

IELRB PUBLIC POSTING

by

SUMMIT HILL SCHOOL DISTRICT 161 BOARD OF EDUCATION

Submitted October 5, 2026

The Board of Education values its teachers and staff and remains committed to reaching a fair agreement that supports employees, students, and the long-term financial stability of the District. The following information is intended to provide employees and community members with factual information regarding the current status of negotiations.

Summary

The Summit Hill School District 161 Board of Education (“Board”) is currently negotiating with the Summit Hill Council, AFT Local 604 (“Union”). The Union represents the District’s teachers and certified staff members.

Since March 2026, the parties have met 10 times, including 3 sessions with a federal mediator. Negotiations remain ongoing between the Board and the Union. The Board has proposed a total of \$4.46 million just in additional compensation and benefits over four years, equaling an average increase in compensation of 3.84% per year. The Board estimates the Union’s proposal would cost \$5.15 million in additional compensation and benefits over four years, with an increase in compensation equaling an average of 4.50% per year, and would lead to significant deficit spending over time. The current contract expired on June 30, 2026. No strike has been scheduled, and the parties continue to work to negotiate a fair contract for the Board and Union members.

Throughout the process, the Board has been committed to taking this process seriously, building on relationships developed during the last contract negotiations, and bargaining in good faith to reach a fair resolution for all in a timely fashion.

Current Proposal Summary

The District has made a comprehensive proposal that includes meaningful salary increases, continued significant investment in employee health insurance, and other economic and contractual improvements. This is a significant investment in the Teachers of our District, and includes the following:

- Total salary increases of 15.35% over four years, on top of 20% over the previous four years (2022-2026), for a proposed 35.35% over an eight year span:
 - o Year 1, 2026-2027 - 3.25%
 - o Year 2, 2027-2028 - 3.50%
 - o Year 3, 2028-2029 - 4.35%

- o Year 4, 2029-2030 - 4.25%
- Maintaining District contribution of 90% of the employee health-insurance premium for a Blue Cross Blue Shield of Illinois (BCBS-IL) plan, with employees responsible for 10%.
- Establishing a family insurance pool of \$340,000 in the first year, increasing each year by \$17,500. The pool would equal \$392,500 in the fourth year. For a total of \$1,465,000 over the contract period. The family pool amount is divided among employees who elect family coverage and provided in addition to the amount of employee only coverage, which is provided to all certified employees who elect District coverage.
- Increasing the opt-out benefit would increase from as much as \$1,000 to as much as \$2,500 annually for eligible verified expenses—a 150% increase.
- Increasing personal leave from 2½ days to 3 days annually, with employees potentially having as many as 4 personal days available with carryover.
- Increasing the duty-free lunch period from 30 minutes to 40 minutes every day.
- Increasing tuition reimbursement from \$150 to \$200 per semester hour.
- Increasing the number of reimbursable graduate hours from 9 to 12 hours annually.
- Increasing the District's annual tuition-reimbursement pool to \$80,000 per year—or as much as \$320,000 over the four-year agreement.
- Improving the retirement incentive by increasing the number of eligible participants from 10 to 15 teachers per year, and qualifying employees could receive a 6% salary increase annually for as many as four years immediately preceding retirement, subject to applicable TRS requirements. This is up a ½ percent from the previous contract, retroactive to allow teachers who identified under the last contract to receive the higher amount until their identified year of retirement.
- Increasing the bonus received by Teachers who use no sick days during the year to a \$400 bonus, while those using only one or two could receive \$300.
- Protecting planning time by giving Teachers at least 200 minutes of planning time during a five-day week, along with a daily planning period. And providing additional PLC and collaborative planning opportunities.
- Increasing 4 current stipends, and adding 8 new stipend assignment opportunities.

The Board remains committed to the collective bargaining process and believes meaningful progress can still be achieved through continued dialogue and good-faith discussions. The Board's goal is to reach an agreement that supports and values employees, preserves strong educational opportunities for students, maintains fiscal responsibility, and serves the best interests of the community.

