

CSIU teachers ink new contract

BY KEVIN MERTZ
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MILTON — The Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit (CSIU) board of directors has approved a new five-year collective bargaining agreement with the CSIU Education Association.

Dr. Bernadette Boerckel, CSIU's director of outreach, confirmed the contract for the organization's teachers was approved during Wednesday's board meeting. The contract runs July 1 through June 30, 2028.

Boerckel said the agreement enhances the teacher's educational benefits. In a separate motion, Boerckel said the board extended those benefits to all CSIU employees.

"Expanding existing benefits and implementing additional benefits is crucial to recruiting and retaining CSIU team members," Executive Director Dr. John Kurelja said, in a statement. "The benefit enhancements testify to the CSIU's commitment to employees and the organization's belief that our educational workforce is the key to our continued success."

According to information provided by Boerckel, the new collective bargaining agreement features various teacher salary bands, starting at \$50,651

for educators who hold a bachelor's degree. The starting salary increases to \$55,843 at the start of the 2027-2028 school year.

Other highlights of the agreement, as provided by CSIU, include:

- All employees electing to enroll in a CSIU-provided health care plan will be moved to a high-deductible plan, effective Jan. 1.

- Employee's premium share costs are based on salary, coverage level and health insurance plan selected. Starting in November, employee salary tiers — determining employee contribution percentage — will shift upwards. The premium share deducted from their paycheck will be reduced by 7% for each respective wage/salary tier.

- To help offset the amount of each plan's deductible, CSIU will disburse funds — half of the deductible, depending on the coverage — into Health Savings Accounts (HSA) for staff who elect medical coverage in one of the CSIU's high-deductible health insurance plans for the next five years.

- Increase CSIU-provided life insurance to \$50,000 for all full-time non-certified staff at no cost to the employee.

- Longevity compensation: After 10 years of employment with the CSIU, employees shall

receive a non-cumulative, non-elective employer contribution paid into a CSIU-approved 403(b) tax-sheltered annuity by years of service to the intermediate unit.

- Retiring employees who have served at least 20 years at the CSIU, who are eligible for normal retirement as that term is defined by the Public School Employees Retirement System (PSERS), and have not had disability retirement during their last year of employment with the CSIU, shall be entitled to receive a contribution toward individual medical insurance premiums into a Healthcare Reimbursement Account based on their number of unused sick days at retirement.

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