



Tentative Agreement Reached

Last Thursday the DCTA bargaining team reached a tentative collective bargaining agreement (TA) with the district. Negotiations with the district have been a challenge ever since the process started in January. Many of our afforded rights like planning time, access to extra duty pay and benefits were at risk of being taken away; while we continued to fight for systematic changes that support our students' learning conditions and our working conditions.

Here are **some** the key wins/takeaways within the new Tentative Agreement:

- 6% Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA), plus salary schedule advancements based on years of experience and educational advancements (steps and lanes 2.7%), equally 8.7% increase for the first year, which is the highest raise in the Denver Metro area.
- A \$50,130 starting salary for first year educators.
- Including DCTA groups like CTE and ESLI instructors onto the DCTA salary schedule.
 - CTE I and CTE II instructors will be moved to the DCTA Teacher/SSP Salary schedule.
 - ESLI instructors will be moved to the BA and BA 18 lanes, making them the highest paid in the metro area.
- Increased numbers of educators will receive the hard fill incentive to be determined by the implementation team.
- Keeping equity on the forefront of everything we do including evaluations and district-wide training.
- SSPs and SPED are given 8 release days to complete IEP paperwork.
- Implementing a joint DPS and DCTA committee that will address equity for BIPOC students and educators.
- Firm commitments on collaboration to find solutions that address class sizes and caseloads.
- Expanding distributed leadership within schools and departments;
 - Defined delineated roles between ILT, SLT, PC, CSC and DLTs for departments.
 - Educators will now receive money for serving on committees like the DLT, SLT, LCC, etc.
- Increasing our financial commitment to educators going through the National Board Certification process.
- Expand professionalism respect by allowing educators to take a personal day without permission from their administrators.
- Ensuring that educators maintain their health benefit credit.
- Sick leave donation program for educators who are in need of days due to terminal illness or catastrophic events.

Next steps:

We are currently in the process of making the Tentative Agreement with the salary schedule available to educators within the DCTA bargaining unit. We thank you for your patience as we continue to work with the district to ensure that it is available as soon as possible.

Once the TA is shared with educators, DCTA staff and bargaining team members will host information and Q&A sessions to address any questions prior to the tentative agreement vote. Soon after, DCTA members will have the opportunity to vote to ratify the TA. Anybody who is a member of DCTA will be able to participate in the contract ratification vote. The vote will be held through a secret ballot sent through DPS email. The voting window will be open for one week. The DCTA bargaining team has recommended voting in favor of the TA.

Paycheck Information

We are receiving many questions centered around paychecks. Please be aware that educators should see step increases, lane changes and the 6% COLA on their September 22nd paychecks. It is likely that the September 22nd check will be higher than future payouts because it will include retroactive pay from last month's paychecks.

Please note: This process may be longer for CTE educators as they are transitioned into the Teacher and SSP salary schedule.

Highest Priority Incentive (HPI)

During Tom Boasburgs time as superintendent, he implemented the high priority incentive (HPI) in an attempt to divide the membership leading up to the pro-comp negotiations. This is a typical union busting tactic. From 2015- 2019 the Highest Priority Incentive was paid based on educator evaluations.

The DCTA bargaining team was able to decouple evaluations from the incentive in 2019. During that time, the team agreed to including the HPI incentive only if it was studied. We communicated the results of the study last year when it was completed. The [CU Boulder HPI Study](#) concluded that there was not a statistically significant effect of the HPI increasing attraction and retention rates for educators within the 30 schools. Based on feedback from our membership, it was determined that members would prefer **permanent salary increases** over higher incentive "bonuses" mainly because these bonuses can go away at any time.

Where is the HPI Funding going?

- \$1000 for all educators in HPI Schools as a transition support.
- More SSP and Special Education teacher pool to support with school IEP support needs.
- Increasing the amount of Hard to Fill positions, currently we pay ~31% of our positions as Hard to fill. This will increase to 35%.
- Significant permanent salary increases for all educators including HPI schools this year and within the next two school years (22-23, 23-24, 24-25).

Know Your Contract - Innovation Process

Many schools are currently navigating the innovation renewal process. This summer, the DCTA bargaining team negotiated contract language to ensure schools are provided with transparency and informed consent throughout the innovation process.

Contract language around the innovation plan development:

Innovation Plan Development

Innovation Plan Applications shall address the requirements of the Innovation Schools Act listed in 22-32.5-104, district policy, and this article. The Innovation Plan Application will identify flexibilities that a school seeks to implement, rationale for flexibilities, the collective bargaining agreement waivers associated with these flexibilities (if any), applicable replacement language, and the impact of these flexibilities to members of the collective bargaining agreement.

In guiding the development of an Innovation Plan application, the principal will collaborate with the School Leadership Team (or equivalent governing body) and other stakeholders to identify (1) "innovations," or new approaches that intended to increase the school's ability to achieve its mission, and (2) the specific waivers from district policy, DCTA collective bargaining agreement provisions, and/or state/laws and regulations that are required to give the school the ability to implement the innovations.

