



Our union has been involved in negotiations with the Champaign School Board and their administration since May of 2021. From day one, the “extended school day” proposed by the Board consumed the vast majority of energy from both sides. It is true that there were times during bargaining when both sides thought we were close to an agreement. However, members made it abundantly clear that we were, in fact, not close at all. When nearly 750 teachers were given a choice between the Board’s offer and authorizing a strike, 91% voted to authorize a strike.

Teachers are committed to doing what is both right and best for our students . Our union sees the Board’s proposal as short sighted. Their commitment to time as “the answer” to the district’s problems prevents them from facing the realities that educators and their students face on a daily basis with understaffed buildings, under-resourced classrooms, and lack of reliable bussing- all issues that we know will extend well into the future if they are not addressed with the input of our entire school community. This is what our teachers want.

Since May of 2021, the needs of our members and our students have even grown beyond the realities of our most current proposal. The District claims that our elementary teachers spend the least amount of time with students, yet our staffing needs far outweigh those same districts. We have seen record numbers of teachers leave mid-year. Our compensation is competitive with other districts, but yet again our needs far outweigh many of our neighboring districts. The Board would do well to analyze these dichotomies - as our current trajectory is not sustainable.

Below we outline the rationale for each of our proposals designed to recruit and retain high quality teachers, increase student success and respond to the growing needs of our community. This is followed by the actual language presented to the district.

Rationale for proposals

Student Learning Task Force:

The Board is proposing a 4 year contract that increases the student day by 50 minutes at the elementary level beginning the 2023/2024 school year. We feel that there needs to be a greater opportunity for stakeholder input and a wider focus on a variety of ways to improve the achievement and opportunity gaps that exist. Therefore, we have proposed a two year contract with a task force dedicated to addressing these gaps. While the community is not directly involved with the bargaining process, we know that decisions we make at the bargaining table have a significant impact on members of our community. Our proposed task force would include all stakeholders (teachers, support staff, parents and administrators) and would be required to bring a proposal before the Board - thus the impetus would exist for us to ratify a change. This approach would give legitimacy to the process and result in consensus. The timeline would be the same as the District's current proposal. Unfortunately, The Board and District refused.

While our proposal operates on the same timeline as the Board's proposal, ours goes beyond the "extended day.". It allows for implementation of grade level centers, curricular overhaul, more balanced calendar schools, sustainable community schools, and any other evidence-based practice that provides engaging opportunities to students. Our proposal ensures transparency and stakeholder input. It allows for the changes in our schools to be rooted in the values of our community. Our proposal is democratic.

Our students could benefit from more special instruction; think PE every day, computer literacy, social emotional/restorative practices, targeted interventions, service opportunities, agriculture, etc. We have suggested all of these things in negotiations. They have refused.

The Board may argue that building the day first is the most pragmatic approach - that once the day is built, all of the things that are important will be filled in. Teachers know better. In 2017, the District began going one-to-one with computers. And since that time there has been no aligned curricular development to support computer/technology use by our students. For well over a decade we've been talking about making systemic changes to curriculum, discipline, and professional development but there has been no substantive changes in many of these areas, despite real needs that our students are facing . Your teachers are reluctant to believe this would be any different. Like so many things in education, the work of implementing the School Board's "big ideas" will land on the shoulders of the teacher with no resources or support to implement the idea. We think students deserve more .

The Board argues that their proposal will help close the achievement gap. And, they will suggest that their proposed Wednesday “early out” will provide the time for teachers to do the work needed to address said gap. However, their proposal fails to address transportation and childcare issues on those days. Teachers are currently responsible for all before and after school supervision. Rain, sleet or snow, teachers are helping students off and on buses, opening car doors, and waiting to ensure that students arrive and dismiss safely. We predict that’ll happen on Wednesdays just the same. Wednesday will be moot as teachers will be extending their existing work, rather than engaging in the Professional Development the district claims they will be offering. Long time educators remember a time when we had ½ days to support afternoon PD for teachers. Those ended, in fact, because of transportation and childcare issues at the elementary level. History is our guide and the contract is the only guarantee. This is why our union is pushing for a Student Learning Task Force to work through these issues and find a data-driven way to address the achievement gap.

