

## Q & A Tentative Agreement (TA) 2025-26

The answers to the questions below are accurate if the TA passes by a vote of the Membership on Monday, May 19 and Tuesday, May 20.

**1. I heard we now have days to use at our discretion that are similar to Personal Time Off (PTO), like many other professionals. Is this accurate?**

Yes! Effective July 1, 2025, we now can access up to 5 days of personal necessity leave (drawing from accrued sick leave) for personal business, at our discretion.

**2. We can use these five (5) days of sick leave at our discretion. What does this mean?**

As a teacher professional, you have the right to decide and define the appropriate use of accumulated sick leave for personal business.

**3. Do I have to ask my principal's permission to use my up to (5) personal necessity leave days for personal business?**

No.

**4. Do I have to give advance notice to access this leave?**

No.

**5. Will five (5) days be added to my annual sick leave accrual?**

No. Additional days will not be added; a full time employee still earns 10 sick days each year. This TA allows us to access up to five days of our accrued sick leave annually, at our discretion, for "personal business".

**6. Should I write sub plans and secure a substitute for my absence when I access personal business leave?**

Yes. It is a professional responsibility to leave sub plans and to call in for/or arrange for a substitute to ensure student instruction continues uninterrupted.

**7. Can I pre-arrange for a sub and call in the job well in advance when accessing personal necessity leave for personal business?**

Yes.

**8. Do I have to take all five (5) of my personal necessity leave days for personal business at once?**

No. You can take your five (5) personal necessity days for personal business in any increments you like, as long as you have accrued sick leave to access and the total does not exceed 5 days in one year.

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**9. I have used all my sick leave. Can I use personal necessity leave for personal business?**

Unfortunately, no. You must have accrued sick leave to access personal business days.

**10. Do I still have my three Compelling Reasons days at full salary each year in addition to this new personal business leave?**

Yes.

**11. Can you remind me of the rules around the use of Compelling Reasons leave days?**

These three (3) days of leave are at full salary and can be accessed for reasons deemed by the unit member to be of compelling personal importance. This leave does not accrue from year to year and does not come out of your sick leave.

Repeated use of this leave by a unit member for the purpose of extending holidays or vacation is not permitted. Use of this leave upon the beginning or conclusion of the teacher and student school years, is subject to review by the Associate Superintendent, Personnel Support Services.

**12. Can I combine my five (5) days of personal necessity leave for personal business (drawing from accrued sick leave) with my three (3) Compelling Reasons days (not drawn from accrued sick leave) for a total of eight (8) days?**

Yes. You can combine these days.

Please note that Compelling Reasons days do have some restrictions: *Repeated use of this leave by a unit member for the purpose of extending holidays or vacation is not permitted. Use of this leave upon the beginning or conclusion of the teacher and student school years, is subject to review by the Associate Superintendent, Personnel Support Services.*

**13. Can I be required to share the reason for accessing five (5) personal necessity leave days for personal business (drawing from accrued sick leave) or my three (3) Compelling Reasons days (not drawn from accrued sick leave)?**

No. You are not required to share the reason you are accessing either of these leave types.

**14. The bargaining agreement language for Compelling Reasons leave says, *Repeated use of this leave by a unit member for the purpose of extending holidays or vacation is not permitted.* What does this mean?**

This means you cannot *repeatedly* use your compelling reasons days directly before or after a holiday, like Memorial Day, or before or after a school vacation, like spring break.

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**15. What happens if I don't use my three (3) Compelling Reasons days in a particular school year?**

Compelling Reasons days do not accrue from year to year. You get three each year and if you don't use them, you will lose them.

**16. What happens if I don't use up to five (5) personal necessity leave days for personal business in a particular school year?**

The five (5) personal necessity leave days for personal business will remain in your accrued sick leave bank if you do not access them in a particular school year. Your accrued sick leave accumulates from year to year, with the ability to access up to five (5) personal necessity leave days for personal business, drawn from that accrued sick leave, *each* year.

**17. What happens if I use my five (5) personal necessity leave days for personal business in a particular school year and then I want to use five (5) more the following school year?**

You can use up to five (5) personal necessity leave days for personal business *each* school year, as long as you have accrued sick leave to access.

**18. Is there a downside to using my up to five personal necessity leave days for personal business every single school year?**

Accrued sick leave can be converted to State Teacher's Retirement System (STRS) service credit per [STRS rules](#). Throughout their career, teachers will access varying amounts of accrued sick leave for injury or illness, or for other reasons outlined in the bargaining agreement. Each individual has their own beliefs about the best amount of accrued leave to use OR save.

**19. Do other districts have Compelling Reasons type days that are in addition to sick leave days?**

Our research on 15 other districts in our region, that the IBPS team uses for comparison, showed that ONLY Encinitas Union Elementary School District has leave similar to our Compelling Reasons days. We have three (3) and they have one (1).

