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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Classroom Teachers' Council Negotiated Agreement, 2016-2026



Following are highlights from the full 10-year contract between the Community Consolidated School District 15 Board of Education and the Classroom Teachers' Council (CTC), the union that represents the District's nearly 900 teachers. The [contract](http://www.ccsd15.net), which is available on the District's website, <http://www.ccsd15.net> was developed through a six-month negotiation process that began in October 2015, and it was ratified by the parties in April 2016. The Board vote to approve this contract was unanimous.

While the great majority of this contract reflects terms and conditions from the District's prior negotiated agreement with the CTC (2012-2016), it includes a longer term for greater stability and a few significant cost-saving actions, as well as some important enhancements and revisions to address the best interests of all District 15 stakeholders— students, teachers, parents, and taxpayers.

- **Ten-Year Contract (2016-2026):** The length of this contract provides financial stability and a strong platform for long-term strategic planning for the District. The length of the contract, which will encourage more stability in our excellent teaching force, reassures teachers. It also avoids protracted negotiations and potential disruption, and eliminates the costs and time associated with multiple additional negotiations over the next 10 years if the contract were shorter in length.
- **Reasonable Increases for Individual Teachers, Overall Cost-Savings to the District\*:** Individual teachers will receive reasonable raises averaging between 2.5 percent and 4 percent per year, while the total cost impact to the District over the ten years has been projected to be approximately less than 1 percent per year (without factoring in additional savings most likely to be realized). This is lower than the District's current average annual salary cost increases over the past 10 years.
- **Early Retirement Incentives\*:** The contract's salary increases are offset by a persuasive early retirement incentive. Based on the age and experience of its teaching force, the District projects that, over the life of the contract, an estimated 25 percent of its nearly 900 teachers will reach retirement age and opt to take advantage of this incentive. New teachers will be hired into the District at lower starting salaries that remain competitive with those of comparable school districts. To decrease overall salary costs, the contract's early retirement incentive must be accessed at the earliest opportunity—four years prior to the year the teacher is eligible for retirement.

***\*It is important to note that the contract includes contingency language that allow the District to adjust the early retirement incentive and reopen the salary components of the contract should changes in state law mandate penalties or shift greater pension obligations to school districts moving forward.***

- **Salary Schedule Changes:** Currently, the District has a two-tiered salary schedule in which teachers hired after July 1, 2012, are on a schedule of lower salaries when compared with Tier 1 salaries. As a result, the District has found it increasingly difficult to attract high-quality candidates for its hardest-to-fill positions and has lost good teachers in those positions to other districts that pay higher salaries. This contract creates a path from Tier 2 to Tier 1. After six years of service, teachers would be moved to the Tier 1 schedule at a salary just higher than their Tier 2 salary. The year of transition creates usually modest raises, some as low as 0.5 percent. The Tier 1 schedule has salaries decreasing in cells for the first four years and Tier 2 for three years. More years of service are required for the higher salaries, saving the District money.

Additionally, this contract increases the number of steps at the top of the Tier 1 salary schedule. As a result, it will take one additional year for teacher's to attain the highest salary. This was accomplished by removing Step 20 on the regular schedule and creating two longevity steps.

- **Reallocation of Professional Development Time:** The CTC desired to have teachers working together on their instructional practices more frequently than is currently occurring. The group proposed using two Friday early release times each month for the purpose of teamwork. The administration felt that there are enough controls and benefits from this change to agree to this shift from District-level to school- and teacher-directed professional development time, resulting in extra sessions for teachers to meet together to collectively improve their craft.
- **Staffing Adjustments:** Aligning the workloads of elementary specials teachers (art, music, and physical education) with their general education colleagues will increase the number of students they service and reduce the number of specials teachers the District will need to employ, creating cost savings.

Similarly, more flexible formulas will allow the District to adjust paraprofessional (program assistant) staffing to best meet the educational needs of its schools and students, while also resulting in significant cost savings of more than \$500,000 annually.

- **Changes in Sick Day Accrual:** Currently, teachers are granted 12 sick days per year, with no limit to the number accumulated. After the accumulation of 89 sick days, the annual allotment of sick days increases to 15. This contract increases to 24 the number of sick days granted annually to those who have accumulated 170 days. (Teachers work 183 days annually.) This is an incentive for teachers to not use their sick days unless absolutely necessary, decreasing the costs for substitute teachers. The Administration calculated the potential cost of employees using these days (which is a cost to the district), but it felt that the benefits outweighed the risks—as we know that the best instruction occurs when the permanent teacher is in the classroom.

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As a District, we are very pleased to have come to a long-term agreement with our teachers that is fair and reasonable, while also representing the best interests of our students, parents, and taxpayers. Our goal was to ensure our ability to continue to deliver and to enhance the high-quality educational programs and services our community has come to expect from our District, while safeguarding its long-term financial health. This 10-year contract is forward-thinking and puts in place the kind of long-term fiscal planning that allows us to secure the future for our students and community.