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by
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American Federation of Teachers Local 604
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SUMMARY

This document contains an overview of current negotiations between the Will County SD 92 Board of Education and the Will County SD 92 Teachers Union. Included are

- A brief account of the bargaining history for this negotiation
- A description of remaining points of contention between the teachers and the board
- All proposals included in the teachers' most recent

BARGAINING HISTORY

The SD 92 teachers presented our intent to bargain with the Board on October 20th, 2025. Negotiations officially commenced on March 4th, 2026. There have been 14 meetings, including 2 full day sessions with a federal mediator, and 2 small-group meetings with 3 members of each team in an attempt to bridge the differences between our positions. The teachers' current contract expired on August 16th, just before the start of classes for this school year.

Concerned with a lack of progress and compromise, despite a year of preparation, 6 months of active negotiations, and the prospect of starting the school year with an expired contract, the teachers of SD 92 voted on Friday, August 28th, to authorize a strike. 85% of all district teachers approved the measure in a secure, secret-ballot vote.

The teachers of SD 92 sincerely hope to avoid a potential strike by reaching a fair agreement with the board through ongoing negotiations, and have continued to meet and confer with the administration since the strike authorization vote.

KEY BARGAINING ISSUES

While SD 92 teachers and the Board agree on a variety of topics, there are still meaningful differences on pay, and on protections keeping experienced educators in the classrooms they know best.

Pay

SD 92 teachers have expressed growing concern with staff losses in the district, including an overall reduction of 3 educators in each building over the last year alone. Many of these positions have not been replaced, subs are an increasingly rare commodity, and we must do all we can to recruit the best new teachers, and keep the experienced teachers we already have.

The teachers have proposed fair raises that will help catch up and keep up with cost-of-living changes and keep the district competitive with its neighbors. The district is funded at 134% adequacy per the state's Evidence Based Funding formula, and has the operating capital to provide these competitive wages. The teachers' proposed raises are estimated to increase net payroll costs by 15% over 4 years, entailing a \$1.6 million increase in payroll by the end of the contract, from \$11.2 million to \$12.8 million. The district had \$27.5 million in fund balance and a healthy 21% long term debt ratio at the outset of the 2025-26 school year, and can afford the raises proposed.

Transfer Protections for Experienced Staff

The teachers of SD 92 have dedicated their lives to teaching and enriching their students, and many stay in the same classrooms year after year, building experience and skills along the way. That is why the district and the teachers agreed in past contracts, going back decades, to protect that classroom experience from hurried or unnecessary transfers to an unfamiliar classroom, building, subject, or grade level.

The Board has proposed to effectively eliminate this protection so that teachers can be moved without regard to the experience they have built in their current classrooms. This could involve moving a 20-year veteran elementary teachers to unfamiliar subjects like advanced math and science at the Junior High, or vice versa.

The teachers of SD 92 believe that we were hired because we are the best people for our jobs, and we get better at the jobs we were hired to do every year. It is best for the district and the students we serve if we're allowed to do our best work in the classes we're best equipped to teach. This is why SD 92 teachers have stood firmly against the district's desire to eliminate protections for experienced teachers against opaque and unaccountable transfers.

Proposal on Salaries

Note (8/24/26):

In July, the teachers proposed returning language for both personal days and involuntary transfers back to what our contract currently says. We also agreed to drop our proposals for just cause. The district's team was open to this at that time. If the district's team had bargained salary increases at that time, the teachers feel that we could have reached a tentative agreement then which would have resulted in a contract vote and ratification before the start of the school year.

We are urging the district's team (including both administration and board of education members) to negotiate salary increases with our team now in order to reach a tentative agreement and ratify a new contract.

Rationale from SD 92 Teachers' Initial Proposal:

We need to attract and retain highly qualified staff. People are leaving the district and in many cases they are not being replaced. This is causing a vicious cycle of increasing workloads and work stress on teachers loyal to the district that will cause more people to leave and exacerbate staffing issues.

Past increases have not kept up with past cost of living increases, and 34% of teachers surveyed are being forced to take second jobs.