Perhaps the most difficult part of this whole thing, for teachers and families, is how this came about. As we’ve reflected and researched the idea of an “extended school day” we’ve come to realize that it has happened in many places with mixed reviews on efficacy - at best. But in all the places where it did happen with a modicum of success, it was a collaborative process before the day was agreed upon - not after. It seems inconceivable that the school board and district leaders who are pushing for this change wouldn’t do some initial research to determine stumbling blocks and issues. Chicago, for example, extended the school day only to reconsider shortening it a few years later. Issues of planning time, staffing, start/end times, recess, and lunch were just as prevalent in those negotiations as they are here. So, your teachers say no. There are better ways. Our working conditions, after all, are your child’s learning conditions.

Staffing in Unit 4 is at a crisis level. Throughout the course of this school year 36 of our members have resigned mid-year. All over the District we have seen Social Workers, Librarians, ESL teachers, Special Education teachers and Classroom teachers walk away and leave it all behind. On top of that, there are an unprecedented amount of vacancies in the District. Currently, there are 71 certified positions needing to be filled. Additionally, you will find over 100 positions available for support staff; there are 33 open positions in our transportation department alone and another 23 openings for aides that provide vital student support. The Board should be drafting proposals that inspire teachers to stay, not ones that have them lining up at the doors to leave. We believe we’ve shared those ideas with the Board over the course of the last 6 months. Know that it isn’t about money. It’s about trust. It’s about a plan that

makes sense. It's about doing what is absolutely best to address the systemic issues our students and our schools currently face.

Kids Plus Discount:

One of our primary goals as a union is to have a contract that helps our district recruit and retain high quality teachers. Teachers, like most people in the community, spend a great deal of time at their job. The work day starts long before classes begin and ends long after classes are dismissed. Reliable and affordable childcare is essential. A modest discount to Unit 4's Kids Plus program makes the in-district child care more appealing to our members and provides a convenient way of ensuring their own children are cared for while they complete the work necessary to support the students of Unit 4.

Kindergarten Class Size:

In our last contract, CFT fought hard to win a reduction to Kindergarten class sizes. Research shows that students who aren't reading at grade level by 3rd grade are not likely to ever catch up. Unfortunately, as it was previously written, the desired changes were not easily brought about. Too many classes are still over the cap and the hiring process for adding an aide to those classes is long and drawn out. This proposal ensures that the Kindergarten students of Unit 4 get the support they deserve in the classroom as quickly as possible.

Staffing:

Mental health and social emotional learning are critical for student success. As a union, we feel that the students of Unit 4 are currently underserved in terms of the number of adults available to them to provide services. We call upon Unit 4 to reduce the student to staff ratio for Psychologists, Social Workers and Speech-Language Pathologists over the course of this agreement in order to better meet our students' needs.

Health Insurance:

This proposal aligns with the union's goal of recruiting and retaining high quality teachers in Unit 4. We have seen insurance premiums rising as much as 15% across the state. Teachers are willing to pay a bit more for insurance, but want to ensure that any raises provided to our teachers to compensate for inflation are not then eaten up by increases to their insurance premiums. This proposal provides

reasonable increases by the District to those insurance premiums and also slightly increases the contribution towards the family premiums.

Compensation:

Teachers in Unit 4 are paid via a salary schedule that has been in the collective bargaining agreement for over 30 years. Pay increases are comprised of two components, adjustment for inflation and years of service. Teachers in the district move ahead on the salary schedule one step for each year of experience they have teaching. This is a very common manner of honoring years of service. Our current salary schedule progresses up to 21 steps. Once a teacher is on the 21st step, the following year the teacher will move “off schedule”. In bargaining, then, the parties bargain the “cost of living adjustment” to the salary schedule and a salary increase to those people “off schedule”. The Bureau of Labor Statistics is reporting a 7.5% increase in consumer goods (<https://www.bls.gov/cpi/home.htm>) for the 12-month period ending in January 2022. The Union’s proposal of 2.75% to the cells for Years 1 and 2 in the salary schedule, and off-schedule raises of 4.25% in Year 1 and 4.5% in Year 2 ensures members’ salaries both on and off schedule aren’t falling behind inflation by too much. We’ve not seen rates like this since the early 1980’s. Given that most economists predict the rates will fall back into a more normal range by the end of this year, we feel this proposal offers some protection for our members while also being realistic to our times. The total cost over last year's payroll including step increases for members is \$2,154,403. There are however, savings that the district experiences each year with regards to salary. The combined salaries of the teachers who retired last year is \$724,328. If the district replaced all of those teachers with new teachers at the starting pay with a Bachelor’s degree, the cost of the new teachers would only be \$491,288, creating a savings of \$233,039 for the district. Factoring in this savings with the cost of the Union Year 1 proposal over last year's payroll results in a 3.30% increase to total payroll. Year 2 of the Union’s proposal results in an additional 3.54% to payroll but does not factor in future retirees so the true cost will be less.