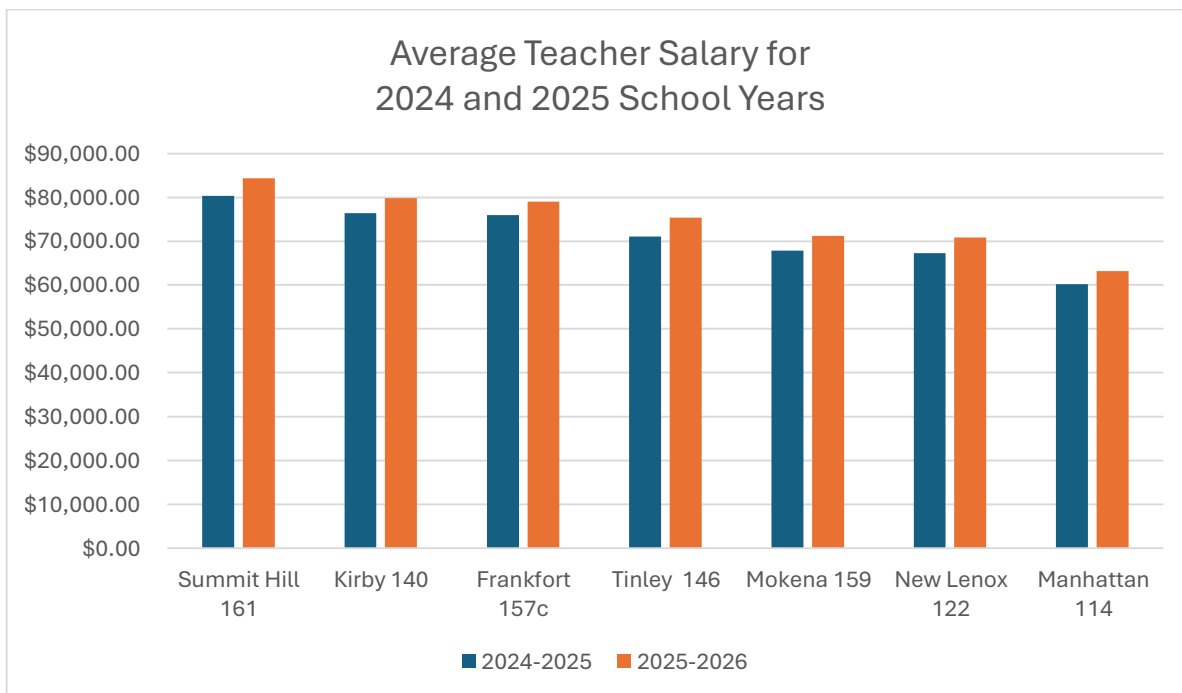
Compensation Comparables

Based on the most recent Illinois Interactive Report Card data (24-25 school year), District 161 teachers have the highest reported average teacher salary among comparable school districts, with an average base salary of \$84,379 for the 2025-2026 school year.

School	Average 2024-2025 Salary	Average 2025-2026 Salary**	2025 Percentage Increase
Summit Hill 161	\$80,361.00	\$84,379.05	5.00%
Kirby 140	\$76,407.00	\$79,845.32	4.50%
Frankfort 157c	\$75,990.00	\$79,029.60	4.00%
Tinley 146	\$71,120.00	\$75,387.20	6.00%
Mokena 159	\$67,870.00	\$71,263.50	5.00%
New Lenox 122	\$67,320.00	\$70,887.96	5.30%
Manhattan 114	\$60,181.00	\$63,190.05	5.00%