Due to the ever increasing demands of the profession and the level of support that current learners need, staff deserves an increase. There has been a reduction in support staff in our district with a loss of 3 teachers in each building in the 2025-2026 school year (2 instructional aides and permanent sub). Teachers are having to sub, which disrupts the learning process.

Language:

ARTICLE XXII. SALARIES

<u>2026-2027</u>	<u>7%—</u>	<u>3.75%</u>	<u>5.0%</u>
<u>2027-2028</u>	<u>6.5%—</u>	<u>3.5%</u>	<u>5.0%</u>
<u>2028-2029</u>	<u>6.0%—</u>	<u>3.5%</u>	<u>4.75%</u>
<u>2029-2030</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>3.5%</u>	<u>4.75%</u>

*Retroactive pay shall be paid to all bargaining unit members for the period beginning with the first paycheck of the 2026–2027 school year (8/14/26) and continuing through the effective date of the new collective bargaining agreement. Retroactive pay shall reflect the negotiated salary increases and any other compensation adjustments applicable during that period.

Proposal on Health and Welfare

NOTES:

This section makes no changes to the share of health premiums paid by teachers and the district, but aligns renewal dates for insurance plans to the calendar year, and acknowledges the addition of an HSA option, both of which are already implemented in practice.

Language:

ARTICLE XVII. HEALTH AND WELFARE

- A. The Board of Education will provide medical and dental insurance coverage for all teachers and their dependents. The Board of Education will also provide \$30,000 in term life insurance coverage on each teacher.
- B. The major medical and dental coverage shall continue in a form substantially similar to the plan in effect as of the date of execution of this Agreement except to the extent that: (i) the co-payment for the drug card shall be \$10 for generic brand prescriptions, \$25 for formulary prescriptions and \$40 for name brand prescriptions and the deductible shall be \$450 annually, renewing on January 1st ~~September 1st~~ of each year or the first day of the plan's renewal period as long as no employee shall have a lapse in their medical or dental coverage.
- C. The Board of Education will pay 100% ~~90%~~ of the premium for single coverage medical and dental insurance for tenured and non-tenured teachers. The Board will also pay the following percentages of the premiums for dependent and family medical and dental insurance coverage:
 - a. Tenured teachers: 82% (PPO), 82% (PPO-HSA) or 79% (HMO)
 - b. Non-tenured teachers: 68% (PPO), 68% (PPO-HSA) or 71% (HMO)

Those employees hired before the 1999-2000 school year currently grandfathered into family medical coverage fully paid for by the district shall maintain that coverage by the district until separation from employment.

- D. The Board of Education will extend the medical, dental and life insurance coverage for teachers leaving the district until August 31st upon meeting the following conditions:
 - 1. The teacher must be employed for the full school year.
 - 2. Written notice of the resignation or retirement must be given to the Superintendent or building principal by May 1st.The Board of Education will extend the medical, dental and life insurance coverage until August 31st for teachers who have been employed the full school year and are terminated.
- E. The Board of Education shall purchase with district funds the type and amount of insurance necessary to protect itself as a corporate body, its individual members, its appointed officers, and its employees from financial loss arising out of any claim, demand, suit or judgment by reason of alleged negligence or other act resulting in accidental injury to any person or in property damage within or without the school building while the above-named insured are acting in the discharge of their duties within the scope of their employment and/or under the direction of the Board.

Proposal on Substitute Teaching

NOTES

This section updates internal substitute teaching stipends after many years of stagnation, which should make in-district subbing more attractive for experienced teachers. It also allows the administration to require internal subbing for urgent need, while seeking to avoid undue impact on already scheduled student activities.

Language:

