

## **Sacramento Unified School District Board Meeting**

### **Nathan Uebelhoer**

Sacramento City Unified School District unanimously approved a measure Thursday to increase the salaries of its teachers.

Teachers will now see a bump of 10 percent to their annual salaries from the 2022-23 school year.

The agreement between SCUSD and the Sacramento City Teachers Association closes negotiations through the 2024-25 school year. The approval was passed at a meeting at the Serna Community Center on Thursday evening.

The SCTA also included a six percent increase for teachers working in special education jobs.

Assistant Superintendent Jesse Castillo presented the motion to the board without much pushback. His five minute presentation also emphasized how the budget between years is not changing exponentially.

“I wanted to include the 2022-23 numbers so that you can see the contrast,” Castillo said. “Next year’s budget will be the same as this year’s and we are actually dropping the rates moving into the next few years.”

Castillo explained how the district agreed to move \$18 million in budget costs from the textbook side to the salary side.

The fiscal year budget of \$37.38 million remains the same for 2023-24 but will actually drop down to \$36.8 million for the next two years.

Castillo also highlighted the increase in rates for substitute teachers to \$355 dollars per day.

Following the swift approval of the measure, board member Tara Jeane wanted to express her excitement and gratitude for the increase.

“I just want to put it on record, the substantial shift we are feeling in the district on all ends,” Jeane said. “I want to thank the people who put in so much work to get this done. The labor partners, the staff here, our board conversations – it just really is exciting.”

Jeane explained how these negotiations only began in August, further emphasizing what she called a “monumental achievement.”

“The fact that we could get this done without any negativity or uncertainty is really amazing,” Jeane said. “I really am excited to see what we can do now in other sectors moving forward after this agreement.”

President Chinua Rhodes gave statements on the new initiative.

“This really is a momentous occasion,” Rhodes began. “It is a paradigm shift not only for our school district but for our entire community.”

Both Jeane and Rhodes acknowledged that these negotiations are not always without their issues.

The SCTA teachers went on strike in March 2022 over this issue. The strike lasted almost a week and kept the district’s 43,000 plus students out of school.

In an attempt to avoid a similar roadblock, the union and district met a year before the school year started but were unable to pass this agreement until now.

Each agenda item in the meeting had Local Control and Accountability Plan goals. These are goals set out by the board for the particular item.

This item, which was the 10th on the agenda, had more goals than any other in the meeting.

These included: College, Career and Life Ready Graduates; Safe, Emotionally Healthy and Engaged Students; Family and Community Empowerment; Operational Excellence.

The SCUSD board has made it a point to highlight teachers in almost all their meetings over the past year. Board member Jeane and President Rhodes made sure to continue that narrative Thursday night.

The negotiation did not include any changes to health and welfare benefits for its employees.

The main budget change as outlined by Castillo was in reductions in school materials. This includes books, supplies and operating expenses.

People qualifying for an additional six percent increase are social workers, psychologists, nurses as well as any teacher working with special education students.