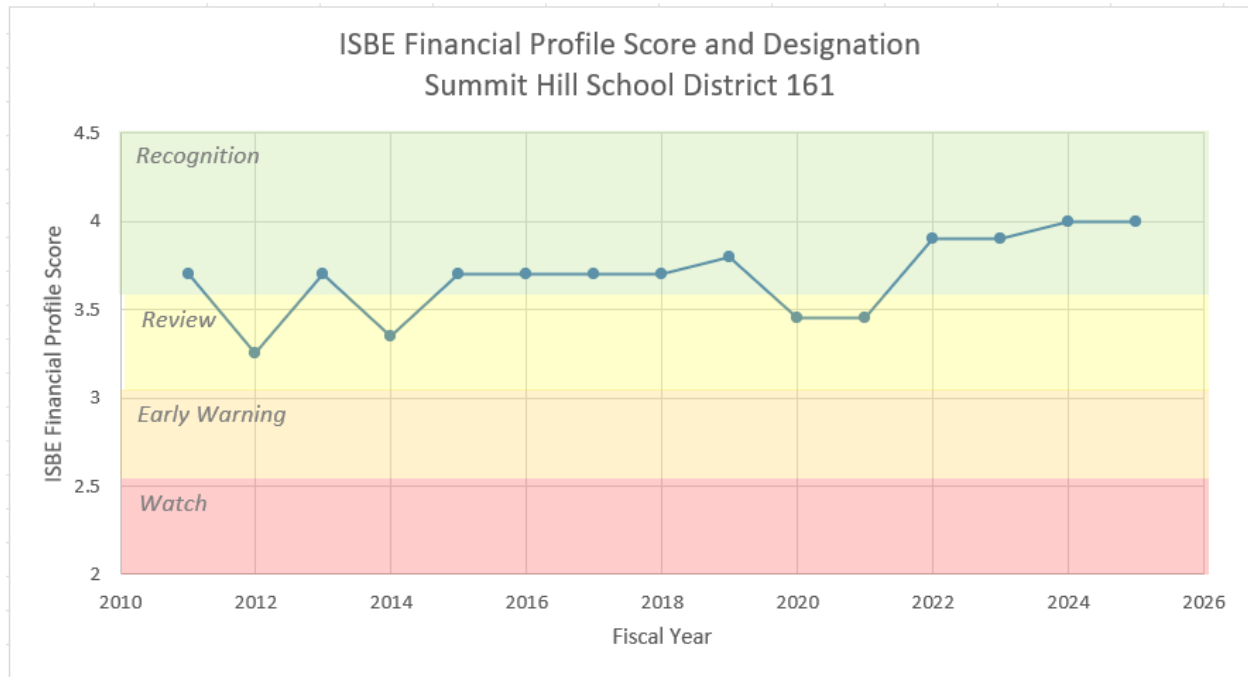
** Average Salary for 2025-2026 as reported to ISBE for 2024-2025 plus the contractual percentage increase for 2025

In addition to salary, the District pays employees' full portion of the required 9% member retirement contribution. Under TRS rules, this contribution is "grossed up," resulting in an additional District-funded benefit equal to approximately 9.89% of salary.



District Finances

The District's finances remain stable, but the Board remains concerned about maintaining financial stability, while student enrollment declines. Despite recently closing two school buildings, the District has not reduced staffing, except mainly through Teacher retirement, while using the funds from the proceeds to pay down debt. The 2025 debt ratio is 21%.



The Illinois State Board of Education assigns every district an annual Financial Profile score built from five indicators: Fund Balance to Revenue Ratio, Expenditure to Revenue Ratio, Days Cash on Hand, Percentage of Remaining Short-Term Borrowing Ability, and Percentage of Remaining Long-Term Borrowing Ability. The scores produce one of four designations. From highest to lowest, they are “Recognition,” “Review,” “Early Warning,” and “Watch.” The District currently holds “Recognition” status, the highest designation, with a score of 3.90 for years 2022 and 2023 and 4.00 for years 2024 and 2025. The District was designated “Review” in years 2020 and 2021, and it has moved between designations over the years.

The District expects \$1.4 million in new revenue for the 2026-2027 fiscal year and estimates \$1.1 million in new revenue for the 2027-2028 fiscal year, based on 2.7% CPI for 2025, which is used to determine the 2026 Levy. That revenue must be distributed equitably provide salary increases and benefits not only for teachers, but all support staff, in addition to any necessary building improvements. One major cost consideration for the 2026-2027 fiscal year, is an up to 18.2% increase to the cost of health insurance. This significant increase greatly affects the amount of new revenue available for salary increases. The Union proposal would use 98% of expected new revenue in the first year, and 111% in the second year.

Year	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	2029-2030	Total
Board Proposal	3.25%	3.50%	4.35%	4.25%	15.35%
New Money	\$1,431,991.05	\$1,090,228.34	\$1,658,762.23	\$1,293,834.54	\$5,474,816.16
Salary & Benefits	\$1,119,386.81	\$991,125.42	\$1,163,743.81	\$1,200,018.38	\$4,474,274.42
Difference	\$312,604.24	\$99,102.92	\$495,018.42	\$93,816.16	\$1,000,541.74
% of New Money	78%	91%	70%	93%	82%

Year	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	2029-2030	Total
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Union Proposal	4.25%	4.50%	4.75%	4.50%	18.00%
New Money	\$1,431,991.05	\$1,090,228.34	\$1,658,762.23	\$1,293,834.54	\$5,474,816.16
Salary & Benefits	\$1,396,498.65	\$1,206,013.43	\$1,269,951.50	\$1,280,563.72	\$5,153,027.30
Difference	\$35,492.40	-\$115,785.09	\$388,810.73	\$13,270.82	\$321,788.86
Percentage of New Money	98%	111%	77%	99%	94%

The Union's Proposal puts the District at risk of running into Deficit spending. If expenditures exceed revenues, the District would eventually need to reduce costs through the elimination of staff, student programs, or student services. For example, this would equate to a family spending more money than they earn on a consistent basis year after year or month after month. Deficit spending compounds over time unless the District takes active measures to correct it. If the District's annual expenses grow faster than its revenues, the structural deficit expands. The Board's position in these negotiations is to avoid deficit spending to maintain the current financial stability, and avoid any future need for raising taxes or eliminating staff.