**20. Do other districts have personal business type days that come out of their sick leave under personal necessity leave?**

Our research on these same 15 regional districts showed that ten districts have leave that is similar to our new personal necessity leave days for personal business. However, most of them have fewer days than eight (8), which is our new combined total of personal necessity leave days for personal business and Compelling Reasons days. In addition, the majority of districts place restrictions on their use. Some examples of restrictions in other districts include: permission from administration must be sought and granted, between 24 hours and 2 days' notice is required, only three (3) days can be used out of seven (7) consecutively, a limit is

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placed on the specific number of unit members allowed to access the leave on a given day at a school or in the district, and/or the leave can only be used on specific days of the week. The new personal necessity leave days for personal business option in this TA does not contain ANY of these restrictions. You are trusted as a professional to make decisions about how and when to use your personal business days.

### **21. Does bereavement leave come out of accrued sick days?**

No. You get **five (5) days** of paid bereavement days outside your sick leave for immediate family members, as defined in the bargaining agreement (it used to be three (3) for in state, or five (5) for out of state or travel in excess of 300 miles one way). If you need more, you can access personal necessity leave, which does come out of accrued sick days.

NOTE: Previously, CA Ed Code provided the three (3) and five (5) paid bereavement days as noted above. Assembly Bill 1949 mandates that up to five (5) days of bereavement leave be provided to employees, but the law only requires unpaid days. All five (5) of ours are paid!

### **22. Who is included as immediate family for bereavement? Do any other relationships qualify?**

Aunt and uncle were just added as qualifying relationships in this TA.

*Members of the immediate family mean the mother, father, aunt, uncle, grandmother, grandfather, or a grandchild of the employee or of the spouse of the employee, and the child of the employee or of the spouse of the employee, and the spouse, son-in-law, son, daughter, daughter-in-law, brother or sister of the employee or any person living in the immediate household of the employee.*

*In cases of long established family or personal relationships not listed, bereavement leave may be granted at the discretion of the Associate Superintendent Personnel Support Services or designee.*

### **23. How many additional personal necessity days (which come out of my sick leave), can I take to grieve after the death of an immediate family member once my bereavement leave is exhausted?**

For the death of a member of the immediate family as defined in the bargaining agreement, you can draw as many days as you need from your accrued sick time.

### **24. I got permission from Personnel Support Services to access bereavement days due to the death of someone who does not fit the definition in the bargaining agreement of immediate family. But I need more time to grieve and/or help put affairs in order. Are there leave options for me?**

As part of this TA, language has been added that will allow you to draw as many days as you need from your accrued sick time, under personal necessity, in this scenario.

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**25. I want to attend the graduation or promotion of a friend, and it does not involve a four-year college or university. Do we have a leave option for this?**

This TA adds modified and more expansive language to the two days under personal necessity (which come out of sick leave) for graduation. It allows access to attend any graduation or a promotion and for anyone, not just a family member. (Just like in the past, to access these days, Compelling Reasons leave must be exhausted).

Prior to this TA, these two days were only available for graduation of a family member from a four-year college or university. In the past, to attend a promotion, we had to access the Family-School Participation Act, which also comes out of personal necessity/sick leave, but was limited to 8 hours per month.

**26. I heard that the last class size reduction made a few years ago was done with one-time money and that these funds are running out. How were we able to maintain class sizes in this TA?**

Budget solutions further away from the classroom were sought to avoid class size increases. For example, Dr. Churchill reorganized the district office, eliminating 10 district office positions and going from 5 departments down to 3.

**27. Why doesn't the Tentative Agreement (TA) include a salary increase?**

PUSD has been experiencing an ongoing budget deficit. About \$11.3 million in budget solutions were implemented for the 2024-25 school year, and approximately \$10 million in additional reductions are being made for 2025-26.

**28. Why does PUSD have a budget problem?**

Some of the main reasons include:

Declining enrollment

- As compared to the 2021-22 school year, PUSD has experienced a loss of 753 students (as of the January 2025 Board of Ed Budget Workshop). The Governor has been lowering the age of eligibility for Transitional Kindergarten (TK) students for several years, which has increased our number of TK students since 2021-22 by 565. Without these additional 565 TK students, PUSD's ADA losses would be far greater than 753 students.
- As of April, projections show a decline overall in TK-12 of -194 students for next year as compared to this year (-168 elementary, +4 MS, -30 HS).
- Why does declining enrollment matter? We are funded on a per student basis. Being in declining enrollment is a huge hit to the budget.

Expiration of one-time funds provided in response to the COVID-19 pandemic

- School districts were given a great deal of one-time monies during and in the years following the pandemic. PUSD received numerous grants, some of which have already

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been exhausted and others that will run out soon. Many additional programs and levels of support were able to be implemented with these funds. It is difficult to contemplate what to cut when these expenditures were all aimed at enhancing the student experience. That said, if items funded with one-time monies are maintained, and the funds are gone, these expenditures must be paid by the general fund.

### PUSD's funding under the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF)

We receive a base grant per student and additional supplemental funds based on the number of students in PUSD who receive Free and Reduced Meals, are English Learners, or are Foster Youth. Our district has a very low number of students who qualify for the supplemental grant funding. Many other districts like SD Unified receive a great deal of additional supplemental funding. In fact, they have so many qualifying students that they qualify for a "concentration grant" as well. Other districts, such as those on the coast, are considered "basic aid." This means their property tax revenues exceed the amount of money the state would provide, and their schools get to keep these funds. PUSD's funding is lower than most districts already because of the reasons mentioned, and declining enrollment and the expiration of one-time funds is making things even more challenging.