



OSCEOLA COUNTY EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

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The OCEA Bargaining Instructional and Educational Support Professionals Teams and the SDOC Management Bargaining Team met on June 28th, 2023, to continue negotiations for the Cost-of-Living Adjustment and additional proposals. OCEA believes these initiatives are essential to improving the lives of our Osceola County educators.

The SDOC Bargaining Team did not bring any proposals or counterproposals concerning salaries to the table, citing the Superintendent transition as the reason. SDOC stated that this was a good opportunity for the district to hear OCEA's offers and concerns to work toward counterproposals for the next meeting in July.

In an act of good faith, both employee bargaining teams have tentatively agreed to adding a third choice to the insurance plan. An Employee Health Center only option being added to the plan will allow employees to establish the center as their designated health providers and will require referrals to specialist. The overall option provides for lower out of pocket max and lower cost for urgent care visits. While OCEA has agreed to that we advocated that no premiums will be raised on any other plans. We have reservations about the ability of the Employee Health Center to take on more capacity, but OCEA wanted to give the management a chance to prove this plan can work and provide our members with another way to save money before talking about other insurance proposals in the future. We will follow all the data and keep our members informed.

For Instructional salaries, OCEA proposed a 6.5% COLA (Cost-of-Living Adjustment). This would approximately be a \$3,300 raise for the average Osceola County instructional staff employee in the bargaining unit. OCEA explained to District leadership that this level of investment in our staff is necessary to retain the talented educators that we have and to attract more educators in the process. District leadership and the School Board have publicly expressed a willingness and a desire to prioritize teacher and staff salaries over other budgetary endeavors.

For Educational Support Professionals, OCEA proposed the district advance their amounts to add amounts equally either .50 cents raise or an additional average of 3% bringing this counter proposal to an average of 6% for members in the bargaining unit. Additionally, the OCEA team requested that all IT or computer techs across the district be reclassified within the tiers as a technical position to improve their pay grade. Lastly, the team requested the incentive for higher degree be made available to all employees regardless of tier so that it serves as a true incentive and not just a reward.

OCEA is hopeful and optimistic that under the new leadership of Dr. Mark Shanoff, we will receive a good faith counterproposal at our next meeting and begin to move Osceola County's compensation package in the right direction.