Conclusion

The Board believes that both the public and its teachers should have complete and factual information regarding current negotiations. The Board does not believe that the full picture of the proposed offerings have been shared with the public or the teachers.

The proposed agreement is a long-term contract that prioritizes maintaining competitive salaries, heavy investments into insurance protection, improved retirement benefits, improved tuition reimbursement, additional personal leave, a longer duty-free protected lunch, increased sick-leave incentives, protected planning and collaboration time, and numerous additional improvements to compensation and working conditions. Those are provisions contained in the proposal.

The Board is committed to continuing its practice of providing competitive salary and benefit package to its teachers, maintaining their level of pay above comparables in the community. The District is well-respected, not only for the academic opportunities it provides to students, but for the work environment and overall salary benefits it provides to employees. The District does not experience issues with employee turnover related to salary and benefits.

The Board also recognizes its responsibility to be a good steward of the District and of the financial resources entrusted to it by the community. Therefore, the Board must ensure that the collective bargaining agreement is sustainable and that the District's long-term financial readiness remains solid without imposing greater burdens on our taxpayers.

The Board believes its final tentative agreement offered on July 14, 2026, continues its tradition of providing competitive salary and benefits to its teachers, while also balancing the interests of employees, students, taxpayers, and the District 161 community.

Our objective remains the same as it has been throughout this process:

A fair and competitive contract.

A sustainable contract.

We remain committed to reaching that agreement...together.

Sincerely,
Summit Hill School District 161 Board of Education

Summit Hill School District 161 Board of Education

Proposed Agreement July 14, 2026

Four-Year Contract: 2026 – 2030

Article II

Teacher Working Conditions

2.1 Working Conditions

The normal teaching day for Teachers shall consist of a seven-hour day. Teachers, except for Permanent Substitutes, shall be required to attend up to ten (10) before or after-school meetings called by the administration. Administration shall make every effort to provide two (2) weeks' notice. An agenda shall be provided at least 24 hours in advance, except in the event of an emergency. If less than two (2) weeks' notice is provided, teachers shall make every effort to attend, but in no case shall miss more than one such meeting per year. The duration of the meetings shall be up to one (1) hour. If the purpose of the meeting can be accomplished via bulletin, it shall be done by that means. The Administration will attempt to plan meetings in a fashion that will provide for the meetings to conclude, where possible, within the seven-hour day.

2.4 Curriculum/Expectations Night

Curriculum/Expectations Night shall be from 6:30 p.m. to 7:45 p.m. On Curriculum/Expectations Night day, the Teachers shall be released after supervision of students has been completed.

Teachers in grades 5-8 shall be required to attend one additional school-related event per academic year. Traveling teachers will be required to attend one event only. Selection for event attendance shall be determined based on seniority, using event sign-up procedure established and managed by Administration. Teachers with greater seniority shall have priority in selecting available event assignments.

2.5 Planning Periods

All Teachers will be granted a minimum of 200 minutes of plan time in a 5-day week. All Teachers shall have a daily planning period. This applies on regular workdays when other provisions cannot be made. Losing a planning time on the day of a field trip or a shortened day shall not apply. It will be the goal of the Administration to minimize the number of routine meetings scheduled to preserve planning time.

In grades 5-8, all Teachers except Permanent Substitutes shall be granted two-hundred (200) minutes per week of Professional Learning Community (PLC) time. In an effort to promote collaboration, once each trimester, during half day school improvement planning dates, elementary teachers without daily PLC time will be allotted a minimum of one (1) hour to cooperatively plan during each of these three trimesterly afternoon sessions. This time will be in addition to specific weekly PLC time offered at the elementary buildings, with a minimum of 30 minutes per week.

2.6 Assignment and Transfer

Each Teacher shall be notified of his/her tentative teaching assignment for the following school year prior to May 1 of the present school year. When changes in assignment(s) are made subsequent to the above date, any Teacher so affected shall be given prompt, written notice of the change. At no time will the Administration make such transfers or assignments without conferring with the Teacher or the Teachers involved. Any Teacher, except for Permanent Substitutes, who is required to change classrooms shall receive a stipend of \$750. Any Teacher whose assignment is involuntarily changed after August 1st of each school year shall receive a stipend of \$1,500, or may choose to resign without the Board taking any action against their Professional Educator License.