ARTICLE VI. SUBSTITUTE TEACHING

1. When it is known that an individual teacher is to be absent for a period of four consecutive weeks, a rified teacher will be asked to fill the position before asking other regular substitutes. Rified teachers will be called in the order of seniority as stated in Section 24-12 of the Illinois School Code. Only teachers who are qualified to fill the position will be called. A rified teacher is a teacher who was released due to a reduction in force during the prior school year.
2. Teachers who take responsibility for an absent teacher's classes during their plan period or duty free lunch shall be paid the rate of ~~\$36- \$41~~ \$40 per hour for the 2026-2027 school year, \$41 per hour for the 2027-2028 school year, and \$42 per hour for the 2028-2029 school year.
3. The hourly rate will be prorated to reflect the actual duration of the class period. The Administration will ask for volunteers and will make reasonable attempts to spread coverage assignments among the building's available staff members to avoid unduly burdening any particular teacher. However, the Administration has the right to require available licensed staff members teachers to cover classes for their absent colleagues. The administration will make every effort to avoid impacting direct scheduled student instruction time.
~~*This rate will be adjusted yearly based upon the salary increase percentage.~~
~~*This rate will be adjusted to \$41 for the 27-28 school year.~~
~~**The rate will be adjusted to \$42 for the 28-29 school year.~~

Proposal on Normal School Day/Plan Time

NOTES:

This section seeks to protect teacher plan time from being cannibalized by meetings. It also represents a mutual desire between teachers and administration to allow Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to sunset after the 2026-2027 school year. Introducing PLCs in a prior contract cycle caused scheduling disruptions and also proved to be redundant with team meetings that now occur at other times.

Language:

ARTICLE VII - NORMAL SCHOOL DAY/YEAR

Section A: School Day

The normal work day for teachers shall be seven (7) hours. Time will be provided each week for teachers to complete planning and preparation during the periods in which their classes are administratively scheduled to receive instruction from Art, Library Media Center, Music, and Physical Education. Teachers in grades EC-5, will be scheduled a minimum of 285 minutes per week, consisting of nine (9) planning periods of at least thirty (30) minutes each. The building principal will make an effort to provide two (2) planning periods per day, to the extent possible. Teachers in grade 6-8 will have the equivalent of ten (10) planning periods per week, with one (1) being used for ~~PLC meetings~~/team planning time. Every effort will be made to avoid using plan time for meeting purposes; however, if a teacher loses their only planning period in a given day, the building principal will ensure the teacher is provided with equivalent planning time within one week or the teacher will be paid for their time according to the extra duty stipend (Article XXII. Section C.).

The starting and ending times will be scheduled by the principal at each school building. This decision will be communicated to staff not later than July 1st of each year. A teacher's contractual school day shall be 7 hours and include a 30-minute non-duty lunchtime. Teachers will have access to their buildings during non-work hours.

There shall be a maximum of two faculty meetings per month scheduled within the normal workday. The Administration will give a minimum of 24 hours notice to cancel each faculty meeting. It is understood that emergency situations may prevent such notice. Information and material that can be dispensed via mailboxes shall be distributed in that manner.

The normal school day shall be suspended for Parent-Teacher Conference Days. (Instead the same hours as the school day shall be scheduled appropriately for the Report Card Parent-Teacher Conference Day).

Section B: School Calendar

The annual school calendar shall consist of one hundred and eighty-five (185) days, of which actual pupil attendance shall be one hundred and seventy-six (176) days. Four (4) days shall be officially declared full-day institutes. Five (5) days shall be designated as emergency days and will be used only in lieu of days lost because of emergency school closings when e-learning days are not available. Teacher attendance at Open House is mandatory, unless a family emergency or illness occurs. Union recommendations regarding the calendar shall be made to the Superintendent prior to January 31.

Section C: Professional Learning Communities

~~Beginning with the 2021-22~~ During the 2026-2027 school year, the student day will end forty (40) minutes earlier on Wednesdays to accommodate a sixty (60) minute period for teachers to conduct PLCs and professional development aligned with the D92 Strategic Plan. On Wednesdays, teachers in PreK-5th grades are required to stay twenty (20) minutes beyond the end of their typical workday for PLC meetings and shall be compensated for those twenty (20) minutes at the rate of \$24 per PLC meeting. ~~However, PreK-5th grade teachers participating in the District's retirement plan on or before August 1, 2023, may decline to remain for the additional twenty (20) minutes of PLC meetings outside the normal teacher workday.~~ Teachers in grades 6th-8th will conduct their PLC session during the 40 minute student release, with the remainder occurring during team planning time each week.

A professional learning community (PLC) is an ongoing process through which teams of educators work collaboratively in recurring cycles of collective inquiry and action research to achieve better results for the students they serve. The PLC process involves the sharing of ideas to enhance their teaching practice and create a learning environment where all students can reach their fullest potential. PLCs will be teacher-led with guidance from the administration and will focus on the PLC key questions:

What do we want students to know and be able to do?