Additionally, the District saves money each year in replacing staff. Unit 4 routinely replaces 100 or more teachers a year yet only a fraction of them are teachers who are retiring. Most of the teachers that left the district are likely those that have only been in the district for 2-4 years. As an example, if all 100 of the teachers that left were on step 4 of the salary schedule, and all of them were replaced with teachers on step 1, that results in a savings to the district of another \$345,600.

Student Loan Assistance:

Student debt is a crisis in our country and it deters people from being educators as their salaries are lower than those of other professional jobs. Student debt also disproportionately impacts women and people of color. As the costs of attaining a college education increases in the years ahead, it is going to become increasingly difficult to recruit qualified teachers. This proposal will provide a modest benefit for a very small group of members as an incentive to work (and stay) in Champaign.

Elementary Scheduling:

This just brings about a slight clarification to our current contract language. For our elementary teachers, having their plan time in consecutive minutes is imperative in order to get any significant amount of work done. A small group of teachers has experienced having their plan time spread throughout the day in small chunks which is not productive. This ensures all members are treated fairly and given adequate time to do their jobs.

Extra Duty Pay:

When teachers are hired to do district work outside the regular school day or choose to substitute teach during our plan time, we are paid at an hourly rate. This rate has not increased since 2013 and as our members do more and more work for the District outside of their contractual hours or during their plan time, we want to ensure they are being fairly compensated.

Current Proposals from the Union

Note: New language items are underlined. Sections that are not underlined are currently in the contract. Sections that have a strike-through are sections we are proposing to remove.

ARTICLE V - TEACHER AND UNION RIGHTS**18. The Board shall offer the following for members with children who attend Unit 4 schools:**

- a. **A twenty-five percent (25%) discount on Kids Plus rates**

ARTICLE VI-WORKING CONDITIONS

Y. Kindergarten Class Size

Effective with the start of the 2020-2021 school year, **After the first four (4) weeks of school**, when a kindergarten class roster exceeds twenty-two (22) students for ~~thirty (30)~~ **ten (10)** consecutive school days or ~~thirty (30) days in a semester~~, the teacher of that class will be provided a Licensed Substitute Teacher (preferably assigned as a long term substitute) or Teacher Aide (TA) until the number of students falls below the class size limit.

AA. Staffing

The Board shall reduce the School Psychologist to student, Social Worker to student and Speech-Language Pathologist to student ratios over the term of this Agreement.

AB. Student Learning Task Force

1. **Beginning in the 2021/2022 school year, the District and CFT shall establish a task force to explore ways to reduce the achievement gap. The task force will examine a variety of options including but not limited to additional staffing, smaller class sizes, reducing the teacher to student ratio, additional balanced calendar schools, additional social emotional learning resources, curricular changes, grade level centers, and a potential extended day for elementary school. The task force will be comprised of equal representatives from administration, CFT, CESP and parents.**
2. **All decisions of the task force must be voted on with the following guidelines:**
 - a. **A quorum must be present for a vote to be held. Quorum shall be defined as 2 members from each representative group (Administration, CFT, CESP, Parents)**
 - b. **A vote shall pass if the following criteria are met**
 - i. **Majority of members vote yes AND**
 - ii. **There is at least 1 yes vote from each representative group**
3. **The task force shall meet monthly beginning in March of 2022 (or within 1 month of ratification) and shall be charged with the following:**
 - a. **Collecting data from comparable districts that outlines their test scores, staffing levels, curricular choices, length of school day and how that time is spent.**