Annually, in February, Teachers will complete a Letter of Intent which notifies the Superintendent of requests for placement. District needs, the intent of all Teachers, and seniority shall be some of the considerations when decisions involving transfers are made.

Open positions will be posted on the District website. While currently employed by the District, Teachers may apply for open positions by completing an internal application. All internal candidates will be interviewed for open positions. District seniority shall be one of the considerations when decisions regarding open positions are filled. After Pe Board has approved a candidate for the position, an email will be sent to internal candidates informing them whether their transfer request was approved or denied. No reason will be provided.

2.7 Procedures of Teacher Evaluation

The Evaluation Plan and procedures are developed in good faith cooperation between the Board and the Union and shall be conducted in compliance with Illinois School Code 105 ILCS 5/24A and Title 23 of the IL Administrative Code Part 50 - Evaluation of Certified Employees. Evaluations shall be completed no later than April 30 of each school year.

2.11 Lunch Recess and Entry & Dismissal Supervision

Lunch and/or recess duty and student entry and dismissal supervision shall be assigned by the administration. There shall be at least ~~one (1)~~ two (2) Teachers supervising lunch in all buildings and at least ~~one (1)~~ two (2) Teachers supervising recess in the Elementary buildings. New or vacant assignments will be offered to Teachers based on district seniority and then experience in the position. If teachers are assigned to lunch and/or recess duty, they shall receive stipends per the Stipend Schedule in Appendix B.

2.13 New Teacher Program

New Teachers, except for Permanent Substitutes, shall be required to attend ~~up to two (2)~~ **one (1)** new Teacher meetings per month, lasting no longer than one (1) hour per meeting for a period of two (2) years to fulfill local criteria and/or ISBE licensure requirements. Any extra work shall be completed during the meetings. New Teachers will not be paid for these requirements. Mentor Teachers will be assigned to new Teachers for a period of at least one (1) year. In addition, a veteran Teacher assigned to a new grade level or content area will also be assigned a mentor upon the veteran Teacher's request. Mentors will be paid for this commitment per Appendix B.

2.17 Video Surveillance Cameras

Video cameras and/or surveillance footage shall not be used for the purpose of teacher evaluation or routine monitoring of employee performance; however, such footage may be reviewed and utilized in connection with investigations of alleged employee misconduct, matters involving student or staff safety, school emergencies, and when requested or required by law enforcement in accordance with applicable law and District policy.

2.18 Internal Substitution

Teachers may be asked to assume responsibility for substituting for a colleague per the direction of a principal or designee during the teacher's preparation period. At the beginning of each school year, building administration shall meet with union representatives to jointly establish a list in order of district seniority of all bargaining unit members, including those with non-instructional assignments, who wish to be considered for voluntary internal substitution. When an internal substitute is needed, the building principal or designee will offer the assignment to the most senior person on the list on the basis of a rotation which continues throughout the school year. Internal substitution will be compensated by period per the rate specified in Appendix B.

Article III

Employee and Union Rights

3.8 Complaints Against Teachers

~~A complaint against a Teacher must be presented to the Teacher. The Teacher has the right to defend him/herself against any accusations or complaints. The Teacher may request Union representation.~~

Conflicts between parents and teachers are best resolved between the parties involved. Any parent with a complaint against a Teacher should be directed to the Parent Student Handbook for the process needed to resolve the matter appropriately. The Teacher has the right to defend him/herself against any accusations or complaints. The Teacher may request Union representation.

Article IV

Leaves

4.2 Personal Leave

Each Teacher shall be entitled to a total of ~~two and a half (2.5)~~ three (3) personal leave days annually for those pressing personal business or legal matters which may not be attended to during a time other than working hours.

Such leave will not be granted during the first or the last week of school, on a day before or day after a vacation period or holiday, on an Institute Day/School Improvement Day, or on scheduled days of mandated state testing except in cases of emergency or with the approval of the Superintendent. In case of emergency, written application must be made after the Teachers return to duty. Personal leave not used in the year of service for which it is granted shall be added to the sick leave accumulated days. A maximum of one (1) unused personal day may be added instead, at the Teacher's option, to the next school year. However, no employee may exceed ~~three and one half (3 1/2)~~ four (4) personal days in a single school year. The use of more than two (2) personal days in a row must be approved by the Superintendent.

