

SEIU & PCS Negotiations Minutes

Date: September 3, 2025

Location: Pinellas County Schools Administrative Building

3:00 PM

Next Meeting:

The meeting was attended by representatives from both the Pinellas County Schools bargaining team and the SEIU bargaining team. The attendees were Laurie Dart, Michael Vigue, Carly Spicer, Dena Collins, Stephanie Woodford, Gary Jeppesen, Dave Richmond, Richard Mac McDonald, Antonia Bruno, Chaize Harrell, Brian Wilson, Erin Medieros, Ryan Rilea, Tia Blunt, Mary Guy, Rebecca Dean, Tia Blunt, John DiGregorio, Mary Guy, Rebecca Dean

Opening Remarks – Ms. Woodford

Ms. Woodford welcomed attendees and outlined the district's next steps. She shared that the district had projected a decrease of 3,300 students, but the actual reduction was 3,700. This enrollment decline has resulted in the reduction of 26 staff positions and additional cuts to certain programs.

Additionally, the district experienced an unexpected \$2.1 million reduction in state funding, with no explanation provided. As a result, staffing reductions are occurring across all buildings, including a reduction of 20 positions at the administrative building.

The district is reviewing class sizes to ensure compliance with class size requirements. Ms. Woodford also highlighted the positive impact of the referendum, which provided salary increases for support staff effective July 1. Teachers received a 0.7% increase this year, in addition to gains from the referendum. Overall, employees in this unit have seen increases ranging from 4% to 10% due to the referendum.

State Funding Update – Gary Jeppesen

Mr. Jeppesen provided additional context regarding state funding. He noted that funds have been allocated specifically for instructional staff, with no additional funding for other employee groups. Any increases for non-instructional staff must come from the district's general operating budget.

This year, the state increased funding by only 0.078%. Currently, nearly 80% of the district's operational funding comes from local taxpayers. The district remains committed to offering the highest possible compensation while maintaining fiscal responsibility.

Compensation Overview – Ms. Woodford

Ms. Woodford clarified that the minimum salary increase for employees is 4.7%, with a maximum of 14.7%, which includes both the referendum and the 0.7% state increase. The district had to estimate how to incorporate referendum funds into employee salaries.

There is potential for additional bonuses in winter and spring, depending on excess referendum funds. These allocations must be approved by the oversight committee.

Union Discussion

The union emphasized that the referendum is a collaborative effort intended to supplement—not replace—base pay. Concerns were raised about the attendance incentive for bus drivers, specifically regarding clock-in procedures. Employees are reportedly required to clock in exactly on time, and being even one minute late may disqualify them from the incentive.

Ms. Dart asked whether any employees had been denied the incentive due to tardiness. The union suggested that the issue could be resolved through coordination between payroll and transportation departments. The concern is specific to the Tarpon and 49th Street compounds.

The union also requested to reopen contract articles, including:

- A 5% across-the-board salary increase for all bargaining unit members.
- Revisions to Article 22, requesting replacement of uniforms and jackets due to normal wear and tear, similar to language used in the Food and Nutrition department.

The district clarified that the request to raise the minimum wage to \$15/hour is in response to a state mandate. The union views referendum funds as separate from regular salary increases. The district responded that referendum funds have not replaced raises and that teachers have received consistent increases over the past 20 years.

Caucus Return – 4:00 PM

Upon returning from caucus, Ms. Woodford confirmed that the district had increased the shoe allowance last year and is open to adding language to support the replacement of worn uniforms. The district agreed to sign off on this change, leaving room to revisit financial discussions later.

Return from caucus 4:00 pm