

After nearly a year of planning, researching, and non-stop negotiations, I am pleased to inform you that the Faculty Assembly and the District have reached a Tentative Agreement on a successor agreement for 2025-2028. I would like to acknowledge the countless hours, sleepless nights, and endless meetings and strategy sessions that your FA Negotiating Team endured to reach what we think is a comprehensive, thoughtful, and extremely positive outcome in many areas for the Full Time Faculty.

The number of gains we made is astonishing. We made improvements to Faculty Workloads (**Article C**) including codifying Non-classroom Remote Work; allowing Reassigned Time to be designated as Overload; increasing Summer Intersession teaching load to 10 LHE; adding language to provide pay for agreed upon “NonContractual Work” to do necessary work while “off contract”; moving pay for Honors, Work Experience, Internships to non-contractual rate (no longer LHE toward overload max and not capped) and allowing for up to 7 Honors contracts per semester; and increasing hours for conducting Associate Faculty Evaluations from two to three with an additional hour for an off-site dual enrollment observation.

We also made solid gains for Department Chairs (**Article D**). In addition to codifying a more uniform election process, we made gains to Chairs Reassigned Time (resulting in 10 departments receiving an increase), and we also successfully negotiated language for Winter Intersession hours.

The FA also achieved its goals with Faculty Evaluation (**Article H**). The changes are too great to detail here, but know that we streamlined both Tenure Candidate and Tenured Faculty evaluation processes. We also worked to bring more clarity to the role of TREC and TREC Chair as well as moved the responsibilities to the District and FA for reviewing CAPs and managing any Appeals. We maintained a peer-review process throughout and focused on reducing redundancies and having a more manageable process.

Other gains include increasing our Professional Development Allowance (**Article I**) from \$1200 per year to \$1500 per year with the option to share with faculty within OR outside of your department. We also increased the Incentive for Early Notice of Retirement or Resignation (**Article K**) from \$500 to \$1000 with an earlier notification date of September 1 to allow for greater departmental planning for replacement requests.

One of the District’s primary interests was to reduce Reassigned Time. We worked with the Academic Senate Leadership to find a good level of RT that continues to meet needs and keeps the discretion for allocations with the Senate. We managed to maintain a great level of RT for most positions but we did have slight reductions for some. I want to personally thank all those impacted who were consulted and so gracious to make the new allocations work. We also were able to gain permanent RT for the Joyful Teacher as well as codify some RT positions that were simply in MOUs (like Guided Pathway and Nursing) that now sit permanently in the Contract.

Now for the big items... Let’s start with Fringe Benefits (**Article J**). The work for making recommendations to our Health Benefits Plans is made at the Fringe Benefits Committee (FBC)

which is comprised of representatives from all employee groups. This was an unusual year where the District received notification of premium increases of our current Kaiser plan of nearly 13% and the PPO plan just north of 11%. Fortunately, the FBC was presented and ultimately supported new options to both the Kaiser and PPO plans that include increases to out-of-pocket expenses but still maintains 100% District-paid coverage. However, because the overall plan increases exceeded 10%, it triggered an automatic reopener between the District and FA. So in late April, the District approached the FA with a proposal which they will also propose to the other employee groups: forfeit the monthly FLEX Benefits Credit (\$250 for Kaiser and \$75 for PPO) in exchange for an additional 1% on-schedule COLA for 2025-2026. Because this was such an important and impactful decision, the FA Negotiating team consulted with the FA Attorney as well as called a special meeting of FA Council to discuss. We know these credits are important, and we do not want to minimize that. However, over the past few years in conversations with FA leadership, the District leadership has maintained that these Credits are unsustainable and no longer relevant for the purpose originally designed when premium differentials between PPO and HMO were extreme. Knowing that as well as that it is likely the District will see increases to the costs of health premium policies each year that we want the District to fully absorb, the FA decided to accept the proposal. Much of what we discussed was the fact that the FLEX Credits are not found anywhere as a guarantee in our Contract, the immediate gain of an additional 1% on schedule will be impactful, permanent, and will compound with each future COLA increase and also positively impact us into and throughout Retirement. Our agreeing to this proposal will also open the door to assist our Associate Faculty Colleagues to negotiate to receive the same medical plans that we enjoy. We understand this is a concession that may be controversial, so we invite you to reach out to a member of Exec and/or Council to engage further about this decision.

And now the results of our negotiation of Salary/Compensation (**Article D**). We took a creative approach to salary/compensation and presented the District with a package that began with a change to the Salary Schedule Step Increases. You may not be aware, but the step increases between steps 1-15 range from 5.4% in the early steps to about 3% at step 15. However, once you reach step 16, the yearly increments are a miniscule .5 to .6%. We proposed changes to those yearly increments and succeeded in moving steps 16-20 to a full 1% each step, Steps 21-25 to .6%, and Steps 26-30 remain at .5%. This was a huge and impactful change and as you will see, created a compounding effect which was a game changer. Then from this new schedule, we will add a 4% on-schedule for year one; a 2.5% on-schedule plus a 1.5% off-schedule bonus in year two; and a 2% on-schedule plus a 1% off-schedule bonus in year three with language that could trigger a reopener in year 3 should inflation and property tax revenue exceed 5% in 2026/2027. You will definitely want to review the actual salary schedules and utilize the "Salary Calculator" designed by our own Annie Ngo (QR Code found in the TA Presentation). With these changes, the average salary increase for next year is over 7%! By year three, we break the 200k glass ceiling on the Classroom schedule.

Please take some time to review the more detailed results of our negotiations on the [TA Presentation](#) and if you want to review all changes and language clean up done, you can review the [CBA Track Change Document](#).

Our work is not finished! We have agreed to reopen to negotiate the FA Proposals on *Academic Freedom* and *Intellectual Property* as well as form a Workgroup to create trainings for the *Initial Online Certification & Recertification Processes* which will become effective Fall 2026.

On May 14, FA members will receive a ballot to vote YES or NO to Ratify the newly negotiated agreement. We strongly encourage and enthusiastically support a **YES** vote! On behalf of your FA Exec Leadership and Negotiating Team, we thank you for your ongoing support.

Mary