The School Leadership Team (or equivalent governing body) will identify, in a consensus model, engagement strategies on how DCTA covered employees at the school can participate in the development of the Innovation Plan. If the equivalent governing body is unable to reach a decision by consensus, the principal shall make a final decision. Possible strategies include inviting teachers to information meetings, hosting forums to discuss opinions, conducting a survey of all educators, submitting anonymous questions to be answered by the School Leadership Team (or equivalent governing body) and/or hosting co-facilitated meetings with DCTA.

The DCTA School Association Representative will be designated as the liaison between the School Leadership Team (or equivalent governing body) and DCTA to solicit and receive ongoing feedback on the development of the innovation plan. If the school does not have a DCTA School Association Representative, DCTA will appoint a DCTA covered employee employed at the school to serve as the liaison. If the equivalent governing body does not include a DCTA School Association Representative, the DCTA School Association Representative will attend the equivalent governing body's meeting for agenda items related to the Innovation Plan Application.

See [full language around the innovation process here](#)

CEA SSP & Special Educator Solidarity (virtual) Roundtable on Saturday September 17th from 10:00 am - 11:30 am

Across the state, educators are carrying greater workloads with less time to support our students. The impacts of the pandemic only exacerbated an already looming problem. With increasing staffing shortages, how can we push the educational systems to adapt and bring the focus back to our students and their services? This roundtable will bring SSPs and Special Educators together from across the state to share solutions and hope for a more sustainable future in this profession. Please [register](#) to receive event reminders, including Zoom meeting info, in advance of the meeting.

Were you a Non-Probationary teacher in another US public school district last year or were you non-probationary in DPS before moving to a DPS innovation school? Transfer your Non-Probationary Status now!

Why is having non-probationary status important?

State law says Probationary teachers can be non-renewed (laid off), for no reason as long as it is not illegal (such as discrimination). If a Probationary Teacher's job is cut, the district owes them no help in finding another position. A Non-Probationary teacher in good standing can only lose their position because the school had to reduce positions – not just because administration would prefer someone else. The district owes a Non-Probationary teacher a 12 month placement if he/she is unable to find a new position on his/her own. Probationary teachers must get three consecutive years of effective ratings and return to the same district for the 4th year in order to gain non-probationary status.

Innovation Schools

Even if you've accepted a job at an innovation school, you should port your Non-Probationary Status. Some innovation schools recognize Non-Probationary Status, some do not. However, even if your school doesn't recognize your status, the district will put a hold on your Non-Probationary Status in the event you transfer jobs to a traditional DPS school at which it *will* be recognized. We are currently waiting to hear how the district will update records.

Questions: Call the DCTA Hotline for advice 303-243-5221

Has your department or school held their DCTA Association Representative election for this year?

Per DCTA Bylaws, schools and departments should hold a yearly Association Representative Election. Some educators choose to hold elections at the end of the school year, while others choose to hold elections at the beginning of the year. However, an annual election must happen! If you need support with facilitating rep elections, please [contact your UniServ Director](#)!

Support for training SLTs/DLTs

If your school or department needs an SLT/DLT training, we are happy to support you! Please [contact your UniServ Director](#) for help.

DCTA is Turning 100!

DCTA is turning 100 years old in January 2023! The DCTA Board of Directors has formed a work group to plan how we want to celebrate this occasion and are looking for Association Representatives from each sector to support this work. We're just getting started and want to plan the best celebration to commemorate the work of DCTA. Reach out to Tim Brown (Timothy.Brown.CEA@gmail.com) to join the work group or with any inquiries!

UniServ Director Assignments

As many are aware, the Denver UniServ Unit has hired three new UniServ Directors to support educators throughout the city. We are also excited to announce that Kate Martin will be taking on a Lead UniServ Director role within the unit. Because of the new staffing/role changes, UniServ Director's school and department assignments may have also changed. Please [click here](#) to see which UniServ Director is assigned to your school or department.

Using DPS Email for Union Business

Our collective bargaining agreement states that educators (including official DCTA communications) are allowed to utilize DPS email to conduct union business for informational purposes. However, educators (including official DCTA communications) may not utilize DPS emails to persuade others on how to vote for a specific candidate, agreement, ballot measure or amendment (this includes union-wide voting). Please refrain from using DPS emails to discuss these matters. Members may choose to have these discussions through home email or other non-DPS communication platforms.

Please make sure to update your personal email addresses through our membership database to ensure we have the correct contact information on file for you.

How to update your contact information on our NEA360 platform:

1. Go to MYNEA360.org.
2. If it is your first time entering NEA360, you will need to create your profile for verification by registering.
3. Once verified and allowed entry, look at the top navigation in black
4. Click "profile," this will give you access to your personal information to verify and update.



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