4.4 Sick Leave

- A. Full-time Teachers may have sick leave days per the chart below at full pay during each school year. Sick leave shall accumulate without limitation.

0-14 years of service	15 days annually
15- <u>19</u> years of service	17 days annually
<u>20+ years of service</u>	<u>20 days annually</u>

- B. Sick leave shall be interpreted to mean personal illness, quarantine at home, or serious illness or death in the immediate family or household. Immediate family shall be defined as parents/step-parents, spouse, siblings/step-siblings, children/step-children, grandparents, grandchildren, parents-in-law/step-parents-in-law, sisters-in-law, brothers-in-law, uncles, aunts, and legal guardians. All equal employment requirements will be followed.
- C. Absence due to injury incurred during a Teacher's employment which is compensable under the provisions of the Illinois Workmen's Compensation Act shall not be charged against sick leave, and said Teacher will not lose regular pay, but there will be deducted any amount received by the Teacher in the form of Workmen's Compensation, whether in the form of temporary or permanent disability. Such payment will not extend beyond the school year during which the job-connected injury was incurred.
- D. Annual Bonus for unused sick days towards creditable earnings.

0 (Zero) used sick days	~~\$300~~ <u>\$400</u>
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1-2 (One Two) used sick days	~~\$200~~ <u>\$300</u>
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Article V

Fringe Benefits

5.1 **Duty-Free Lunch**

All full-time Teachers shall be entitled to and be allowed duty-free lunch period equal to the regular school lunch period but not less than ~~thirty (3)~~ forty (40) minutes in each school day.

5.4 **Insurance**

A. Health Insurance

During the life of the Agreement, Teachers who elect coverage shall contribute 10% of the annual premium of group health insurance (deducted in equal payments from 2 salary disbursements per month), with the Board contributing the remaining 90% of the premium. The employee group health insurance deductible, co-insurance requirements, maximum out of pocket expenses, prescription coverage, and other terms will be as described in the attachment "Summit Hill SD161 PPO Plan and HMO Plan".

Individual Teachers shall have the option of securing family coverage for Health Insurance at the Teacher's expense. However, annually, the Board will establish a pool for Teachers who select family health insurance. For 2026-2027 the pool will be \$340,000 and shall be increased by an additional ~~\$15,000~~ \$17,500 each year of the agreement. The pool shall be divided evenly among Teachers who elect family coverage for health insurance premiums only. The amount per employee will be determined no later than August 1 each year and will remain constant for that school year. However, if two (2) or more Teachers qualify for coverage under the same family insurance policy, if they opt for family coverage, the Board will contribute the amount toward the premium equal to what it would have otherwise paid toward the individual Teachers' premiums, not to exceed the cost of the family policy premium, unless the cost to the Teachers would be less by participating in the family health insurance pool provided for above. Teachers who elect this option are not eligible to receive money from the Board's family insurance pool.

Teachers who receive health insurance from another source may opt-out of the District's insurance option, provided they submit a copy of their insurance card to the District. In addition, they may receive up to ~~\$1000~~ \$2500 annually. This insurance benefit is not intended by the parties to be a TRS-reportable flexible benefits plan. It serves as an alternative form of non-creditable compensation in lieu of board-provided health insurance. This option shall allow eligible Teachers who have access to other health insurance coverage to waive coverage under the District plan in exchange for payment of a portion of the Teacher's out-of-pocket costs under such other health insurance coverage, totaling up to ~~\$1000~~ \$2500 for verified costs (i.e., deductibles, out-of-pocket expenses, etc.) but not the cost of premium expenses of another insurance policy. The Teacher will provide proof of costs by May 1 of each school year and shall receive reimbursement for said costs no later than June 1.

B. Dental and Vision Insurance

During the life of the Agreement, Teachers who elect coverage shall contribute 10% of the annual premium for employee dental and/or vision insurance (deducted in equal payments from 2 salary disbursements per month), with the Board contributing the remaining 90% of the premium. Individual Teachers shall have the option of securing family coverage for dental and/or vision insurance at the Teacher's expense.

C. Life Insurance

The Board shall provide a group life and accidental death dismemberment insurance policy in the amount of \$50,000 per insured for all members of the bargaining unit while they are employed by the Board. Employees electing to retire under the provisions of the law of the State of Illinois may elect to continue with the District's group life and accidental death dismemberment insurance policy with the premiums paid by the employee.

