ARTICLE 20
TOTAL COMPENSATION

20.1 Application

20.1.1 **For the 2025-2026 school year, there will be no increases to the salary schedules.**

20.1.2 **For the 2026-2027 school year, effective January 1, 2027, the hourly rate for all ranges will be increased by $1/hour. This will conclude negotiations for total compensation through June 30, 2027.**

20.1.3 The parties agreed to change the Group Purchasing Organization ("GPO") effective July 1, 2023. Effective July 1, 2023 **through December 31, 2026; the District** will continue to pay a total employer contribution cost of up to $25,772,544 towards the cost of health and welfare benefits (including Vision and Dental) premiums.

a. The District will fund the full premium cost of health and welfare benefits for each eligible, full time (40 hours per week) unit member employed on or before the date of Board ratification **through December 31, 2026**.

b. **Effective January 1, 2027, the District shall establish a "soft cap" contribution up to the Traditional Kaiser HMO composite plan rate, as set forth herein, for each eligible unit member, (37.5 hours/week or greater), towards their selection of a health and welfare benefits plan. Employees shall contribute the difference between the Traditional Kaiser HMO composite plan rate and plans with premiums above that amount. The District's "soft cap" contribution will continue to be at the amount in place on December 1, 2028, for the cost of the Traditional Kaiser HMO composite plan rate until the parties reach a different agreement.**

The Parties also agree to add six (6) new HSA 80 plans.

~~This~~ **These** employer contribution will be prorated as outlined in section 20.2.1 for unit members who work less than full time.

c. For January 1, 2025 through ~~June 30, 2025~~ **December 31, 2026,** should there be an increase in the cost of the premium for the CDHP PPO 90 or the CDHP HMO $1,600, the district will fund the increase in the premium for either of those two plans. Should the employee select a health and welfare plan other than the two CDHP plans listed above, the district will pay an employer contribution of $16,500 towards the cost of the premium for the health and welfare plan the employee selects.

d. **District Health Savings Account ("HSA") Contribution: Effective January 1, 2027, the District will annually contribute towards a unit member's eligible HSA account the difference between the "soft cap" contribution and the actual premium cost of the plan selected by the unit member, not to exceed the maximum IRS allotment for self-only coverage, in effect as of January 1, of the plan year.**

e. Unit Members hired before January 3, 2023: The District shall offer Cash-in-Lieu to all eligible full time (40 hours per week) unit members who can prove they are covered by group medical coverage. Part-time eligible unit members currently enrolled in a District medical plan and can prove they are covered by group medical coverage outside of the District are eligible for a prorated Cash-in-Lieu.

f. Unit Members hired on or after January 3, 2023: are only eligible for Cash-in-Lieu if they are employed full-time (40 hours per week), subject to the conditions in ~~(c)~~ **(e)** above.

g. The amount of the Cash-in-Lieu for unit members defined in 20.1.3~~(c)~~ **(e)** shall be prorated and paid as follows.

Beginning 7/1/2023, the Cash-In-Lieu shall be:

1. $5,000 - 1.0 FTE unit member
2. $3,750 - .75 FTE unit member
3. $2,500 - .5 FTE unit member

20.1.3 ~~The parties agree that the Medical Advisory Committee of the District, VESPA and VUEA shall meet on a regular basis to assess the GPO and to educate members about the plan and to discuss ways to educate unit members on choosing possible future cost-saving plans offered by the GPO. The committee will also have a goal of offering HSA plans to all eligible unit members.~~ **The District and VESPA agree to form a joint health and welfare advisory committee with VUEA, with training from an independent, non-broker, provider that is jointly chosen by the VESPA and VUEA Presidents and the Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources. The parties shall meet at least four times between January and June. The goal of the advisory committee is to control health and welfare benefits costs, educate members, improve benefit options, and explore adjustments to the prorating eligibility of benefits referenced in 20.2.1.**

~~20.1.4 Medical Cost Trigger. Once the total cost of health and welfare benefits in the GPO exceeds $23,195,289 (ninety (90%) of the current total amount of $25,772,544), the parties agree to bargain in good faith (VESPA will be represented in the bargaining by their bargaining team), to explore all possible medical plan changes to keep the total cost below $25,772,544. When an agreement is reached on changes, the changes shall be referred to formal bargaining to implement the agreed upon changes, based upon a vote by the VESPA membership and ratification by the VUSD Board of Education. It is the parties' intent that all current eligible unit members', employed on or before the date of Board ratification, health and welfare premium costs be fully funded by the District until there is a subsequent, negotiated total compensation agreement.~~

20.2 Health and Welfare Benefits Eligibility:

20.2.1 **Effective January 1, 2027,** unit members shall receive health and welfare benefits based on the following prorating of eligibility for the fringe benefit package:

Benefit schedule for regular, permanent unit members:

20.2.1.1 20.00 hours a week to 29.99 hours a week, the district will pay 50% of the employer contribution as outlined in 20.1.3 (including a and b) above.

20.2.1.2 30.00 hours a week to ~~39.99~~ **37.49** hours a week, the district will pay 75% of the employer contribution as outlined in 20.1.3 (including a and b) above.

20.2.1.3 ~~40.00~~ **37.5** hours a week **or greater**, the district will pay 100% of the employer contribution as outlined in 20.1.3 (including a and b) above.

20.2.1.4 Unit members who work less than 4.00 hours per day will not receive any district paid health and welfare benefits.

