

TO: SCCOE Employees

FROM: Larry Oshodi, Assistant Superintendent - Personnel Services

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*Larry Oshodi*  
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DATE: November 16, 2022

RE: SEIU Contract Negotiations Update

As promised, we want to provide all employees with updates regarding our ongoing contract negotiations with SEIU as well as other relevant matters.

As you may know, the Santa Clara County Office of Education serves students with significant disabilities including those that are developmentally disabled, medically fragile or have autism. We place the safety of our staff and students as our highest priority. To meet the educational needs of our students, we routinely assess staffing needs to provide the right balance of classroom staff to support our students.

As a reminder to all of our personnel in the Education Services Division, all incidents involving students warrant the filling out of an incident report and/or student accident report which needs to be submitted to the supervisor the day of the event. Additionally, any incident involving a staff injury must be communicated immediately to the supervisor to ensure staff receive all necessary support and documents.

With regard to the status of bargaining with SEIU, the SCCOE proposed a two-year contract with a **10% pay increase** for the first year of the contract (2022/2023) and an **additional 5% pay increase** for the second year (2023/2024). The County Office also proposed that the parties would reopen bargaining in year 2 for salaries if the Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) derived from the enacted State Budget Act is equal to or above 6% for the 2023/2024 school year.

SCCOE also proposed further pay increases, including extending the salary schedule for all SEIU positions from 5 steps to 7 steps. Each step is equivalent to about a **5% pay increase** automatically added to each employee's pay annually, up to 7 years. To account for service beyond 7 years, SCCOE also proposed **increasing all longevity pay rates** at each annual interval from 10 through 26 years of service.

Furthermore, SCCOE proposed an **extra 2.5% pay increase for all positions on the Paraeducator salary schedule**. This adds up to a total increase of **12.5%** (10% + 2.5%) for this year. Additionally, for the many paraeducators who will move to the new Step 6 on their anniversary date and receive another 5% pay increase, this adds up to a total of **17.5% pay increase** just for this year.

SCCOE is proud of the hard work of all our employees, and therefore maintains a total compensation package which includes very competitive, excellent health and wellness benefits and retirement benefits. SCCOE proposed that upon retirement with 10 or more years of continuous service, SCCOE will pay **50%** of the retiree's medical cost. After 15 years of service, SCCOE will pay **75%** of medical costs, and **100%** of medical costs after 20 years of service with SCCOE. SCCOE also makes a significant annual

contribution towards the pensions of all members of the CalPERS retirement system which SEIU members belong to.

Regarding medical benefits for current employees, SCCOE proposed to increase the employer's medical contribution to **\$1,588.00 per month** for the 2022/2023 benefit year, and **\$1,620.00 per month** for the 2023/2024 benefit year. Due to this increase in the employer contribution towards the medical plans, the employee cost for all medical plan options will decrease significantly, making **4 of our 6 medical plan options (including the most popular Kaiser HMO plan) now available with no additional employee contributions** for full-time employees.

Our health benefits continue to include **Dental and Vision plans at no cost to employees**. The dental and vision plan options have also been significantly enhanced starting this plan year. Some of these enhancements are listed below.

Dental:

- Nightguard coverage increased from \$250 to \$500
- Calendar Year maximum increased from \$2500 to \$4000
- Orthodonture coverage at 100% up to \$5,000 lifetime
- Dental implants now covered up to 50%

Vision:

- Frame and contact lens allowance increased from \$175 to \$300
- Progressive lenses covered in full
- LightCare (UV and Blue Light) now included in coverage

These increases in health and welfare benefits for the first year of the contract is equivalent to about a 5.8% pay increase for SEIU employees. **This brings the total pay increase proposed by SCCOE to 15.8%** (10% on salary + 5.8% for benefits). Paraeducators would receive an additional 2.5% to 7.5% pay increase for a total proposed increase of about **18.3% to 23.3% for paraeducators** just for this contract year.

SCCOE is also adding two new benefit options this year. The **Fertility/Family Forming benefit** will provide a lifetime coverage of **\$15,000 per employee** utilizing the benefit. A **new Mental Health benefit** offers another health and wellness provider with coaching and therapeutic services at no cost to employees. This will enhance the services currently available to all employees through our SISC Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

SCCOE also continues to provide other insurance benefits listed below at no cost to employees. Employees may be able to add enhancements as may be allowed by each provider at each employee's cost.

- Flexible Spending Account (FSA)
- Keenan Voluntary Short-Term Disability (STD) Insurance
- Mutual of Omaha (Business Travel Accident) Insurance
- Standard Basic Life/Accidental Death & Disability (AD&D) Insurance

- Standard Long-Term Disability (LTD) Insurance

We hope this update provides more clarity regarding the ongoing negotiations with SEIU. We also want to use this opportunity to express the SCCOE's commitment to the wellbeing of all employees by providing a fair and competitive compensation package and safe working environments.

The SCCOE and SEIU are scheduled to return to the bargaining table on Thursday, Nov 17, 2022. The SCCOE bargaining team continues to bargain in good faith. The County Superintendent and her cabinet highly value all of our employees and are grateful for your support and service to the SCCOE community.