



Classified Tentative Agreement (TA) – Full Summary & Staff Guide

Medford School District 549C & OSEA Chapter 15

1. Contract Overview

- Extends the agreement to:
 - **July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2028**
- Maintains most existing contract language, with targeted financial and structural updates.

2. Wages (COLA) – Major Highlight

New Wage Increases

- Year 1 (2026–27): 6.25% increase
- Year 2 (2027–28): 0.00% increase

✓ Why This Front-Loaded COLA Structure Matters

A. Protection against inflation volatility

- If inflation spikes early:
 - You're already protected with a larger raise upfront
- If inflation slows:
 - A second-year COLA becomes less critical

B. Real-Life Example

Example employee earning \$20/hour:

- With 6.25% raise:
 - New pay = \$21.25/hour
- That increase applies:
 - All year
 - To overtime
 - To retirement contributions

👉 If you split it (ex: 3% + 3%), you would earn less total money over the 2 years

Bottom Line: ✓ **Bigger raise now = more total earnings, stronger long-term base**

3. Step Placement (New Improvement)

✓ What Changed

New hires placed based on verified experience

- Direct experience = full credit (example: coming from another school district doing the same work)
- Related experience = partial credit (private sector doing same work)

Impact :

Helps:

- Recruit stronger candidates
- Reduce underpaid starting wages

👉 **Also applies when employees move into new classifications.**

4. Extra Duty (Coaching) – What This Means for Classified Staff

Key Clarification:

Classified employees who coach do NOT have to use personal leave to attend coaching duties such as away games.

How It Works

✓ Paid Through Coaching Stipend

- **Coaching assignments are:**
 - Paid separately through a stipend
- **Because of this:**
 - You are already compensated for that time

✓ No Need to Use Personal Leave

When you need to leave early or miss part of your regular shift for coaching:

You do NOT need to use:

- **Personal leave**
- **Vacation leave**
- **Sick leave**

✓ **Your Options Instead**

You may:

- ✓ Flex your time (make up hours within the same week), OR
- ✓ Take unpaid time if flex is not available

👉 **This gives you flexibility without using your earned leave.**

✓ **Sub Coverage**

- You are allowed to request a substitute
- You do NOT need to use personal time to do so

✓ **What to Enter in Frontline**

- When requesting time for coaching duties:
 - Select **“Release Out”** as the reason for absence

Why This Matters

- Protects your earned leave balances
- Recognizes that coaching is:
 - A paid responsibility separate from your regular job
- Provides flexibility without financial penalty (if flexing time)

Simple Bottom Line

- 👉 Coaching time is already paid
- 👉 You don't have to burn personal leave
- 👉 Use flex time, unpaid time, or sub coverage
- 👉 Just select “Release Out” in Frontline

5. Insurance – Insurance Opt-Out Rules

Current (Old Model)

- District offers \$400 monthly stipend to those that opt out of insurance due to having outside insurance

New (TA Change)

- District will only offer \$400 monthly stipend to those that opt out of insurance, as long as their current health insurance is not OHP, individual Marketplace, or student health STATUTORY/OTHER AUTHORITY: ORS 243.860 - 243.8

What This Means

A. You can't always take the stipend - If your insurance comes from:

- The individual marketplace (ACA plans)
- Oregon Health Plan (Medicaid)
- Student health plans

👉 Then you cannot opt out of OEBC medical insurance to receive the district stipend

B. What you *can* do instead

- You have two choices:

✓ Enroll in the district (OEBC) medical plan

✓ Waive coverage (but not receive opt-out money if you fall into the categories above)

If you waive medical and don't qualify for the stipend, you can still enroll in:

- Dental
- Vision
- Other optional benefits

C. If you DO qualify to opt-out

- If you have qualifying outside insurance (like through a spouse/employer plan):
 - You may be eligible for opt-out compensation
- Even if you opt out of medical:
 - ✓ You can still enroll in:

- Dental
- Vision
- Other optional benefits

D. Flexibility in benefits

- Employees can mix and match:
 - Take medical + waive dental
 - Waive medical + take vision
 - Any combination allowed (unless contract limits it)

Simple Bottom Line for Staff

- **Not everyone can take the opt-out cash — it depends on your type of outside coverage**

If you qualify:

- You can take the stipend **or**
- Mix and match benefits

If you don't qualify:

You'll need to choose:

- district insurance **or**
- waive coverage without stipend **or**
- waive medical, mix and match other benefits, and no stipend

What if you decide to take the district's Insurance but you want a better plan??

⚠ If you choose a higher-cost plan:

- The district still pays their contribution
- You pay the difference out-of-pocket

6. Retirement & Savings (Maintained Benefits)

- Up to \$50/month district match
- \$600 annual contribution
- \$1,000 initial contribution for new enrollees

 **Strong benefit remains unchanged.**

7. Workweek & Scheduling (Unchanged)

- Option for **4-day / 10-hour schedules** continues for some job classifications

Advance Notice Requirements

- Permanent schedule change: **30 days**
- Temporary change: **2 weeks**
- Emergency exceptions allowed

8. Overtime & Compensation Rules (unchanged)

- Overtime = **1.5x pay**
- Double time for holidays
- Employees can:
 - Decline overtime (except emergencies)
- Comp time must:
 - Be used within fiscal year or paid out

9. School Closures – Clarified

 **The district has clarified that employees are not required to report to work when travel conditions are unsafe during inclement weather. While some staff may be asked by site administrators if they are available to work on weather-related closure days, reporting to work will be voluntary and not mandatory. Site administrators will communicate directly with any staff who may be needed by October of each school year.**

Short-Term Closures (1–2 days)

- Employees:

- Still paid
- **Requested staff (not mandatory):**
 - Earn overtime pay

Long-Term Closures (3+ days)

Options:

If you are not working:

- Make up time
- Use leave
- Dock pay
- Required staff:
- Paid regular rate

If you are working and part of snow removal team:

- **Paid Overtime**

10. Reduction in Force (RIF) Improvements

- **Requires:**
 - Advance discussion with the union
 - Clear communication about:
 - Reasons
 - Process
 - timelines

 **Improves transparency and employee awareness.**

11. Leaves & Time Off

No major structural changes:

- **Sick leave:**

- 1x day per month worked, 10 days/year for most classified, 12 days (96 hours) for 12 mo employees. Front loaded, unlimited carryover.
- **Personal leave:**
 - 3 days/year
- **Bereavement leave maintained**

12. Other Updates

- **Clarifies:**
 - Temporary employee limits
 - Association access rights
 - Hiring and reporting processes
- **Maintains:**
 - No-strike clause
 - Management rights language

PROS & CONS

Pros

- Significant 6.25% raise upfront
- 100% district-paid base insurance
- Better starting pay for new hires
- Maintains retirement contributions
- Improved clarity for closures and scheduling