



Hillsborough Classroom Teachers Association

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Hillsborough CTA declares impasse in contract negotiations

TAMPA – At today’s negotiations in the media center at Chamberlain High School, the Hillsborough CTA bargaining team presented a “bottom line” proposal to the School District. HCTA’s proposal includes, among other things, the two step increases employees are owed for their work the last two school years, and reconvening of negotiations in the event Hillsborough County voters approve the one-mill revenue referendum during the primary election on August 23.

Because of the parties’ lack of progress on employee salaries, HCTA further notified the Florida Public Employee Relations Commission (“PERC”) that the parties’ bargaining had reached an impasse today. HCTA representatives are hopeful that the district will come back at the next bargaining session on August 4 with an offer that educators can live with—literally, in some cases—if they are going to return to the classroom when school starts on August 10. The District’s revenues under the state education funding formula are increasing by over \$148 million in 2022-23 compared to 2021-22. While even this increase is not enough to create the schools students deserve, HCTA believes the District has the funds to pay for the two step increases, which the District itself estimates would cost only around \$26 million.

“With over 900 teacher vacancies and another 600 support personnel vacancies, our schools are in a crisis,” said Rob Kriete, HCTA president. “We have to take drastic and decisive action—now—just to have enough staff to keep students safe. The district can’t afford *not* to fund our proposal.”

As for the district’s claims that it can’t afford what HCTA is proposing, Mr. Kriete was skeptical: “Out of \$148 million in new revenue, they can’t find a way to use \$26 million to pay employees for the work they’ve done the last two years? Nobody buys that.”

The impasse declaration comes at a critical moment for the district. Primary election ballots—which include the millage referendum—have already been delivered, and early voting begins on August 8. HCTA believes the district’s agreement with its proposal would help the case for the referendum.

“The district has an opportunity here to show the community what its priorities are, and they need to take it,” said Mr. Kriete. “Voters aren’t going to be impressed if the district’s plan is to use tomorrow’s tax dollars to pay yesterday’s bills.”

The parties return to the table on August 4 at the Hillsborough CTA office at 3102 N. Habana Ave.

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Hillsborough Classroom Teachers Association is the certified bargaining agent for over 17,000 teachers, guidance counselors, nurses, paraprofessionals, secretaries, clerks, and other educational employees of Hillsborough County Public Schools.

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