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Central Unified School District

CUTA Negotiations Update – June 5, 2026

The Central Unified School District bargaining team and the Central Unified Teachers Association (CUTA) bargaining team met on June 5, 2026, for the twelfth negotiations meeting regarding the 2025–2026 collective bargaining agreement. Members of the negotiation team representing the District included Dr. Javan Childs, Julia McLennan, and Eliseo Cuellar. Members of the CUTA negotiations team included Laura Bolton, Angie Botelho, Twylite Lawrence, Gregory Pullinger, Andrea Chase, and Krystle Pumarejo.

The primary focus of the session centered on Article 7.3 and the application of class size averaging language within Appendix E of the collective bargaining agreement. CUTA representatives raised concerns regarding the inclusion of Transitional Kindergarten students within the K–3 grade span class size average believing it to be a “typo” within Appendix E. CUTA expressed their understanding that TK students historically had not been included in the averaging calculations used to determine elementary staffing allocations and class size compliance. CUTA indicated that the issue had significant implications for class size reductions and their ability to communicate anticipated outcomes to bargaining unit members.

In response, District representatives conducted a review of historical bargaining records and contractual documents centered upon Appendix E. Following a caucus, the District presented documentation demonstrating that Appendix E was formally incorporated into the collective bargaining agreement in August 2014 and subsequently modified through a mutually signed Tentative Agreement in June 2017. The District provided copies of the signed agreement and supporting documents showing that language explicitly including Transitional Kindergarten within the K–3 grade span average was negotiated, agreed upon, and later approved by the Board of Trustees. District representatives acknowledged that portions of the Appendix contain language inconsistencies but maintained that the specific reference to TK was intentional and had been formally adopted through the bargaining process.

The discussion evolved into a broader examination of historical practice and the practical impact of class size calculations. CUTA representatives expressed concern that including Transitional Kindergarten students in the averaging formula could reduce the effectiveness of efforts to lower class sizes in the primary grades and could result in larger classroom enrollments than employees had anticipated. CUTA representatives emphasized the importance of reducing class sizes to support literacy development particularly in the earliest grades.

District Administration

Mark E. Marshall, Ed.D. - Superintendent

Javan Childs, Ed.D., Assistant Superintendent - Human Resources & Labor Relations • Amer Iqbal, Assistant Superintendent - Chief Business Officer
Marilyn Lopez, Ed.D., Assistant Superintendent - Student and Family Services • Julia McLennan, Assistant Superintendent - Educational Services

District representatives acknowledged the importance of maintaining manageable class sizes and supporting student achievement but also emphasized the fiscal and operational implications associated with modifying long-standing staffing formulas. District leadership expressed concern that removing TK from the averaging calculation without conducting a comprehensive analysis could create significant staffing obligations and financial commitments that had not been previously evaluated. The District noted that any adjustment to class size calculations could result in additional staffing requirements and associated costs at a time when the District continues to face long-term fiscal pressures and reserve concerns.

Throughout the discussion, both parties explored the relationship between class size reductions, staffing allocations, and the District's overall financial condition. District representatives emphasized the importance of making data-informed decisions and indicated that additional analysis would be necessary to fully understand the impact of modifying the existing language. The District expressed concern about making significant changes late in the bargaining process without sufficient opportunity to evaluate the long-term fiscal consequences. District leadership also reiterated concerns regarding future reserve levels and the possibility of increased fiscal oversight if financial projections continue to deteriorate.

The bargaining teams also discussed broader operational concerns, including supervision responsibilities and staffing challenges. CUTA representatives inquired about the District's plans to address supervision-related issues and raised the possibility of considering alternative solutions in conjunction with discussions surrounding class size language. District representatives shared that they continue to evaluate multiple options for addressing supervision needs and operational requirements while balancing financial realities. District leadership noted that districts across the state are increasingly exploring various approaches to providing student supervision and maintaining safe learning environments amid budgetary constraints.

Over the course of bargaining, the District has sought to establish a recess supervision model utilizing elementary teachers to assist with student supervision during recess periods. Discussions have centered on the frequency of supervision assignments and the operational need to ensure adequate student supervision throughout the school day. During negotiations, the District initially sought a model requiring elementary teachers to provide recess supervision on an equitable basis. CUTA maintained its position that any agreement should not exceed one day of supervision per week. Discussions continued with the District seeking a minimum of two days per week, and CUTA maintaining a position that if there is to be an agreement of supervision, it should not exceed one day per week while citing prior to supervision being removed from teachers duty, most sites were able to operate with teachers providing one day a week of supervision. In an effort to move discussions forward, the District subsequently proposed a one-day-per-week recess supervision model. While the parties engaged in productive dialogue over the course of negotiations regarding supervision, no agreement was reached during the June 5 session, and recess supervision remains an active topic for future negotiations.

As the session progressed, both parties acknowledged that additional time would be necessary to fully evaluate the issues under discussion. District representatives indicated that any significant revisions involving class size calculations would require further review with district leadership before additional commitments could be considered. Both teams recognized the complexity of

the issues being discussed and the importance of ensuring that any decisions made would be sustainable and aligned with both educational and fiscal priorities.

Near the conclusion of the session, CUTA requested a caucus to discuss next steps. Following internal discussions, CUTA representatives informed the District that they preferred to return to the bargaining table in August. As a result, the session concluded without additional bargaining dates being scheduled. While several issues remain unresolved, both parties expressed a desire to continue discussions in the future and acknowledged the importance of reaching agreements that support students, employees, and the long-term success of Central Unified School District.

The District proposed a 1.25% ongoing salary increase, with a one-time, off-schedule payment of 0.75% for each member in the bargaining unit.

Although the June 5 session did not result in a final resolution of the remaining outstanding issues, the discussions showed additional need for clarity regarding historical contract language, class size calculations, and the fiscal considerations associated with proposed changes. Both bargaining teams remain committed to continued dialogue and future negotiations aimed at achieving a mutually acceptable agreement that balances educational priorities, employee interests, operational needs, and fiscal responsibility.

Sincerely,



Mark E. Marshall, Ed.D.
District Superintendent