- b. Jointly creating a parent survey and collecting data from a wide, representative group of Unit 4 families.
- c. Jointly holding forums at each elementary school to seek input from all stakeholders in order to develop recommendations for closing the achievement gap.
- d. If strong interest is shown for an extended school day, grade level centers or additional balanced calendar schools through the forums and survey, then the Task Force shall develop a plan that includes the following information:
 - i. Detailed start and end times for each school with a thorough transportation plan for bus riders
 - ii. Detailed school schedules that reflect the interests of the stakeholders (i.e. if survey results showed additional time for lunch and recess then that would be a priority of the plan)
- e. If a detailed plan was developed that impacts working conditions, then by March of 2023, the Task Force shall present the plan to the Board, CFT Leadership and CESP Leadership. Upon approval, the parties will then bargain the impact of the change in working conditions. CFT and CESP members will then have the authority to vote the plan up or down through internal ratification procedures.
- f. If CFT and CESP ratify a plan that impacts working conditions, it would be implemented the school year after the ratification vote takes place.
- g. In the event a plan is agreed upon and it is determined that there is not enough staffing to ensure that busses will not be regularly canceled or that students will not be guaranteed a bus ride of less than 45 minutes, the implementation of the plan shall be delayed until staffing issues are addressed.
- h. In the event that agreed upon start and end times prevent a teacher from accessing already established childcare, the District shall develop a plan that provides an opportunity for members with those documented childcare concerns to opt to a position at a school with a different bell schedule.

ARTICLE VIII: SALARY AND ECONOMIC RELATED ITEMS

C. Group Health Insurance

During the term of this Agreement, the CFT and the Board agree to use health care plans to be negotiated each plan year. For the **2021-2022** school year, the following plans shall be offered: Health Alliance POS-C 1000d NS1 Rx8 (**\$690** single premium cost), the POS-C 2000d NS1 Rx8 (**\$644** single premium cost), and the HMO HSA **5000** Bronze NS3 Rx3 (**\$426** single premium cost).

If the foregoing plans are not available in subsequent years, or upon mutual agreement of both parties, the Board agrees to negotiate with CFT for new and/or substitute plans. The new plans will have at least the same level of benefits and comparable level of coverage. The parties agree to establish a Joint Committee composed of equal representatives to study health insurance plans. The parties will schedule their first meeting to negotiate health care plans to occur no later than April 15 each year.

The Board will contribute up to the following amounts per month for the bargaining unit member's single health insurance premium if he/she chooses one of the Point of Service (POS) plans.

2021-2022: \$690

2022-2023: \$735

For the **2021-2022** school year, the Board will contribute an additional **\$150** per month toward the employee plus one or family health insurance premium for any bargaining unit member who elects employee plus one or family coverage in one of the Point of Service (POS) plans. For the remaining years of this Agreement, the Board will contribute an additional **\$175** per month toward the employee plus one or family health insurance premium for any bargaining unit member who elects employee plus one or family coverage in one of the Point of Service (POS) plans.

If an employee chooses the employee-only Health Savings Account (HSA) plan, the Board will pay the full cost of the single premium (up to **\$426 in 2021-2022, up to \$454 in 2022-2023**) and contribute \$3,000 per year into a Health Savings Account (HSA).

If an employee chooses the employee plus one or family Health Savings Account (HSA) plan, the Board will pay the full cost of the single premium (up to **\$426 in 2021-2022 up to \$454 in 2022-2023**), and an additional **\$150** per month toward the employee plus one or family health insurance premium in **2021-2022**. An additional **\$175** per month toward employee plus one or family health insurance will be paid for the remaining **years** of the Agreement.

The Board will also contribute \$2,500 per year into a Health Savings Account (HSA) for the duration of the Agreement.

The parties acknowledge that the HSA shall be administered in accordance with IRS regulations and participation in the HSA may prevent a bargaining unit member from also participating in the Flexible Benefit Plan.

When two bargaining unit employees are spouses and elect employee plus one or family coverage in one of the Point of Service (POS) plans, (or one spouse is in the bargaining unit and the other works for the District in a benefits qualifying position outside of the bargaining unit), the District shall apply one

Board paid single coverage insurance premium toward the cost of single coverage and the other Board paid single coverage insurance premium toward the cost of employee plus one or family coverage. The parties agree that this provision applies to dental and vision coverage as well.