How will we know when students have learned it?

What will we do if students haven't learned it?

What will we do if students already know it?

In practice, some examples of this may include the following activities/steps/processes listed below.

PLC team members work collaboratively to examine, discuss, and determine learning expectations based on the standards.

PLC teams identify areas of instruction where students are struggling or need more attention and identify strategies for meeting those needs.

Teams develop a plan for addressing the area of concern and decide on the type of work that students should do to demonstrate learning/improvement in that area.

Teams implement the plan with their students and gather evidence of student learning.

Teams review student work and discuss the success of the plan.

Teams reflect on the analysis of student work and discuss potential changes to the instructional strategies.

Teams may plan, study, and act on various instructional strategies, including action research projects.

Bargaining unit members shall have a maximum of sixty (60) minutes of Professional Learning Community time each week to be used for PLC teams to meet, except in weeks prior to the end of the trimester/quarter, when PLC teams will not be required to meet.

After the 2026-2027 school year, Article VII. Section C: Professional Learning Communities will be struck from the contract.

Proposal on Salary Differentials for School Psychologist/Student Service Team Leader

Notes:

This section outlines a new expanded role for School Psychologists/Student Service Team Leaders, with new responsibilities and compensation. This new role is intended to recognize and expand needed student services that were not included in previous contracts.

Language:

Article XXII: SALARIES

1. School Psychologists/Student Services Leader will be taking on additional duties, that the job title and description needs to be updated, and that the additional duties warrant additional compensation.
 - a. ~~The position of School Psychologist will be retitled School Psychologist/Student Services Leader~~
 - b. ~~The job description for School Psychologist/Student Services Leader will be updated to include aspects of coordinating and implementing multi-tiered systems of support ("MTSS").~~
 - a. Compensation based upon completed years of service as a Full-Time School Psychologist or School Psychologist/Student Service Leader in District 92.
 - b. The school psychologist/student service team leader will be available for up to 5 days during the summer if the district has specific needs requiring a school psychologist for those days. These 5 days will not be used for work that could be done during the normal school year. Scheduling of such days will be coordinated by mutual agreement between the district and the employee. Responsibilities may be completed in person or virtually. These days may be used for responsibilities including, but not limited to, student evaluation- including play based assessment, parent consultations, and participation in meetings. Compensation for summer work is already provided in accordance with the terms of this agreement per Article XXII: Salaries.
2. Current Salary Differential:

2025-2026 Salary Differential Schedule

<u>Years of Service</u>	<u>Annual Salary Differential Amount</u>
<u>0-3</u>	<u>\$8,888</u>
<u>4-6</u>	<u>\$9,523</u>
<u>7-9</u>	<u>\$10,158</u>
<u>10-12</u>	<u>\$10,793</u>
<u>13+</u>	<u>\$11,428</u>

These amounts will increase annually in a manner consistent with the stipend structure outlined in the collective bargaining.

Salary differential will be prorated for SP/SSL's hired mid-school year. Under no circumstances may payment of this differential expose the Board to excess salary payments or charges from the Illinois Teachers' Retirement System ("TRS") and the differential will be automatically reduced to the extent necessary to avoid such exposure.

Proposal on Extra Duty Curricular Salaries

Notes:

The hourly rate for extra duty has remained stagnant for many years. The rate increase was determined based upon the percentage increase of the prior contract.

Language:

Article XXII: EXTRA DUTY CURRICULAR SALARIES

Section C. Instructional Tutoring, ~~Summer Instruction~~, Extra Curricular Teaching, Mandatory Supervisory Duties

The Board shall pay for instructional tutoring, extra curricular teaching outside the school day, and/or mandatory supervisory duties, not to include detention duty, beyond the scheduled school hours at the rate of ~~\$36.00~~ ~~\$41.00*~~ \$40.00 per hour for the 2026-2027 school year, \$41 per hour for the 2027-2028 school year and \$42.00 per hour for the 2028-2029 school year. See attached salary schedule for payment of extra duty, co-curricular duties. All district sponsored curriculum related meetings (e.g. summer committee work, workshops, meetings) held outside the regular school day will be compensated at the rate of ~~\$36.00~~ ~~\$41.00*~~ \$40.00 per hour for the 2026-2027 school year, \$41.00 per hour for the 2027-2028 school year and \$42.00 per hour for the 2028-2029 school year.