Flexible Scheduling:

20.2.1.5 The district will assign hours on an average-a-day basis. For example, the district will assign 4.00 hours a day for a 20.00 hours a week unit member.

20.2.1.6 If the unit member and supervisor mutually agree, the 20.00 hours may be distributed in flexible pattern. For example, the 20.00 hours could be

assigned as 5.00 hours a day for two days, 6.00 hours a day for one day, and 4.00 hours a day for one day.

20.2.1.7 Once the unit member and supervisor agree to a particular schedule, that schedule shall remain in force for the remainder of the year unless the unit member and supervisor mutually agree to change the schedule.

20.2.1.8 Except in case of a layoff situation, the total weekly hours will not be reduced for the school year.

20.2.2 Unit members will be grandfathered for health and welfare benefits eligibility at the level consistent with the contract under which they were hired. For example: a unit member hired prior to March 1, 1992 and who has a regular, permanent assignment of 4.00-5.99 hours per day will continue eligibility at the level of 67% of the District paid level for full time employees and a unit member with regular, permanent assignment(s) of 6.0 or more hours per day will continue eligibility at 100% of the district paid level for full time assignments.

20.2.3 When a unit member makes a change in hours, the eligibility levels in section 20.2.1 will apply, unless an increase in hours would result in a decrease in benefits eligibility (i.e., a unit member working 6.0 hours per day and receiving benefits at the 100% level who moves to a 7.0 hour position would not drop in benefits eligibility from 100% to 75%, but would remain at the 100% level). Examples include: a unit member hired prior to March 1, 1992, and who has regular, permanent assignment(s) totaling 4.0 hours will continue to receive benefits at the 67% level, but if that same unit member moves into a regular, permanent assignment at 6.0 hours, on or after March 1, 1992, that unit member will be eligible for benefits at the 75% level, not the 100% level.

20.2.4 Positions identified as "limited term" do not accrue benefits. For example, a unit member who is currently assigned to a regular, permanent 3.0 hour position who also is working in a limited term 3.0 hour position, does not qualify for a benefit level assigned to an employee with 6 hours. Benefit eligibility is determined by the total number of hours an employee works in (a) regular, permanent assignment(s).

20.2.5 The one exception to the above general guidelines for determining levels of benefits coverage will be the Bus Drivers in the Transportation Department. As Bus Drivers are required to re-bid for routes on a yearly basis, if a Bus Driver is put into a position where they would be required, under the seniority bidding system, to accept a bus route which is less hours than would be needed to maintain the Bus Drivers' existing benefits level, then the Bus Driver would not be reduced in benefits level. However, if the Bus Driver would have been able to be assigned to a route, based on their seniority, at or above the minimum number of hours required to maintain their existing benefits level and chose to bid on a route with fewer hours, it will be considered as a voluntary reduction in hours and the Bus Driver's benefits level will be reduced accordingly.

20.2.6 For purposes of this Article, a position is to be defined as a specific, individual assignment with a specific number of assigned hours per day and days per year and identified in the Classified Human Resources Position Control system with a unique position number. For example, the District may determine that a full day special education class needs to be covered by 5.5 hours of Paraeducator time, but may choose to define that time into two separate positions, for example, one at 3.0 hours per day and one at 2.5 hours per day. Under this circumstance, the 5.5 hours of assigned time would be considered as two separate positions and not one 5.5 hour position.

20.2.7 The District shall maintain the right to establish or revise the number of hours for positions as it feels is appropriate and this may be below the threshold for benefits coverage.

20.3 Health and Welfare Benefits for Retired Employees

20.3.1 Unit members who, as of June 30, 1993, were eligible under the 1992-95 contract to receive deferred compensation payments after retirement and who retire from the Ventura Unified School District under PERS will receive deferred compensation at $1,500 for each year of service, plus one, not to exceed 30 years based upon the unit member's years of service and their benefits level as of June 30, 1993.

The deferred compensation amount will be paid annually over a 5-year period, according to Appendix F, upon the unit member's retirement from the Ventura Unified School District. Any unpaid installments of the deferred compensation plan shall be paid to the unit member's beneficiary in the event of the death of the unit member.

20.3.2 Eligible unit members are unit members who qualified for benefits as of June 30, 1993. Disability retirement under PERS, after at least five (5) years service credit in the District, will be treated as regular service retirement.

20.4 The District will implement an IRS Section 125 plan for bargaining unit members.

20.5 INITIAL SALARY PLACEMENT – NEW HIRES AND PROMOTIONAL ASSIGNMENTS

The District has an interest in establishing criteria to place bargaining unit members, who accept a promotional assignment, and new hires at a step on the salary range of the classification for which they were hired, that recognizes the education and experience they bring to their role in supporting students and the services of the District. For new employees hired on or after July 1, 2022 and promotional assignments effective after the date of Board ratification, upon approval of the Director of Classified Human Resources and notification to the VESPA President, an employee may be provided with advanced step placement up to Step 5 based on the following criteria:

20.5.1 Additional qualifying experience beyond that required for entry into the class (limited to no more than one step for each two years of experience related to the classification)

20.5.2 Additional education at the college level beyond the educational requirements established for entry into the class (limited to no more than one step for each two years of education related to the position)

20.5.3 For promotional assignments, a bargaining unit member will be placed in accordance with the criteria above or at the salary step on the new range which provides a minimum increase of 5.7% of the member’s current salary, whichever is greater. In no instance shall the placement be higher than step 5 of the range for the new classification.