For example, if both Jane and John Doe elect employee plus one or family coverage in one of the POS plans, then the Does would have \$690 x 2, or \$1380 plus \$300 for a total of \$1680 per month applied to their premium in 2021-2022.

When two bargaining unit employees are spouses and elect employee plus one or family coverage in the Health Savings Account (HSA) plan (or one spouse is in the bargaining unit and the other works for the District in a benefits qualifying position outside the bargaining unit), the District shall apply one Board paid single coverage insurance premium toward the cost of single coverage and the other Board paid single coverage insurance premium toward the cost of employee plus one or family coverage. The Board will also contribute \$2,500 per year into a Health Savings Account (HSA).

For example, if both Jane and John Doe elect employee plus one or family coverage in the HSA plan, the Does would have \$426 x 2, or \$852 plus \$300 for a total of \$1152 per month applied to their premium and \$2500 per year contribution by the Board to their HSA in 2021-2022.

For the term of this Agreement, the Board will contribute the cost of any increase in single dental insurance premium up to \$35 per month.

For the term of this Agreement, the CFT and the Board agree that the Eye Med Standard Plan Vision Plan or a comparable plan shall be provided to all bargaining unit members. The cost of the single premium shall be paid by the Board, up to \$5 per month.

Flexible Benefit Plan - The flexible benefit plan shall be continued for the duration of this Agreement. Administrative costs shall be paid by voluntary participants. Deductions for the flexible benefit plan shall be sent to the administrative agency on the business day following the deductions.

The Board reserves the right to cancel insurance after 30 days for non-payment of premiums in cases where the employee is required to pay the premium to maintain coverage while on a contractual leave.

The Board may opt to implement a self-funded health insurance plan in lieu of a fully insured plan as long as the benefits associated with the plan remain substantially the same.

L. Compensation Schedule

4. The salary schedules for the 2021-2022 School Year through the 2022-2023 School Year are included in the appendices of the Agreement. Teachers on the salary schedule will receive increases in the following amounts:

2021-2022 School Year: Step Plus 2.75% to each cell

2022-2023 School Year: Step Plus **2.75 %** to each cell

Teachers who are off schedule will receive increases in the following amounts:

2021-2022 School Year: **4.25%**

2022-2023 School Year: **4.5%**

All employees on the salary schedule shall move forward one step with the start of the new academic year. Employees on step 21 move “off schedule” and shall receive the salary increase negotiated for employees “off schedule.”

Any increase negotiated to the salary schedule for the ~~2018-2019~~ **2021-2022** School Year will be retroactive to July 1, ~~2018-2021~~.

(*) If the pension law changes the 3% to a greater amount, then the off-schedule raises will increase to the new amount, not to exceed 4.25%

L. Student Loan Assistance (re-letter the rest of the section) From Board package on 11/22/21

The District shall offer a student loan assistance program. A maximum of twelve (12) teachers per year shall be permitted to enter this program. To be eligible for assistance, a member must meet the following criteria:

1. **Employed by the District for a minimum of two (2) full years.**
2. **Employed in a position listed on the District’s most recent “Hard to Fill” list for at least one (1) of the past two (2) years of service.**

OR

Employed at a campus serving a minimum of 55% Low Income Students (as listed on the Illinois School Report Card) for at least one (1) of the past two (2) years of service.

3. **The loan must have been obtained during a teacher’s initial course of study to obtain teacher licensure.**
4. **The loan must not be eligible for a Federal loan forgiveness program.**

Disbursement shall occur as follows:

1. **Each member shall be entitled to up to \$5,000 of loan assistance.**
2. **Funds shall be distributed to members in \$1,000 increments per year for up to five (5) years, which may or may not be consecutive upon request of the member.**
3. **Members must submit their paperwork for assistance by October 1st of each year.**

4. **Funds shall be distributed to recipients by December 1st of each year.**
5. **A selection committee comprised of District and CFT representatives shall review each request to ensure they meet eligibility requirements and to determine which requests will be granted in the event more than twelve (12) are received in a given school year.**
6. **Distributions may be taxable to members and shall be reported in accordance with IRS guidance.**

Members who resign or are terminated from Champaign Unit 4 Schools prior to completing two (2) years of service after the most recent disbursement of funds will be required to repay \$1,000 to the District. (For example, if an employee receives \$1,000 during the 2021-2022 school year and ends employment prior to the end of the 2023-2024 school year, the employee will need to repay \$1,000.)

