



**Pittsburgh Federation of Teachers
Synopsis for the Tentative Agreement
for the
Paraprofessional Employees Bargaining Unit**



On Friday, May 30, 2008, negotiators for the PFT and School District reached a tentative agreement for the over 700 employees covered by the Paraprofessional Employees collective bargaining agreement.

Provisions of the new tentative agreement are presented in this synopsis. This information about the tentative agreement is available on the PFT website at www.pft400.org.

An Informational Meeting for Paraprofessional members will be conducted at the PFT Building on Thursday, June 5, 2008, at 4:30 P.M.

KEY POINTS

Term:

This agreement is for three years, from July 1, 2007, through June 30, 2010.

Wages:

- a. All Paraprofessional employees will receive a **3%** increase to salary effective April 1, 2008.
- b. All Paraprofessional employees will receive a **3%** increase to salary effective July 1, 2008.
- c. All Paraprofessional employees will receive a **3%** increase to salary effective July 1, 2009.

All Paraprofessional employees will receive three 3% increases. When the cumulative effect of the raises is calculated, the total growth is an over 9% increase over the term of the new contract.

The first 3% increase will be retroactive to April 1, 2008. That increase, along with the 3% increases for May and June, will be paid in a single, separate check once the district payroll office calculates amounts accurately. PFT negotiators focused on strengthening the salary schedule to gain permanent income increases rather than gaining a larger one time retroactive payment.

All Paraprofessional employees will receive a second 3% increase to their salary effective July 1, 2008. That increase will be based on the April 2008 salary which includes the first 3% increase. Paraprofessionals will, therefore, receive cumulative increases over 6% from their March 2008 salary to their July 2008 salary amount.

All Paraprofessionals will receive a third 3% increase to their salary effective July 1, 2009.

These three 3% raises are important because they strengthen the salary schedule and provide a stronger foundation on which to build during the next negotiations.

Health Care:

a. The current Paraprofessional insurance coverage and payment of premiums shall continue at their present rates through 2009. For insurance coverage beginning in 2010, Paraprofessionals will have the option during the 2009 open enrollment period to choose:

1. To continue their current Keystone HMO coverage and change their premium formula to one that is tied to the total cost of insurance.

Individual --- 5% of premium and 20% of any premium increase

Family --- 3% of premium and 20% of any premium increase

-or-

2. To change coverage to Standard Blue PPO (which is currently not offered to Paraprofessional Employees) and continue the premium formula tied to individual base salary.

Individual --- 0.75% of base wages

Family --- 1% of base wages

Some Paraprofessional employees may choose to keep their current contribution rate and move to the Standard Blue insurance coverage, while others may prefer to remain with their current HMO coverage and pay the adjusted contribution. All employees will have plenty of time to consider which option is better for them/their families. The PFT will assist all employees prior to the enrollment period in 2009, and we will ensure that each Paraprofessional employee has quality medical insurance to protect the individual member and her or his family, as needed.

Paraprofessionals will have no change in their insurance contribution or coverage through December 2009. Again, no coverage or contribution changes will go into effect until January 2010.

b. Medical benefits for Domestic Partners are now included under group health care plans.

c. Part-time employee health care coverage remains the same for such employees.

Clearances:

Effective with the start of the 2008-2009 school year, paraprofessionals who have been employed at least three years may be required, as a condition of continued employment, no more than once every three years, to obtain and submit clearances under Acts 34 and 151. These clearances will be maintained in the paraprofessional's personnel file. The cost of obtaining the clearances shall be borne by the District. The District will meet with the PFT Liaison to the Office of Human Resources to discuss implementation issues.

Severing Employment:

Paraprofessionals approved for disability retirement must sever their employment with the district within 2 years of the effective date of the disability retirement.

Methods of Salary Payment:

Pay dates for Paraprofessionals, Teachers, and Technical-Clerical employees will be coordinated. All will occur on the schedule established for Teacher pay dates.

Severance Pay:

Severance pay based on cumulative sick leave continues in effect. The parties agreed to eliminate Section 4.d. (Alternative Pay Calculations based on years of service).

Sick Days:

Efforts to eliminate cumulative sick leave have been defeated. All current Paraprofessional employees will continue to have sick days accumulate annually without limit and to be usable annually without limit.

Special Education:

Commencing with the 2008-2009 school year, all paraprofessionals paid through the Program for Students with Exceptionalities will have the opportunity to complete up to 15 hours of professional development training paid at the effective paraprofessional workshop rate. The hours must be completed outside of the workday.

