



Hillsborough Classroom Teachers Association

3102 N. Habana Avenue, Tampa, FL 33607 | 813-238-7902 (T) 813-237-4541 (F) | www.hillsboroughcta.org

Today's bargaining session once again highlighted the gap between what our employees need and what the School Board is willing to put on the table. Let's break down where we are....

The School Board's Budget Reality

- Last night the School Board held their first public hearing on their 2025-2026 budget, where their **2025–2026 tentative budget allocates \$820M for instructional salaries alone** (instructional salaries include most ESP salaries as well), alongside projecting an **ending 2024-2025 general fund balance of \$290M** (this is higher than they projected at the start of the 24-25 fiscal year).
- HCTA's Executive Director gave kudos to the School Board's finance team for allocating an **additional \$123 Million in instructional salaries over what the School Board reported they spent in 2023-2024 at \$697M in actual instructional salaries.**
- HCTA's President, Rob Kriete, pointed out that over the past eight years, instructional salary spending has stagnated even as fund balances grow and remain healthy stating "It's imperative to make sure that money is flowing to employees instead of over-budgeting for positions that aren't filled."
- All School Board members made comments on the tentative budget presentation in relation to employees:
 - Member Combs stated, "salaries have NOT kept up." She expressed the need to fund the most important people in our district. She pointed out: "Why is there so much in the fund balance? Because it was on the backs of teachers and individuals working 2-3 jobs who are covering more classes"
 - Member Rendon praised all employees, stating "HCPS is the choice option because of the phenomenal work of our employees".
 - Member Washington stated "We have to work hard! Our employees are not being paid what they should have and what they deserve. They should be paid what they deserve."
 - Member Gray framed the improvement and "high school grades are due to our teachers and staff."
 - Member Perez described how HCPS "is the house and we are a family". And that we need to "place money in the pockets of our teachers & staff."
 - Member Hahn continued to push her goal of implementing a fund balance policy that would require the unassigned fund balance have no less than 10%... more than THREE times the legal requirement.



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DOE Memo Blame Game!

Today the Florida Department of Education required every Superintendent send a copy of a clear and unambiguous anti-union memo to every public school employee, blaming teacher's unions for withholding funds allocated for salary increases...

Let's set the record straight...

The Spin:

- The Governor and Legislature claim they made "historic investments" in pay, yet passed the lowest base student allocation (BSA) increase in history at 0.78%
- They point the finger at unions for "delaying raises" yet leave out the fact they delayed the less than 1% increase by two months!
- They encourage employees to pressure their unions to "get you the dollars.", all the while our union is currently and actively advocating for the School Board to use budgeted funds NOW for fair, equitable and much needed salary raises!

The Reality:

- **HCTA is ready to agree to historic raises right now!** We've proposed step movement, base salary increases, new and increased supplements, and one-time payments to deliver the largest raises possible.
- **It's the School Board that's not yet agreeing.** Their team is at the table explaining budget "uncertainty" while just last night they tout a \$290 million fund balance and a tentative budget that allocates more money than EVER spent before on instructional & support staff pay.
- **The Governor's so-called "historic investments" created compression, not fairness.** The \$47,500 starting pay and \$15/hour minimum wage requirements ignored mid and veteran employees and provided no sustainable funding for real & equitable raises. Hillsborough's own numbers prove it: last year the School Board budgeted \$852 million for instructional salaries but they haven't spent more than \$700 million in the past FOUR years!
- **FEA called it out:** the Governor's "blame educators" tour masks fuzzy math and bad policy. (Read the FEA response here: [FEA Statement](#))



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Salary & Pay

Raises & Pay Counter Proposals From the School Board for Instructional:

The School Board brought their counter proposal to HCTA's previously presented compensation package for instructional employees. Their proposal totaled approximately \$27 million (compared to HCTA's \$80 million proposed on July 15), and included:

- One level/step movement (but **NO increases to the base salary** scales as HCTA previously proposed)
- \$1,500 longevity payment for top level/step employees (HCTA previously proposed \$3,000)
- Continuation of Student Services licensure supplements at the same amounts as last year (HCTA previously proposed increases to these payments)
- Increase of the ESY/ELP pay from \$27 up to \$30 (HCTA had previously proposed this payment be based on instructional salary steps E00-E15)
- Continuation of ESE bonus at \$1,500 (HCTA previously proposed \$3,000 and inclusion of Gifted – The School Board rejected the inclusion of Gifted in the ESE bonus)
- A new one-time payment to School Psychologists of \$1,200 (this counter by the School Board removed School Psychologists from the ESE bonus they received last year at \$1,500, cutting their prior supplement by \$300. HCTA previously proposed School Psychologists remain included in the ESE bonus and receive an additional critical shortage payment of \$5,000)
- A renewed commitment to redefining what Renaissance Schools mean to come up with an MOU to address Schools of Need.
- **Rejection** of a one time payment on the first paycheck.
- **Rejection** of HCTA's previous proposal of including ESE Centers in the Transformation Network payment.
- **Rejection** of HCTA's proposed increases to Advanced Degree Supplements, bilingual/interpretation services supplement, new and improved NBCT supplements, and other improvements.
- Continuation of fingerprint monitoring fees and a no-premium insurance option for employees.



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Raises & Pay Proposals From HCTA For ESPs:

HCTA again brought forward a full compensation proposal and adjusted our previous \$10.26 million proposal down to approximately \$10.2 million to find agreement. In response, the School Board stated they would need time to continue to review their budget. Here's what HCTA currently has on the table:

HCTA Proposal:

- Level/Step movement
- 5.45% improvement to the overall salary schedule (moves the one-time payment into base salaries)
- \$2,500 longevity pay for top of scale employees
- Regarding of 6 employee areas
- Pay differential for "Schools of Need" (response to the continuation of Renaissance pay)
- Fingerprint monitoring fees covered & continuation of a no-premium health insurance plan option

NOTE: These compensation proposals ARE NOT FINAL. HCTA has made proposals showing the cost and needs associated. It is up to the School Board to agree or provide a counter proposal. We encourage our members to contact School Board members and the Superintendent NOW to tell them why these pay raises are needed and how they will impact your students and your life as employee of HCPS!

🎧 Missed the session? Watch and listen to the recording here:

<https://youtu.be/7urPQQ7z8KM?si=CeOY6Ger6X1PG4NX>