By participating in the program, members consent to the District withholding all or part of their final paychecks to fulfill all or part of this obligation. If the final paycheck does not cover the entire cost of repayment, members agree to arrange for prompt repayment of any remaining balance.

Note: CFT and Administration shall work together to develop the paperwork members will use to apply for assistance. The District is reviewing the Section 127 information CFT provided and is willing to establish such a plan if permitted.

APPENDIX 1: ELEMENTARY SCHEDULING

1. All classroom teachers will be provided at least 240 minutes of planning time per week.
2. Classroom teachers, Interventionists, and ELL teachers shall have six (6) periods of forty (40) minutes weekly. The standard planning period at the elementary level will be forty (40).
Planning minutes for each period shall be consecutive and not broken into smaller chunks.
3. Classroom teachers, Interventionists, and ELL teachers shall use one planning period every other week for collaboration ~~at the grade level~~. The classroom teacher may use the time during the non-collaborative weeks for individual record keeping. Principals and grade level teams will create the agenda together (either in person or electronically) for collaborative planning and teachers will set the agenda for individual record keeping.
4. One forty (40) minute class period each week shall be spent in the library as part of the planning time cycle. Elementary classroom teachers will not be required to remain with their students during the library period.
5. Full time "Special" teachers, those who teach music, physical education and art shall teach (30) thirty forty (40) minute classes each week.
6. "Special" teachers shall have a daily planning period of forty (40) consecutive minutes, or 200 minutes per week in addition to a thirty (30) minute duty free lunch period.
7. "Specials" teachers, Librarians, shall be allocated five (5) minutes of "set up" time between classes. Each building will determine sufficient passing time to move students to and from "specials" classes.

8. ~~If modifications to the curriculum are required to facilitate Section 5, appropriate staff development activities and/or curriculum writing opportunities will be provided to affected teachers in accordance with Article VIII, Section G(2) of the 2002-2005 Collective Bargaining Agreement.~~
9. Full time librarians will be assigned at all elementary schools except Southside. Elementary librarians will teach one forty (40) minute period for each class in the building each week as part of the classroom teacher planning cycle. Remaining class periods will be scheduled into the library as needed.
10. Elementary librarians will be placed on extended contracts for seven (7) days. These days may be used either before the start of school year or after the end of the school year to ensure that time is provided to open and shut down the libraries and to teach students from the beginning of the school term through the end of school.
11. If any "Special" teacher must be transferred to the middle school level, transfer will be done in accordance with Article VII B.
12. Full-time PE, Music or Art Teachers may be assigned supervision or tutorial duties during the school day if their schedules reflect unassigned blocks of time or more than ten (10) minutes.
13. The elementary librarians' caseload shall not exceed more than 28 classes per week. At no time should the total classes exceed 28 per week. Elementary librarians shall have at least 240 minutes per week for library management time. The rationale for this agreement is to provide the librarians with the necessary time to function as professional school library media personnel
14. Enrichment implementation plans for each school will be reviewed annually at Areas of Consultation.
15. Middle School Functional Life Skills teachers shall be given one, forty (40) minute period each week for collaboration with other staff members.

"Extra Duty Pay"

All references to \$32.50 per hour shall be increased to \$35.00 per hour.

NON-SUBSTANTIVE LANGUAGE CLEAN-UPS

Incorporate 8/5/2020 MOA regarding Differential Payroll Schedule

Incorporate 8/28/2019 MOA regarding Mentor Table Revisions

Incorporate 5/8/2019 MOA regarding Classroom Moves

Change all instances of "Executive Director of Human Resources" to "Assistant Superintendent..."

Change all instances of "ESL" to "MLL"

Remove “graduating from baccalaureate programs accredited by the American Medical Association” from Article VIII.3a. (This was inadvertently left in last time when it should have been removed following ratification of the prior Agreement.)

Correct all spacing/formatting/punctuation errors missed last time