

NTEA Member's Update - May 10, 2023

Here are the contents of this Update:

- “Extraordinary budget problem”.
- Involuntary Transfers
- Employment Contracts
- Teacher of the Year, Retirements, and an End of the Year Celebration

“Extraordinary budget problem.”

This is like a post I made of the NTEA Members Facebook group last weekend. So, if you read that post, you probably don't need to read this.

On Friday May 5, a meeting of Instructional Coaches and Ed Specialists was convened at the District Office. The purpose of the meeting was to inform those members that some of them would need to go back to classroom teaching. NTPS had already made the decision to fill vacant positions with existing staff which meant 7 members housed in the District Office would need to be placed back into school sites. This was because NTPS was now saying that the District faces an “extraordinary budget problem.” That is a quote from Sarah Rich who helped lead the meeting. This was not the tone from the District a month ago when they said that we are not in a crisis. Today, I heard the District say that describing the situation as an “extraordinary budget problem” was not a good choice of words because problem or crisis should be defined as having to initiate a Reduction in Force (RIF) or Emergency School Board Action. We are not faced with either of those situations because the District “feels good about the 2023-24 budget” given what they are doing through attrition and other cost cuts.

This is likely very little consolation to those members caught in the middle of forced choices to relocate. NTEA is working with WEA to plan how we will move forward to address this situation and make sure there are no other, better options. We continue to work to understand how NTPS sees only the revenue reductions (due to things like a foreseen reduction in regionalization funds and federal ESSER money) but not the additional revenue from the state for SPED and Pension cost reductions. This work will continue, and we will keep you updated.

Involuntary Transfers

Related to the District's budget “problem” and boundary changes, some worksites (Lacey ES, Pleasant Glade ES, Woodland ES and Komachin MS) appear to need to move some certificated teachers elsewhere in the District. Questioning whether this must happen will be addressed elsewhere after some meetings with WEA. Suffice it to say, NTEA is aware of these situations and are working to ensure member rights are followed. That said, some information that Building Principals may have given out prior to today (May 10) is going to be adjusted. After meeting with Human Resources this

NTEA Member's Update - May 10, 2023

morning, I raised the concern that the proposed method of determining who would be involuntarily transferred, if no volunteers were willing to be moved, would violate Article 21; Section 5 and Article 28; Section 4 of our CBA. After a discussion about historical events and practices with a District team not involved 4 and 5 years ago, the District determined that my understanding of seniority and "employment categories" for elementary schools was correct. HR will be re-communicating with certain elementary principals to make sure our CBA is not violated during the process of moving staff and filling vacancies. This does not mean some members will not be unfortunately affected. It does mean the process used by NTPS will follow the CBA and thus, very unlikely to result in violations. This may come as little consolation right now to those staring at tough decisions/forced choices, but there is still much time before the start of the 2023-24 school year and changes always happen. Often for the better.

Employment Contracts

Employment Contracts for the 2023-24 school year should be available to you on or before June 1st, unless you have already resigned, been non-renewed, or notified the District you are retiring. I have yet to hear how HR will get your Employment Contract to you, but they will notify you about that. Please, please, please do not hesitate to sign and return your Employment Contract. Even if there is confusion about your assignment in a building or you are worried that you might be looking for something different before the end of the year, missing the deadline to submit an Employment Contract is not good. You can always get out of the contract after signing it, if you submit a letter of resignation or a request for release before the last student day of this school year, June 22. If you do either of those before June 22, the District MUST release you from the contract you just signed and returned. If you want out after June 22, the District will probably tell you they will release you once they have "found a suitable replacement." This is all described in Article 7; Section 3 of the CBA. An Employment Contract means you have a job, but it does not indicate what the job is. That is your "assignment" and that can change. That is explained in Article 21 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Teacher of the Year, Retirements, and an End of the Year Celebration

In an effort to get back to more of what we used to do before COVID, NTEA has secured the South Bay Grange for an End-of-the-Year Celebration. This is scheduled for June 7. While details have yet to be worked out, know the venue is ours from 3:30PM to 7:30PM. This event is really for buildings to come to do a few things to celebrate and for all of us to celebrate together. Groups are encouraged to come and show off their Teacher(s) of the Year (TOY) and/or honor those members retiring from NTPS. For the retirees, NTEA always has a little something to give back. Even if you will do or will have done a more intimate celebration at your worksite, please consider

NTEA Member's Update - May 10, 2023

asking your TOYs and retirees to come on June 7 and have a contingent of colleagues from the worksite join for a while. There will be food and beverages provided.

Ray