

# Tentative Agreement Highlights

On behalf of our members, the Newark Teachers' Union has negotiated a progressive contract designed to provide feedback and support so we may all reach our greatest potential as educators. By shifting the way we develop and support teachers, we will directly impact the quality of our practice and raise student achievement. This Agreement establishes Newark's teachers as national role models and innovators striving to reach our ultimate goal: ensuring all of our students graduate ready for college, careers, and life.

## COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

- **Financial Commitments** – Through the Agreement, we secured a significant financial commitment from NPS to fund the following:
  - **A new universal salary scale that includes both increases and transition bonuses.**
    - Under the Agreement, every member currently on the BA scale and all future hires will move to the new salary scale.
    - Teachers currently on the Master's or PhD scale **have a one-time option** to remain on the current salary scale **OR** move over to the new scale.
    - The Agreement includes a one-time "Transition Bonus" for all employees who move to the new universal salary scale, were on the payroll as of June 30, 2012, and have at least one school year of service in NPS. This Transition Bonus is *over and above* both the retroactive pay in the new agreement and the pay increases contained in the new salary scale.
    - Members on the new universal salary scale will move up a step **and** receive a Transition Bonus. Members who stay on the old scale will move to the next step and earn annual stipends moving forward.
  - **More money earlier in your career, and a more equitable salary scale.** The new scale increases salaries earlier in your career, allows you to earn a higher salary for more years, and features higher salaries than the old scale. Over the years, the current scale had developed wide variations in salary increments. The new scale levels out increments to smooth increases over time, thus dividing up new salary funding more equitably.
  - **A substantial retroactive payment for all members.** The Agreement includes significant retroactive pay—a total of \$31 million across all members. Under the Agreement, every member who was on payroll as of June 30, 2012, including those on the maximum salary step, will receive a proportional amount of retroactive money based on his or her current step. The retro pay is *in addition to* 1) the Transition Bonus that those moving to the new scale will receive and 2) the step increases staff will receive. Under the Agreement, longevity payments also remain in effect. For those who achieved longevity during the past two years, retro payments will be made.
  - **A new "pay for performance" system that lets you earn substantial bonuses.**
    - The "pay for performance" system is aligned with the new state law and is very simple. The "pay for performance" paradigm essentially grants a step based on an "effective" or "highly effective" annual evaluation and freezes the step for a less-than-satisfactory evaluation. Teachers rated "partially effective" or "ineffective" will be able to move to the next step when their rating improves.

- The Agreement includes rewards as well. In addition to step movements for teachers rated “effective” and “highly effective”, the new universal salary scale offers ways to earn annual bonuses funded through philanthropic monies. For example,
    - A teacher can earn a bonus of up to \$5,000 annually for receiving a Highly Effective rating on their annual evaluation.
    - A teacher can earn a bonus of up to \$5,000 annually for working in a school performing in the lowest 25% in the district AND receiving a Highly Effective on their annual evaluation.
    - A teacher can earn a bonus of up to \$2,500 annually for working in a hard-to-staff subject AND receiving a Highly Effective rating on their annual evaluation.
    - **The above rewards are cumulative, meaning that a teacher who earns a Highly Effective rating on their annual summative evaluation, works in one of the 25% of lowest performing schools, and serves in a hard-to-staff subject area could receive an annual bonus of up to \$12,500 on top of his/her annual salary.**
    - An educator can earn \$20,000 for completing a NPS-approved program that is aligned with the Common Core State Standards.
- **Retirement Notification Rewards** – Educators who provide notification of retirement prior to February 15<sup>th</sup> of a given year will be eligible for increased pay out of their accumulated days.
- **A new sick bank model—so leave is there when you need it.** State legislation passed more than two years ago allows districts to create a voluntary teacher sick leave bank. The Agreement launches that sick leave bank model in Newark.

## TEACHER EVALUATION, FEEDBACK AND SUPPORT

- **A Framework of Excellence** – Developed in conjunction with teachers and administrators, the District has created and defined a new framework of what effective instruction looks like so we can identify for individuals areas where they are having great success or need additional support. The framework consists of competencies that are aligned to the Common Core standards and are **FEWER, CLEARER** and **HIGHER**.
  - Fewer – The Framework focuses on FEWER competencies, all of which are observable in the classroom.
  - Clearer – The Framework uses CLEARER and more concise language to describe what each competency looks like in practice.
  - Higher – The Framework sets a higher bar for the competencies we need to meet in order to ensure rigorous instruction takes place in every classroom.
- **Evaluation Results and Feedback** – The Agreement adheres to the TEACHNJ Act wherein teachers will receive an annual rating in one of four categories: highly effective, effective, partially effective and ineffective. The Framework for Effective Teaching includes a new rubric and ongoing opportunities for feedback and development that will support your growth. This framework will go into effect during this 2012-2013 school year.
- **Joint Union-Management Committee** – The NTU and Newark Public Schools (NPS) will form a joint advisory committee to review the implementation of the evaluation system and provide ongoing feedback. The Agreement outlines that the committee will be comprised of an equal number of NTU and NPS representatives – up to 5 each – and that during the first year of implementation the group will meet on a monthly basis with quarterly meetings thereafter.

- **Peer Validators** – Recognizing that some of the best feedback we receive often comes from our colleagues, the Agreement includes provisions for Peer Validators to be used by the district to conduct independent evaluation reviews. Any teacher who receives a rating of ineffective will be afforded the opportunity to request a review. Additionally, the joint advisory committee will provide recommendations on the qualifications, selection process, and process to analyze the quality of the Peer Validators.
- **School Improvement Panel** – In adherence to the TEACHNJ Act, schools will develop a School Improvement Panel consisting of a principal, vice principal (or similar), and teacher to support teacher mentoring and evaluations.

## SCHOOL EMPOWERMENT AND FLEXIBILITY

- Affording educators the opportunity and autonomy to make decisions that best fit the needs of their students means we can be more effective both individually and collectively. The Agreement allows for schools make site-based decisions and seek waivers from the collective bargaining agreement (CBA).
  - If 25% of a school's staff raises an issue that requires a waiver from the CBA, the staff shall vote by secret ballot whether to approve moving forward in seeking the waiver. If 50% plus one of the affected, permanently-assigned staff who vote choose to approve the waiver, it can be submitted.
  - Waivers require approval of the building principal, Superintendent and NTU President.
  - Waivers cannot be requested pertaining to salary scales, fringe benefits, holidays, grievance procedures, transfer provisions, or seniority provisions.

## TURNAROUND SCHOOLS

- Educators at schools needing additional supports and interventions in order to make dramatic improvements need even more increased flexibility to make school-based decisions on certain provisions of the CBA. The Agreement outlines the following provisions regarding Turnaround Schools:
  - NPS can designate up to 10 schools as Turnaround Schools each school year. In determining which schools to designate as Turnaround, NPS will consider data such as proficiency over time, growth over time, and enrollment over time.
  - All Turnaround Schools will have Election to Work Agreements that will specify the expectations and requirements of staff members at each school. A staff member can choose to sign the Election to Work Agreement **OR** apply to other vacancies within the district.
  - NPS and the NTU have agreed upon four waiver templates differentiated by whether the school is a high school or elementary school and whether or not there are additional instructional minutes.
  - In schools that extend instructional time, educators will be eligible for \$3,000 annually.