

Subject: Bargaining Update: Prioritizing Students and Supporting Educators

Dear Union Members and Members of the Bargaining Unit,

We met on July 31st, 2024, for our second bargaining session with Leon County Schools. Our focus remains on putting students first by ensuring great educators. This can only be done by providing employees with competitive compensation, balanced workloads, and respect. Although there was some movement, the bargaining team has concerns. Issues that have been at hand for quite some time, such as class size and caseloads, continue to be redirected into work groups rather than actionable contract language. However, Our collective action is making a difference.

Early Wins:

- **Extended Bereavement Leave:** We are pleased to announce a significant win in extending bereavement leave. All educators will be entitled to five days of bereavement leave without travel distance requirements upon tentative agreement. This change reflects our commitment to supporting our members during difficult times.
- **Proposed Supplements:** Several new supplements have been proposed, including New elementary school-specific supplements, arts supplements, and agriculture.
- **Training Rates:** An increase in hourly and training rates has been proposed, recognizing the importance of ongoing professional development.
- **Administrative Support:** If a parent's communication with a teacher becomes hostile or oppositional, the teacher can ask for administrative intervention. The administrator will then handle the communication until the teacher feels comfortable resuming direct contact.

Concerns Needing Your Support:

- **Salary Proposal:**
 - LCTA presented a proposal totaling \$6 million. The district Countered with their "best and final" offer of \$4 million. While this is a positive acknowledgment of our efforts, we continue to push for a competitive compensation package that reflects our educators' dedication and hard work.
 - While the district says they want to put money in the pockets of teachers as soon as possible, we believe the money amount must be competitive. Although we trust the district is operating in good faith, we owe it to you to verify the numbers.
- **Professional Expectations and Workload:** We continue to advocate for reasonable expectations around professional duties. The district has suggested that teachers should work beyond regular hours without pay, specifically mentioning IEP meetings. We are addressing this issue to ensure fair compensation for all extra work.
- **Class Size and Caseload Caps:** The district has not yet provided a counterproposal on class size limits and caseload caps; instead, it is suggesting further workgroups. We have engaged in these discussions since 2022 and will continue to press for concrete contract solutions that benefit students and educators.

Where We Are:

There is still work to be done at the table, so will you join us? We must address the district's lack of substantive contributions to several proposals and demonstrate we are united. With your support, we can create the urgency needed to make a difference. These are important issues to us all. Add your name to the statement of support. Stand with your fellow educators. Join your union colleagues in making a difference for our students and all educators.

In solidarity,

The LCTA Bargaining Team

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