



## Media Release

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### **NEW AFSCME CONTRACT STARTS AT \$15 AN HOUR WITH RAISES FOR EMPLOYEES WITH MORE THAN SIX MONTHS EXPERIENCE**

**(Bradenton, FL – June 15, 2022)** All bus drivers, custodians, food service workers and maintenance employees will make at least \$15 an hour, and those employees who have been with the district more than six months will receive pay increases according to a new contract reached between the School District of Manatee County and members of the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME). The School Board of Manatee County approved the ratified contract during its meeting yesterday.

The \$15 starting pay applies to all employees who fall under the AFSCME umbrella. The district revised the AFSCME salary schedule to bring all employees up to a minimum of \$15 an hour.

AFSCME employees who were hired from January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2021 (or more than six months), will receive a one-step pay increase. AFSCME employees who were hired from January 1, 2015 to December 31, 2019, will receive a two-step pay increase. AFSCME employees who were hired prior to January 1, 2015, will receive a three-step pay increase.

The total cost estimate for the AFSCME package is an increase of \$1,904,800 for the 2022-2023 school year.

“We are extremely pleased to have this contract in place well before the next school year begins,” said Superintendent Cynthia Saunders. “I want to thank everyone on both sides of the table for helping us to improve pay for our AFSCME employees. This new contract will help us attract and retain individuals who are critical to serving the needs of our students and families.”

AFSCME employees also participate in the Florida Retirement System (FRS) and are eligible for additional school district benefits.

Local AFSCME President Deanna Howell was also glad to get the new contract finalized.

“I think this is a great contract for our employees,” Howell said. “We worked hard together with the district to get this contract approved so that we can focus on hiring and retaining high-quality employees.”