~~*This rate will be adjusted yearly based upon the salary increase percentage.~~

Section G. Extended School Year Instruction

The Board shall pay ~~Summer~~ Extended School Year Instruction teaching staff \$50.00 per hour for the 2026-2027 school year, \$51 per hour in the 2027-2028 and \$52.00 per hour in the 2028-2029 school year. ~~at their individual hourly rate (teacher's annual salary divided by 1260).~~ Teaching staff will be assigned to lead teaching roles prior to other non-licensed staff or teachers outside of District 92, even if the non-licensed staff/non-D92 teacher has the qualifications needed.

Proposal on Fair Practice (Tentatively Agreed)

Notes:

This proposal updated non-discrimination language to reflect the protected classes recognized by the Illinois Department of Human Rights. <https://dhr.illinois.gov/filing-a-charge/jurisdiction-chart.html>

Language:

ARTICLE VIII. - FAIR PRACTICES

The Board and the Union agree not to discriminate against any teacher on the basis of age, ancestry, arrest record, conviction record (except where required to be considered by law), citizenship status, disability (physical, mental, and association with a person with a disability), gender identity, military status, order of protection status, pregnancy, religion, sexual orientation, unfavorable military discharge, work authorization status (as defined in the Illinois Human Rights Act), race, creed, color, national origin, sex, reproductive health decisions, Family Responsibilities (as defined by the Illinois Human Rights Act), ~~or~~ marital status or membership or non-membership, or participation in the activities of Will County District #92 Council, AFT Local 604.

Proposal on Union Leave (Tentatively Agreed)

Notes:

This proposal specifies a maximum number of leave days for union business outside the district and gives the teachers greater discretion to determine when to use these days.

Language:

ARTICLE XVI.I - Union Leave

The President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Building Representative, and/or designee(s), subject to administrative approval, shall be allowed released time for the investigation of grievances or other appropriate activities relating to school or teacher welfare.

Such requests will not be unreasonably denied, and any denial will be in writing, accompanied by an explanation. The President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Building Representative, and/or designee(s), shall be granted release time of up to three (3) days combined in order to attend union hosted events outside of the school district. ~~subject to administrative approval, shall be allowed to attend Union hosted conference(s), seminar(s), and/or course(s). In the event that the Union hosted conference(s), seminar(s), and/or course(s) occurs during the school day the attendee(s) absence(s) shall not be counted as a sick day or a personal day for up to two days per school year.~~

Proposal on Artificial Intelligence (Tentatively Agreed)

Rationale:

This proposal creates a new joint committee to review and recommend adoption of AI technologies for the district. It creates a transparency requirement for the board to disclose their intent to use or purchase AI technologies, and limits the use of AI in personnel decisions.

Language:

ARTICLE X – Artificial Intelligence

The Union and the District recognize that the group of technologies and systems collectively referred to as Artificial Intelligence (AI) will have broad impacts on teaching and learning. It is mutually understood that such technologies should be approached as an opportunity to improve work and education outcomes while respecting the rights and professionalism of teachers.

The Union and the District shall establish a joint committee to oversee adoption of AI and Automation in the district. This committee will consist of two representatives chosen by the Union and two representatives chosen by the District, and shall meet at least once per school year, no later than March 1st. The committee will discuss and advise the Board on the adoption and implementation of new technologies, and related training and professional development. The committee will receive such training as mutually deemed necessary to understand new technologies as they emerge.

Prior to any adoption and/or implementation of AI technologies, the Union will be informed of the Board's intent, and the joint AI committee will be engaged. The District retains full authority over all personnel decisions and will not rely on artificial intelligence (AI) as the sole or determinative factor in matters including, but not limited to, evaluations, discipline, reductions in force, or involuntary transfers. The District will disclose the use of any AI technology that it knowingly uses in relation to individual personnel decisions at the time those decisions are rendered.

