

PESPA & PCS Negotiation Meeting Minutes

Date: November 4, 2025

Start Time: 4:00 PM

Meeting Began: 4:04 PM

Adjourned: 5:09 PM

Location: Admin Building

The meeting was attended by representatives from both the Pinellas County Schools bargaining team and the PESPA bargaining team. The attendees were Michael Vigue, Stephanie Woodford, Gary Jeppesen, Dave Richmond, Carly Spicer, Bryan Bouton, Scott Barnum, Jennifer Resnick

The following articles were discussed:

Article 11 – Employee Equipment

- Discussion regarding lack of training for MBA and Paraprofessional staff in handling student fights.
- Concerns raised about OPS cases and unmet needs for students with IEPs.
- PESPA expressed concern that staff were assigned to work with a student without being given any prior information, despite others being aware of the student's violent tendencies.
- PESPA says they would like staff to receive MAT training.
- PCS counteroffer was presented, including copies of support resources for staff.

Article 12 – COD Program

- PCS (Woodford) stated that the COD program requires a complete overhaul and noted the \$420,000 cost to the district.
- Woodford emphasized that some employees who took COD 20 years ago are still receiving the benefit, which no longer aligns with the original intent of the program. She stated she would prefer to buy out the program and redirect those funds toward salary increases.
- PESPA says they want the district to see the benefit of the COD program and to regenerate it for the next 15 years. PESPA proposed agreeing now to revisit the program next year.
- PCS agrees to revisit the COD program in the future. Aim for Mid-February.

Article 23 – Childcare

- PCS agrees to the top portion of the article.
- PESPA says that "employees' child" should also include grandparents who are caretakers of a child, noting the average employee age is 53, and many may be raising grandchildren.
- PCS responded that this would need to be brought back for further discussion, including a cost analysis. Woodford stated that PCS is not currently aware of how many grandparents could qualify and that this may require legal review, possibly through existing court or foster arrangements.
- PESPA says they want the wording changed to "dependent child."
- PCS (DART) mentioned adding specific language to include "dependent grandchild." However, PCS says that broadening the definition to "dependent" may increase costs significantly.
- PCS proposed adding sunset language through the end of the current contract year (2 years).
- Woodford stated she is not opposed to a long-term change but would prefer to revisit it later.

Article 5 – Use of District Email

- PESPA says that Manatee County allows the use of school email for notifying employees about training such as CPR, meetings, and legislative changes that impact their job—without promoting any point of view.
- PCS says they want to keep the district's email system separate from union activities and that the union may use its personal union email instead. PCS stated it assists with voting but does not want the district's mail system used for union communications.

- PCS noted that training information is already shared via Dena Collins or ChalkTalk, and CPR training is not through PLN.
- PESPA emphasized the need for a way to communicate important training updates to staff, noting that when PCS and PESPA collaborate effectively, communication works well but that is not always the case.

Salaries (Initial Discussion – 4:23 PM)

- PCS proposed a 1% across-the-board increase.
- Woodford presented ranges of percentage increases, including referendum and total overall increase comparisons.

Caucus: 4:24 PM

Resume: 4:47 PM

COD Follow-Up

- PESPA requested a start date for discussions on the COD program.
- PCS recommends beginning mid-2nd semester, and PCS agrees to that timeline.

Article 11

- PESPA and PCS agreed; article signed and finalized on 11/4/25.

Article 23

- PESPA says that item #2 on the last page is fine as written and requests to “pull out ‘dependent’ and leave as is.”
- PCS counters by removing #2 entirely, explaining that this benefit is no longer free to the district. PCS reviewed pricing for employee and outside rates, noting that the district already provides a substantial discount and does not receive FTE funding.
- Article was signed and agreed upon with #2 removed. PESPA signed.
- PESPA asks when the change occurred and when they were notified. PCS says notification occurred in May or June, with the change effective FY26.
- PCS noted that 20% of the program is VPK 3, and the district lost \$9 million in funding. Despite this, PCS will continue the program at a loss with reduced units.

Salaries (Continued Discussion)

- PESPA says they understand the district’s financial limitations and that only 0.7% of state funding covers instructional costs. However, they emphasized the financial strain on employees, who are taking personal loans, maxing out credit cards, qualifying for SNAP, and struggling to pay rent.
- PESPA says the district’s offer equates to only \$270 annually or \$0.15 per hour and noted that employees are repeatedly told each year that “we can only give so much.”
- PESPA counters with a 3.3% increase to align with inflation.
- PCS says the total overall average increase, including referendum, is 5.97%.
- PESPA says they do not want the referendum included as part of the salary increase.
- PCS says that the district could have delayed the referendum to align with the raise timeline, but that approach would have resulted in a smaller total increase than PESPA’s 3.3% proposal.

PESPA says the School Board should go to Tallahassee to fight for more education funding and suggested doing so jointly.

PCS says the district took a financial risk with the referendum and could have lost \$30 million in revenue. PCS noted that as employee count decreases, referendum funds increase, and this funding separation will continue.

- PESPA says “we want to be paid,” mentioning concerns about COD and childcare adjustments. Despite reservations, PESPA agrees to the 1% salary increase.

Timeline

- Tentative Agreement (TA): November 4, 2025
- PESPA will send out an announcement including TA details and voting site information.
- Vote Date: November 18, 2025
- Board Meeting: December 16, 2025 – TA scheduled for Board approval.
- PCS says the employee bonus will be issued after the holidays (January) and plans to update the Bonus MOU to include pay dates.
 - Salary Increases effective: January 16
 - Bonus Pay Date: January 30

Meeting Adjourned: 5:09 PM