May 21, 2024

This email is going to all PFT Member

Dear PFT Members,

Below are some questions and answers about the 2024-25 PUSD/PFT Tentative Agreement (TA). A pdf copy of the Q & A and a copy of the TA are also attached to this email.

PFT Members will vote electronically on the Tentative Agreement on Tuesday, May 28 & Wednesday, May 29. If the TA is ratified by Members, it will go before the PUSD School Board for a vote on Tuesday, June 4.

Please see your Site PFT Rep/s if you have additional questions not addressed below. If you still have questions after reaching out to your Site Rep/s, feel free to email PFT Directors, Patrick Keough or Crystal Ochoa, or myself.

In Solidarity, Kelly

Questions & Answers

2024-2025 Tentative Agreement Between the
Poway Unified School District and Poway Federation of Teachers

All the answers to the questions below are accurate if the Tentative Agreement (TA) is ratified by PFT Members and the School Board.

Q: Are class sizes going up next year due to the budget shortfall?
A: No. PFT and the District Interest Problem Solving (IBPS) team agreed to maintain class sizes (same staffing ratios, elementary caps, and secondary targets).

Q: Why aren't we getting a salary increase?
A: PUSD is facing a projected $28 million shortfall for next school year.

Q: Will there be an increase in our out-of-pocket amounts for health and welfare coverage next year?
A: No. As a result of this Tentative Agreement (TA), the amount PFT unit members currently pay out-of-pocket for health and welfare premiums WILL NOT INCREASE in Plan Year 2025, NOR WILL IT INCREASE in Plan Year 2026. This applies to all three HMO plans and to the PPO plan. The Interest Based Problem Solving (IBPS) team recognized the importance of finding a way to avoid insurance cost increases for employees amid

state and PUSD budget gaps. NOTE: An insurance Plan Year runs from January 1 – December 31.

Q: The cost of insurance continues to increase. How is the PFT unit avoiding increases to our out-of-pocket amounts for dependent health and welfare coverage for the 2025 & 2026 Plan Years?

A: Per a previous agreement, an amount equivalent to 1% of PFT salaries is placed in our Other Post Employee Benefits (OPEB) Irrevocable Trust Fund each year (current annual contribution is $1.9 million). The funds in this Irrevocable Trust are used to pay the annual costs associated with the health and welfare benefits extended to retirees with 10 years or more of PUSD benefitted eligible service from age of retirement until age 65 pursuant to *Section III, Health and Welfare Benefits for Retired Teachers*, of the collective bargaining agreement.

- Instead of making the full $1.9 million contribution to the OPEB Irrevocable Trust Fund in both 2024-25 & 2025-26, **50%** of the annual contribution will be transferred to the PUSD general fund each year to offset the increased cost in health and welfare insurance premiums in Plan Years 2025 & 2026.

Q: Is the out-of-pocket amount PFT members will pay for HMO dependent health and welfare coverage in Plan Year 2027 equivalent to 20% of the projected premium costs in that Plan Year?

A: No. The out-of-pocket amounts PFT unit members will pay for HMO dependent health and welfare coverage is far less than 20% of the projected insurance premiums for Plan Year 2027.

- If we have annual insurance increases of 6% each year from now until 2027, the out-of-pocket amounts PFT unit members will pay for HMO dependent health and welfare coverage will be close to an 84/16 insurance premium cost sharing model.
- This is very similar to the percentage cost share PFT members are paying currently.
- If insurance increases more than 6% each year from now until 2027, the PFT unit will be paying less than a 16% cost share.
- Why would the district agree to a lower cost sharing model in the 2027 Plan Year?
- Instead of making the full $1.9 million annual contribution to the OPEB Irrevocable Trust Fund in 2026-2027, **25%** of these funds will be transferred to the PUSD general fund to mitigate the increased cost in health and welfare insurance premiums in Plan Year 2027.

Q: Will there be an increase in the opt out annual amount of $1250 for members who do not access health and welfare plans because they are covered by a spouse?

A: No, unfortunately. To keep premiums as low as possible, it was not possible to raise the opt out amount.

Q: I see that our health and welfare out-of-pocket premiums won't go up at all until January 1, 2027, per this Tentative Agreement. Why can't health and welfare out of pocket amounts for PFT unit members stay the same indefinitely?
A: Health and welfare premiums continue to increase every year. PFT has been able to avoid an increase in the cost of dependent premium coverage for basic health plans for members for about 16 years. To defray their costs, the district has been pursuing greater employee contributions from PFT unit members for many years.

Q: Why can't we use the OPEB account for salary increases? Why can't we use the OPEB account to reduce insurance out-of-pocket costs every year?
A: Any payments not made to the irrevocable trust result in one time money rather than ongoing money. Caution must be used when considering making a lesser contribution than the annual commitment to this fund. A lack of contributions could eventually put the account at risk of being underfunded. We are not remotely close to this situation now, but frequent lesser contributions could put the health plans of PUSD retirees at risk.

