We are committed to maintain our appreciation for our teachers and staff through offering the best total compensation we can while maintaining necessary services for our scholars and maintaining our fiscal stability. By using the top third in total compensation as a guide throughout the years, we have been able to remain competitive and remain fiscally responsible. The District looks forward to further negotiation sessions in hopes that we can reach an agreement through the mediation process.