



Media Release

Contact: Michael Barber
Director of Communications
(941) 720-1734

SCHOOL BOARD APPROVES NEW CONTRACT WITH MEA INCREASING STARTING TEACHER PAY TO \$55,177

(Bradenton, FL – September 13, 2022) The School Board of Manatee County unanimously approved a new contract today between the school district and the Manatee Education Association that raises starting pay for teachers from \$52,910 to \$55,177 – making starting pay for teachers in Manatee County amongst the highest in the state. The new contract also raises the minimum hourly pay for Paraprofessionals or Teacher Aides to \$15 an hour.

The newly approved starting pay of \$55,177 for teachers consists of base pay of \$48,586, plus a supplement of \$6,591 made possible by the 1-mill referendum originally approved by Manatee County voters in 2018 and renewed in 2021. The previous starting pay for teachers of \$52,910, consisted of a base pay of \$47,500, plus a referendum supplement of \$5,410. The previous minimum hourly pay for Paraprofessionals was \$13.34.

“During this time when all school districts are struggling to recruit and retain the highly qualified teachers and paraprofessionals our students need and deserve, this is a significant step forward for our school district,” said Superintendent Cynthia Saunders. “I want to thank the bargaining teams for the district and the MEA, the School Board for its approval of the new contract, and our community for its continued support of our students and schools.”

MEA President Pat Barber noted that “Changes in FL Statue and the way teachers’ salaries are funded make it more difficult to reach agreement, but both teams worked to find the best possible agreement under those conditions. This is the earliest agreement Manatee has reached in many years, and that will help our employees and our community.”

Additional Highlights of the New Teacher Contract:

- Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA)* of \$150 applied to each level of the salary schedules (COLA as defined by Florida Statutes 1012.22).
- Teachers on the Grandfathered schedule receive a 4 (four)-level increase; those on the Performance

schedule who were rated highly effective receive a 5 (five)-level increase and effective receive 4(four)-level increase.

- Longevity will maintain current contract language.
- Supplemental/Differential pay will increase across the board by 2% plus supplements added (all information will be included with ratification documents).
- Credit for prior teaching experience will increase from 10 years to 12 years (the process for receiving credit will be sent out once the contract is ratified).
- Masters Supplement increases \$300 to \$1,500.
- Sub Coverage language-\$20 per hour when teachers split classes or cover during their planning time; daily pay not to exceed the daily sub rate of \$120.
- Curriculum Pay (Pay for curriculum and special projects including staff development) increases to \$20/hour and is retroactive to August 2, 2022.

Additional Highlights of the New Paraprofessional Contract:

- 1 (One) step movement on the salary schedule for eligible paraprofessionals (those who worked 99 days or more last year).
- 2% to paraprofessionals at the top of the schedule.
- \$1.00 per hour increase applied to each step of the salary schedule for all paraprofessionals.
- The para base salary becomes \$15.00 per hour.

Teachers and Paraprofessionals

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) regarding the referendum supplement (the millage) for the 2022-2023 school year was signed. The referendum supplement for paras will be to \$2,358 (an increase of \$304), and for teachers the referendum supplement will be \$6,591 (an increase of \$1,181).

For both contracts all current contract language including health insurance premiums continues until 2023-2024 negotiations.

All salary improvements are retroactive to July 1, 2022.