Proposal on Post Degree Credit/Tuition Reimbursement (Tentatively Agreed)

Notes:

This proposal updates tuition reimbursement language to ensure credits are from accredited institutions, and aligns the submission and pay adjustment dates with district needs.

Language:

ARTICLE XV. POST-DEGREE CREDIT/TUITION REIMBURSEMENT

All post-degree credit after employment must be at the graduate level and pre-approved by the Superintendent prior to the commencement of such work in order to qualify for reimbursement and to be applicable to movement on the salary schedule. Approval shall be granted for courses from accredited institutions of higher learning taken for advanced or further certification requirements, expansion of knowledge of school subjects taught in the district, expansion of knowledge of teaching methods, and/or psychology, completion of approved advanced degree requirements, and/or professional development.

The Superintendent may, but is not required to, consider approval of courses subsequent to their completion. In extraordinary circumstances, and without creating a practice, approval for undergraduate credit shall be limited to an accumulated maximum of fifteen (15) undergraduate hours subject to the provision of paragraph 1.

The Board shall reimburse the teacher for his/her actual tuition cost upon completion of such pre-approved course work as described below. In order to qualify, the teacher must earn a grade of “B” or better, or Pass when permitted by the institution. The Board’s obligation to reimburse for such course work shall be limited to no more than 45 graduate hours beyond the Bachelor’s Degree and no more than 45 graduate hours beyond the Master’s Degree. This provision shall apply prospectively for those teachers possessing only a Bachelor’s Degree, and thereafter, once a Master’s Degree has been awarded, as well as for those teachers who have a Master’s Degree. Hours must be earned subsequent to a degree conferred and shall consist of resident study in an approved and accredited institution.

The Board shall establish a fund for the designated school years for tuition reimbursement. Any teacher who receives the approval of the Superintendent shall be entitled to receive reimbursement for actual tuition costs not to exceed a maximum per course hour as indicated below and not to exceed a maximum of eighteen (18) graduate hours per fiscal year.

Teachers requesting reimbursement must submit suitable evidence of successful course completion for the aforementioned coursework before September 20th of the school year following completion of the graduate course work. Failure to submit the request for reimbursement by September 30th will result in the inability of the teacher to receive reimbursement. To qualify for tuition reimbursement the teacher must return as a regular employee of the District the September following completion of their course work, except those teachers with unexpired recall rights. Failure to submit official transcripts by December 31st of each year shall result without further action, in forfeiture of all reimbursement paid and the teacher shall then repay the amount reimbursed to the Board, either within fifteen (15) days, or the Board may commence salary

deductions for such payments in equal installments for the remainder of the school year provided, however, such reimbursements shall be added to the unused carry over as specified below.

From the fund designated by the Board, if all requests for reimbursements do not exceed the sums indicated below, then and only then, shall teachers submitting reimbursement requests receive the actual cost of tuition to the maximum reimbursement. If, however, the sum total of reimbursement requests exceeds the sums indicated below, then all teachers will receive a proportionate share of their actual costs provided the entire reimbursement does not exceed said sums. For the term of this Agreement, the total annual fund amount available for tuition reimbursement shall be \$70,000. Unused funds shall not accumulate from year to year. The maximum tuition reimbursement for the term of this Agreement shall be \$280.00 per credit hour.

Teachers who wish to qualify for horizontal lane advancement must provide proof of successful completion of course work with an official transcript to the Business Office. There are three deadlines for submitting transcripts for graduate coursework resulting in adjustments to a teacher's annual salary. The dates are as follows:

- ~~Submitted by August 1: Adjustments made prior to the first pay cycle of the new school year.~~
- Submitted by September 15 ~~October 1~~: Adjustments to the teacher's salary will be made retroactively to the beginning of the contract year. This will take effect with the first payroll in October ~~second pay cycle in November~~.
- Submitted by January 15 ~~February 1~~: Adjustments to the teacher's salary will be made retroactively to the start of the second half of the school term. This will take effect with the first payroll in February ~~second pay cycle in March~~.

The Board and the Union may agree to offer professional growth conferences in lieu of graduate courses as equivalent semester hours of credit for tuition reimbursement and/or salary advancement, on a program/course basis.