5.5 Extramural & Other Duties

When possible, extramural positions will be filled on a voluntary basis. District seniority and qualifications shall be two of the primary considerations when assignments are made. A Teacher who has been doing an extramural or other duty and who has performed satisfactorily in that activity will continue to do that duty if he/she so wishes unless the club is discontinued.

In those cases where there are insufficient volunteers to fill an extramural position, the District ~~will~~ may assign the duties to those who have the least seniority in the District on a rotating basis. The determination of the qualifications shall be made by the Administration and shall not be grievable. The district may elect to open extracurricular positions to potential candidates outside the bargaining unit in the event no Teacher volunteers under the process within 3.12(B). In the event a non-member of the bargaining unit attains an extracurricular position, that position will be re-opened for the following year for Teachers to have an opportunity to apply and Teachers will have priority over non-bargaining unit members.

Notification of tentative extramural positions for the next school year will be made prior to the end of the current school year.

The exact amounts for each stipend are listed in Appendix B. Payment of stipends will be issued in full at winter break for those activities beginning and ending before winter break. Payment for stipends will be paid in full at the end of the school year for those activities beginning and ending after winter break. For activities that span both semesters, one-half will be paid at winter break and the other at the end of the school year. ~~Coaches will be appointed from, among others, those Teachers assigned to teach physical education full time, and provided that such physical education Teachers shall teach a full load of classes.~~

The Board reserves the right not to fill all extramural positions listed in the collective bargaining agreement. Any extramural activity shall have a maximum of 30 students or have this requirement waived at the administration's discretion.

General Guidelines for District-Sponsored Clubs (May be waived by agreement of the Administrator and teacher/sponsor)

If a club is full and more students want the opportunity to participate in the club, the club may split into additional sessions.

Duration of each elementary club: once a week for 30 weeks. Each meeting is 40 minutes. (Total 20 hours.) If club is split, duration would be 2 sessions of 15 weeks or 3 sessions of 10 weeks. Stipend would be adjusted.

Duration of each Walker club: 20 meetings - Each meeting is approximately 1 hour. (Total 20 hours.) If club is split, duration would be 2 sessions of 10 meetings. Stipend would be adjusted.

Duration of each SHJH club: 16 meetings - Each meeting is approximately 75 minutes. (Total 20 hours.) If club is split, duration would be 2 sessions of 8 meetings. Stipend would be adjusted.

Activities (Grades 5-8)

Curricular activities are defined as events such as Career Day and Science Fair. These events occur on a limited basis during the school year and include Teacher involvement outside the school day. Either the Administration or a Teacher may initiate a proposal for a new extramural activity or additional duty. The Board retains the right for final approval for any additional activities or duties. At the time the duties or activities are approved, the Board and the Union shall negotiate the rate of pay.

5.6 Tuition Reimbursement

Teachers wishing tuition reimbursement shall make application to the Superintendent for pre-approval to enroll in a graduate-level course. In those instances when the applying Teacher has not earned a master's degree, evidence of acceptance into a master's degree program at an accredited institution must be provided at the time of the application for tuition reimbursement. A Teacher shall not seek reimbursement for coursework to attain a BA+ 15 unless the coursework is included in his/her master's degree program. Within thirty (30) days of completion of the pre-approved course(s), the Teacher must provide the Superintendent with official proof that establishes the completion of the pre-approved course with a grade no lower than "B." Teachers meeting the requirements specified in this section will be reimbursed the costs of tuition not to exceed ~~\$150~~ \$200 per semester hour and not to exceed ~~nine (9)~~ twelve (12) semester hours for each period of May 1 through April 30. The amount of money available for tuition reimbursement will not exceed ~~\$70,000~~ \$80,000 annually. There shall be no "carry over" of funds from one period to the next. Reimbursement for interim session or summer school shall be made when the Teacher returns to teach for the fall semester. If a Teacher leaves the District within one (1) year of receiving 1 tuition reimbursement, the teacher must fully reimburse the District for the amount received for the most recent year's tuition.

To receive reimbursement for courses completed after March 1, the Teacher must return to District employment in the following school year.

5.7 Retirement Incentive

A. Unused Sick Leave

Upon retirement, the Board will pay Teachers \$30.00 per day for up to 50 unused sick leave days that are not used for TRS service credit. The payment will be made after the Teacher's last day of service, but no later than July 15th of the year of retirement.

