



## Instructional Bargaining Press Release Osceola County Education Association April 11, 2024

Tonight, the Osceola County Education Association and the School District of Osceola County returned to the bargaining table for the first time since November 2023. This meeting marked the start of serious salary negotiations for the 2024-2025 school year.

OCEA was pleased to learn that **SDOC intends** to put forward a \$15.5 million salary package. **Unfortunately, this money would NOT benefit every instructional employee and would be contingent upon loss of summer vacation, loss of planning time throughout the year, a new employee attendance policy, and removal of classroom set-up days.**

SDOC claims that their proposal would create a "potential earnings of \$5,295 or 9.5%" for instructional staff. But in fact, 3% (approximately \$1,625) would be the only guaranteed increase for all employees. An additional 1.5% -1.8% could be earned based on employees' evaluations. Another 1.0% could be earned by only classroom teachers for a loss of two summer vacation days. 3.7% could be earned by only classroom teachers adhering to a new attendance policy.

SDOC stated that they could not anticipate how many teachers would choose to participate in the attendance supplement, but, based on current data, only approximately 800 of the 3,100 employees would be qualified.

Additionally, the loss of two summer vacation days would be "optional." However, the district would take away all classroom set-up time for all teachers during pre-planning, mandating five days of district-controlled meetings instead. SDOC stated that they anticipate just 1,000 of the 3,100 teachers would choose to participate in the two summer days, and the 2,100 other teachers would not be given time to set up their classrooms for the new year. Non-classroom instructional personnel would lose all access to self-directed preplanning time.

Furthermore, SDOC proposed taking away two teacher planning periods per month. This would remove strong contractual language that currently protects all self-directed teacher planning time. Teachers would also be required to stay after school for conferences and NOT be paid monetarily.

All of these proposals increase teacher workload, decrease teacher preparation time, and offer a mere \$1,600 in return. This is disrespectful to the employed professionals and families of the district. It is a major disservice to students who should be able to benefit from well prepared, engaging lessons.

"I'm appalled, especially because they are blatantly ignoring our essential instructional non-classroom employees," stated OCEA President, Janet Moody. "However, I am determined

to work with my team and SDOC to reallocate the \$15.5 million to better address the needs of district employees, starting with OCEA's proposals."

Members will recall that SDOC has repeatedly demanded increases to the Athletics Supplements. OCEA has held firm in the belief that Curriculum Supplements must also be addressed. As a result, a joint review committee was held. Unfortunately, SDOC participated but still refused to negotiate. After seven months, SDOC again returned to the table empty handed. **OCEA, however, brought forward an updated proposal, further expanding the number of employees who would benefit from the Curriculum Supplements.** (View the full proposal on the OCEA website).

OCEA also continued to remind SDOC that they are violating state law by refusing to pay all teachers in Title I schools an additional supplement. **Failure to pay this is especially appalling as \$12 million was left unspent in Title I funds last year.** (View budget documentation on the OCEA website.)

"We know we have more Title I schools. The money is coming in. Where is it going? It should be going into the pockets of educators," stated OCEA bargaining team member Jamila Taylor.

**Finally, OCEA is thrilled to announce our proposal to provide SDOC instructional staff with paid maternity leave!** Allowing new mothers 8 paid weeks of leave would cost the district an annual maximum increase of only \$693,333. (View the full proposal and rationale on the OCEA website.) OCEA believes maternity leave would empower our employees to establish a healthy homelife for their young families. In doing so, they will undoubtedly be more productive when at work, have increased morale, and be more likely to make Osceola County School District their 30-year career "home." This is a common sense, low-cost/high-yield proposal that would also make SDOC the first district in the state of Florida to offer paid maternity leave to teachers. We believe Osceola can and should be the leader in this endeavor!

OCEA is already devising a counterproposal to more fairly distribute the salary payments to benefit ALL instructional employees. We strongly encourage our members to attend our General Membership meeting on April 22nd, as well as future bargaining meetings. Every educator's voice matters, and we will continue to fight together for professional treatment.



**Proudly representing education professionals working  
in the School District of Osceola County**