



August 22, 2022

Dear Colleague,

The UTD Negotiations Team which is made of members in the workforce just like you, has been hard at work since the process started in April. I am happy to report that after ten negotiation sessions we have finally reached an agreement.

When we first began the process, we asked you, the bargaining unit members, to complete a survey and give us direction. Your message was clear that our top priorities should focus on compensation, healthcare, and lifting morale. We took those issues and made them our focal points throughout negotiations.

Given the inadequate state budgetary circumstances, our team looked at all funding sources in this process to ensure maximum compensation available. This agreement provides employees with an economic package that increases everyone's income, improves morale, and seizes the moment.

**If this Tentative Agreement is ratified, the following salaries and benefits will be in effect:**

#### **Increasing Pay**

- Instructional employees based on their evaluation and salary schedule, will receive a 6% pay increase effective July 1, 2022 for 12 month employees, and for 10 month employees, it is effective August 12, 2022.
- Education Support Professionals (ESPs) will see an increase of at least \$2/hour and an improvement of \$15/hour minimum across the board.
- Employees will see that the Healthcare Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) avoided any increase to monthly premiums for employees and dependent healthcare insurance, which ensures a true raise that is not washed out by healthcare increases.

#### **Increasing Morale**

- Employees providing substitute coverage due to substitute teacher shortages will receive compensation for covering classes.
- Stewards will have protection against retaliation when carrying out their duties on behalf of the union and its members.
- Instructional personnel will have increased flexibility when applying for both voluntary and hardship transfers.
- The calendar will include a permanent fall break as the divisor has been adjusted.

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## Seizing the Moment

- We negotiated the use of Federal ESSER funds in order to address the teacher shortage.
- We negotiated a joint proposal with major modernization of the pay scale for our Educational Support Professionals (ESPs) while improving their career ladder.
- We negotiated a Letter of Understanding (LOU) with a waiver window for health insurance coverage for new employees, which helps with recruitment.

Securing improvements to salaries and benefits as we start the 2022-2023 school year was the goal and we have delivered. During a time when we are facing a teacher shortage and with the continued insufficient funding from the Florida Legislature to fully address our needs, I believe this contract is a positive step forward. We will continue to advocate for additional funding. The renewal of the referendum on November 8<sup>th</sup> is our next priority, and we will need everyone's help to pass it. We all want higher salaries, and the only way to achieve that is through continued advocacy for increased funding from the Florida Legislature.

For more details on the precise contract language, please read the "What a YES and a NO vote means" document. Tony, Mindy and I along with the UTD Negotiations Team recommends a **YES** vote on this Tentative Agreement.

As always if you have questions, please do not hesitate to call UTD at 305-854-0220 and speak with a member of our expert staff. If you know anyone who is not a member, let them know that fairness and equity begins with them. We are stronger together and need everyone who benefits from our negotiations to join the cause.

In solidarity,



Karla Hernandez-Mats  
UTD President