B. Retirement Incentive

No more than a total of ~~ten (10)~~ fifteen (15) Teachers per school year, selected by seniority, and who have a minimum of fifteen (15) years of full-time teaching service in District 161 may participate in the Retirement Incentive. To access the incentive, written notice of irrevocable retirement must be received by the Board no later than November 1 of the first year of participation in the incentive (~~this deadline will be extended to January 15, 2023 for the first year of the Agreement only~~). Retirement under this Section will only occur at the end of a school year. Once given and accepted by the Board, a Teacher's notification of intent to retire may not be rescinded, except to retire at a date earlier than originally stated.

Eligible Teachers may select an incentive between one (1) and four (4) years in length. For Teachers selecting an incentive of four (4) or fewer years in length, their salaries in each of the years remaining until retirement shall be ~~5.5%~~ 6% over what it was the previous school year. Any Teachers who began participating in the retirement incentive under the prior Agreement shall also receive the 6% salary increase for any remaining years of teaching service to the District prior to retiring. In the event the salary increases pursuant to this section shall result in the Board being required to pay an additional payment or penalty to TRS, the pay increases shall be limited to the amount that is TRS creditable without additional payments or penalties by the Board.

Employees electing to retire under the provisions of the law of the State of Illinois may continue in the health, dental and/or life insurance programs of the School District with the premiums paid by the employee for up to ten (10) years or when the employee reaches age 65.

Article VI

Salary

~~For the 2022-2023, 2023-2024, 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 school years, Teachers shall receive salary increases of five percent (5%).~~ Teachers shall receive the following salary increases for each year of the agreement:

<u>2026-2027</u>	<u>3.25%</u>
<u>2027-2028</u>	<u>3.50%</u>
<u>2028-2029</u>	<u>4.35%</u>
<u>2029-2030</u>	<u>4.25%</u>

Raises for all years include annual step movement. Salary scale will include zero step placement.

6.3 Placement on the Salary Schedule

School Social Workers, Speech Pathologists, Counselors and School Psychologists (S.S.P.) who are serving the District in such capacities and who confirm that their master's degree requirement consisted of at least fifty-five (55) hours of masters-level work (including clinical hours) shall be placed in the MA+30 column of the Salary Schedule, or beyond if warranted by additional education beyond their degrees. School

psychologists whose degrees meet the fifty-five (55) hour requirement but who earned their degrees prior to the S.S.P. designation shall be grandfathered. Such current employees shall also be placed accordingly. Full Credit will be granted on the salary schedule for each year up to ten (10) years of full-time teaching experience earned while fully licensed and permanently employed as a teacher in a fully accredited public or private elementary or secondary school beginning with the 2026-2027 school year."

6.4 Advancement on the Salary Schedule

Teachers who earn credit in graduate courses may advance horizontally on the salary schedule provided the following requirements have been met:

- A. The Teacher shall present a request for course pre-approval to the Superintendent in advance of taking the course;
- B. The Superintendent may accept or reject a course for any or all the following reasons:
 - 1. Its pertinence to the area of education;
 - 2. Its relevance to subject(s) taught;
 - 3. Teachers may apply to the Superintendent for approval of training for an administrative degree. The Superintendent's decision is final and at his/her sole discretion.

The decision of the Superintendent to accept or deny the course for horizontal advancement on the salary schedule is final and not subject to the grievance procedure.

- C. When a request for a course subject approval is submitted to the Superintendent, said request shall be granted or rejected within ten (10) days of its submission. If the request is rejected, the Superintendent shall notify the employee in writing of the reasons for the rejections.
- D. Once advance approval for the course is given and the course is completed, the following conditions must be met prior to the employee receiving the appropriate salary schedule placement:
 - 1. All hours must be earned at an accredited institution of higher learning;
 - 2. Satisfactory completion of a course with a grade of "B" or higher must be demonstrated by an official transcript submitted to the Superintendent by October 15 of the school year for which salary-schedule placement is requested.
 - 3. Teachers are required to submit applications for lateral movement on the Salary Schedule by October 15th of the school year for which the salary schedule placement is requested. Forms are available electronically at the District Office.

E. Teachers shall be advanced at the appropriate earned step on the salary schedule at the beginning of the school year provided their total days worked plus any paid leave used during the previous school year amounts to at least one-hundred-twenty (120) days.

Permanent Substitutes are not eligible for advancement on the salary schedule. Their compensation shall be equal to seventy-five percent (75%) of BA, Step 1.

6.5 ~~Pay for Involuntary Room/Assignment Change~~

~~Any Teacher whose room and/or grade level assignment is changed after August 1st of each year shall receive a stipend of \$600 (effective August 1 st, 2021).~~