

Pinellas Classroom Teachers Association (PCTA) and Pinellas County Schools (PCSB) Bargaining Session

Date: July 20, 2026

Time: 4:31 p.m. - 5:45 p.m.

Location: PCTA Building

Participants

Members Present: Brennen Pickett, Janet Cunningham, Tracey McConnell, Paula Stephens, Allison Hearn, Shannon Hoff, Dan Perrazo, Michael Vigue, Dena Collins, Dave Richmond, Carly Spicer, Gary Jeppesen

Call to Order

The bargaining session was called to order at 4:31 p.m. Discussions focused on compensation, healthcare costs, referendum funding transparency, TSIA allocations, employee benefits, and contract-related matters.

Opening Discussion

Tracey McConnell recognized teachers for their role in helping the district achieve strong academic performance and noted that educators continue to express concern about rising healthcare costs. She stated that many employees fear salary improvements could be offset by increases in healthcare expenses and reiterated the union's position that referendum funding should remain separate from negotiated salary increases. Article 49, Section B of the collective bargaining agreement was referenced regarding continued discussions on salaries independent of referendum funding.

District Response

Michael Vigue welcomed participants and thanked teachers for their service to students. He acknowledged concerns about healthcare affordability and explained that, in a self-insured system, employee compensation and healthcare expenses draw from the same financial resources. He stated that referendum funds are not subject to bargaining and are presented on salary sheets for transparency so employees can view their full compensation package.

TSIA Funding and Compensation

The district outlined its proposed methodology for distributing Teacher Salary Increase Allocation (TSIA) funds. Eligibility will include full-time K-12 classroom teachers, Title I teachers, and Pre-K teachers. Approximately 2,733 teachers qualify for TSIA funding, with an estimated allocation of \$1,124 per eligible employee. In addition, approximately 5,695 teachers will receive referendum-funded compensation, resulting in a total annual referendum amount of \$12,905. The district intends to use September 1, 2026 as the eligibility date for TSIA determinations.

Contract Articles

The union requested discussion on bereavement leave, certification reimbursement, terminal pay, and sick leave buy-back provisions. The district stated it would not reopen contract articles outside the regular bargaining cycle but remained willing to consider certification renewal reimbursement and potential bereavement leave enhancements.

Healthcare and EWBS

District representatives reported ongoing healthcare funding challenges. Healthcare costs previously exceeded available funding by approximately \$30 million. After plan changes implemented in 2025, the deficit has been reduced but remains approximately \$11 million. The district reported that state requirements for self-insured plans include maintaining reserve funds and emphasized the need to control healthcare costs while minimizing employee impact.

Caucus

The parties recessed for caucus at 5:02 p.m. and reconvened at 5:30 p.m.

Questions were raised regarding sick leave balances, TSIA implementation, fringe benefits, certification reimbursement, and bereavement leave usage. Dave Richmond clarified that accumulated sick leave remains on an employee's record and may be restored upon reemployment or transferred to another Florida district. Shannon Hoff requested district data related to bereavement leave utilization and associated costs. The district agreed to review the request.

The parties discussed accommodation for larger meeting spaces for future bargaining and EWBS meetings. The district also agreed to remove annual referendum amounts from future salary proposal sheets. An updated district proposal is expected at a future bargaining session.

Next Bargaining Session: July 23, 2026, from 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. (or later if needed) at the Pinellas County Schools Administration Building.

Adjourned at 5:45 p.m.