Q: I have HMO insurance coverage for myself only. I don't cover my spouse nor my dependents. I have heard that in some other districts, employees in my situation pay an out-of-pocket amount for their health and welfare coverage. Will I be starting to pay an out-of-pocket amount for my health and welfare coverage in Plan Year 2027?
A: No. It is true many other districts charge an out-of-pocket amount for those who cover themselves only. However, in our district, employee only coverage in the HMO plans will remain fully paid by PUSD in Plan Year 2027, while HMO dependent coverage will experience the mitigated increase noted in the TA.

Q: Why was there no Supplemental Early Retirement Plan (SERP) this year? When will we have one?
A: It typically takes about 7 years to have the demographic to be able to consider offering a SERP and we had one recently (2021-22).
Here is some additional information about SERPs:

- SERPs are offered as a money saving mechanism, and many factors are needed to make them possible. Ultimately, the SERP needs to result in significant savings to the district that they would not otherwise realize.
- The savings created when the retiring teachers are replaced by lower paid teachers is one factor. That said, we can't assume every position will be filled with a

brand-new teacher who is at the lowest end of the salary schedule, because teachers come to PUSD with varying levels of experience.

- The cost of any incentive the district would provide to the retiring teachers is another factor.
- The district realizes savings "naturally" when people retire, without paying out an incentive like those offered in a SERP. So those who plan to retire anyway are not the target group. We need many teachers to retire earlier than planned to make it fiscally appealing to the district.

Q: Do I have to get permission from my principal to use my three Compelling Reasons Days, which will now all be at full salary?
A: No. This leave can be accessed for reasons deemed by the unit member to be of compelling personal importance.

Q: Are my three annual Compelling Reasons Days "use them or lose them days?"
A: Yes. This leave does not accrue from year to year.

Q: If we can use the Compelling Reasons Days for reasons we deem to be of compelling personal importance, why can't we use them every year to extend a vacation? Similarly, why can't we use them at the beginning or end of the school year unless we get approval from the Associate Superintendent of Personnel Support Services?
A: It can be difficult to find subs right before or right after a school break. The existing contract language with this provision has been in place for many years, and the district also feels absences for reasons such as vacation and/or at the beginning or end of the school year, for reasons outside of those described in CA Ed Code (Sick, Personal Necessity, etc.), is not in the best interest of student learning.

Q: I used my third Compelling Reasons Day earlier this year, when it was at differential pay (currently $158). Can I get my $158 back now that this has been negotiated?
A: Unfortunately, no. This TA takes effect July 1, 2024, if approved by membership and the School Board.

Q: I am supposed to be evaluated next year based on the every three year cycle for teachers with 10 PUSD years of seniority or more. Now that the parameter is changing to every 5 years, when will I be evaluated?
A: With ten years of PUSD seniority, if you were supposed to be evaluated in the 24-25 school year, your next evaluation will now be in the 26-27 school year.

Q: Where can I find the TPLES handbook so I can better understand the evaluation cycles for temporary teachers and probationary employees?
A: The TPLES handbook for teachers is available on the TPLES Canvas course under Forms and Documents.

Q: I was evaluated last year. I have 15 years of successful PUSD experience with all "meets standards" evaluations. When is my next evaluation?
A: If you were evaluated in the 22-23 school year, your next evaluation will be in the 27-28 school year.

Q: What if I reach ten years of seniority in the middle of my current evaluation cycle?
A: If you reach ten years of seniority in the middle of an evaluation cycle, three years will be added until your next evaluation year. For example, if you were evaluated this year (23-24) and have eight years of seniority, your next evaluation would have been in the 25-26 school year. However, your evaluation will be moved forward to the 28-29 school year.

Q: I am scheduled to roll off the TLC prime salary column next school year. If this TA passes, when will I need to have 40 TLC points to remain on the prime salary column?
A: If the TA passes, you will be scheduled to "roll off" the prime salary column for the 2025-26 school year instead of the 2024-25 school year. To remain on the prime salary column for the 2025-26 school year, you will need to have 40 unexpired points available by no later than Oct. 1, 2025, to retroactively take effect for the 2025-26 school year. (TLC work must be completed and submitted to the PLAB Rep by September 15, so it can be reviewed and points can be awarded by October 1).

Q: If I have TLC points that would have expired after June 30, 2024, do I now have another year to apply these toward the 40 points required for the prime salary column?
A: Yes.

NOTE: You may wish to log into MyPLAN, Staff Development, My Profile to print or take a screenshot of your TLC information. We don't anticipate any issues when the system is modified per the terms of the TA, but this would give you a record to refer to going forward.