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Hillsborough CTA 2025-2026 Contract Ratification FAQ

Will we get retro pay?

Yes. The agreements, upon employee ratification and School Board approval, will be effective July 1, 2025.

When will we get our raises and our retro pay?

Upon employees ratifying the agreement at the completion of the voting period September 16-26, 2025, and the School Board approving the agreement on September 30, 2025, we expect base salary increases and step/level movement to be included as early as possible during the first semester. Other supplements and additional payments may have different pay dates which are listed in the tentative compensation agreement. HCTA will work with HCPS and provide updates to our members as these dates become clear and available.

Who is getting steps? I heard it's just for teachers.

Eligible Instructional and ESP employees will receive one step movement on all improved salary schedules based on completed years of experience. Completed years of experience is defined by working half plus one day and receiving an effective evaluation for the 2024-2025 school year.

ESP Employees at the top of their respective Pay Grade (Level 24) who do not advance one step/level will receive an additional \$2,000 longevity supplement and Instructional employees at the top of the A/B/E/G/P/Q and Student Services pay scales who did not advance one step/level will receive an additional \$2,000 longevity supplement.

What does “eligible employee” mean?

Generally, “eligible employee” means you must have worked half of the school year plus a day in the prior 2024-2025 school year and have an effective or higher evaluation score on your most recent (2024-2025) annual evaluation. New hires without an evaluation are still considered “eligible.”

Some of the additional payments/supplements are based on position, licensure and other requirements, so it is important to review the tentative economic agreements.

How much of a raise am I getting?

Instructional employees can see how much of a raise they will get, by comparing your current salary step (*see your pay stub*) with the step you will advance to on the proposed salary schedules and including any additional payments you are eligible for. Other additional payments may apply to eligible employees (i.e. Schools of Need, ESE payment, NBCT, Student Services payments, etc.). Please refer to the 2025-2026 Instructional Economic Agreement for specific eligibility information.

ESP employees can see how much of a raise they will get, by comparing your current Pay Grade/Step (*see your pay stub*) with the step you will be placed on the proposed salary schedule and including a regrade and/or additional payments you are eligible for. Other additional payments may apply to eligible employees (i.e. Schools of Need, Transformation Network, etc.). Please refer to the 2025-2026 ESP Economic Agreement for specific eligibility information.



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The current (2024-2025) ESP and Instructional salary schedules are published on the [HCPS Employee Relations site](#) and are available in [Appendix C of the HCTA ESP Contract](#) and [Appendix C of the HCTA Instructional Contract](#).

Tentative 2025-2026 ESP and Instructional Salary Schedules with comparison information can be found on the "CONTRACTS" page of the HCTA Website [under 2025-2026 Bargaining Information - "2025-26 Ratification Information"](#)

I'm near the bottom of the pay scale, will I get a raise?

See above.

I'm at the top of the pay scale, what am I getting?

Both ESP and Instructional employees who are at the top of their respective pay scale who do not receive a step/level will receive the agreed upon increases to their base pay PLUS an additional longevity payment of \$2,000.

I have a master's degree; will I get the advanced degree supplement?

Yes. The advanced degree supplements were won at the 2022-2023 impasse and are now included in Appendix C of the Instructional Contract. While the School Board refused to increase the amount of these supplements, they will continue to be paid to certificated instructional personnel who have an advanced degree in their area of certification **and will continue to include certified instructional personnel who have an advanced degree regardless of certification area**. The inclusion of advanced degrees regardless of certification area is thanks to the relentless advocacy of our HCTA members and members all across the State who participated in lobbying and educating lawmakers to change the Florida Statutes governing this payment.

Will my retro payment be taxed at a higher rate?

No. Typically, the IRS formula for withholding pay may trigger a higher percentage of a large lump sum payment (such as retro pay) to be withheld from your paycheck. But when you file your taxes for 2025, your overall tax burden will not be different. You will receive the extra pay that was withheld in the form of a larger tax refund (or a smaller tax bill).

If you do not want a higher percentage of your lump sum payment to be withheld, contact the Payroll Office at: Payrollinformation@hcps.net.

Are employees on leave (FMLA, health, personal) eligible for the increase?

Employees who are on leave will receive increases upon returning from leave.

What are some of the highlights in the tentative agreement for Educational Support Professionals?

- This agreement delivers more than 40 improvements to contract language, expanding employee rights and strengthening workplace protections (*refer to summary in the ESP Ratification Packet*).
- Eligible ESP employees shall advance one step on the new ESP salary schedule that includes increases to hourly



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rates.

- Eligible ESP employees at the top of their pay grade (Level 24) to advancing one step/level will receive a \$2,000 additional payment, to be paid no later than the end of the first semester.
- Approximately 1,500 Education Support Professionals will also be regarded by one pay grade for a higher rate of base pay. Pay Grade 15 collapsed into 16 (raising minimum pay to \$15.45/hr) plus specific regrades for Secretary I, Bilingual Aides, Kindergarten Assistants, Micrographics Clerks, Data Processors, Registrars, Paraprofessional 3, RNs, LPNs, Office Network Computer Specialists.
- The Board will continue to pay the full cost of an employee-only health insurance premium for a designated health plan.
- The Board will continue to pay the cost of fingerprint monitoring fees.

What are some of the highlights in the tentative agreement for instructional staff?

- Eligible Instructional employees shall advance one step on the new Instructional E, G, P & Q and Student Services salary schedules – these schedules include increases to base pay.
 - *Base pay on the A & B salary schedules will not increase: Employees who are still on the A or B salary schedule may elect to move to the E or G salary schedules to receive a significantly higher base pay without risk of losing tenure/contract*
 - *Employees on steps 20-25 of the student services scales will receive a permanent fix to base pay of \$1,000 to eliminate the one-time supplement paid the last 2 years.*
- Eligible Instructional employees at the top of their respective salary schedules to receive a \$2,000 additional longevity payment, to be paid no later than the end of the first semester.
- Eligible Student Services employees who hold their licensure to be paid an additional payment of \$750, to be paid at the conclusion of the 2025-26 school year.
- Eligible SLPs who hold their ASHA CCC's to receive an additional payment of \$1,500 to be paid at the conclusion of the 2025-26 school year.
- Eligible ESE instructional employees to receive an additional payment of \$1,500 to be paid at the conclusion of the 2025-26 school year.
- Eligible NBCTs to receive \$1,000 additional payment for mentoring and training, to be paid after submission and approval of required documentation.
- Eligible NBCTs teaching at Schools of Need or Transformation schools to receive \$4,500 additional payment.
- Eligible Instructional employees assigned to substitute during their planning who choose to be compensated will continue to be paid \$20/hour.
- Rehired retirees will now be granted all years of experience. Current employees will be placed on their proper pay level and receive retro to July 1, 2025.
- 11% increase to ESY and ELP summer pay from \$27/hour to \$30/hour.
- NEW \$848.77 Student Services Team Leader supplement.
- Increase of ESE Contact/Team Leader supplement from \$848.77 up to \$1,120.01.



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- The Board will continue to pay the full cost of an employee-only health insurance premium for a designated health plan.
- The Board will continue to pay the cost of fingerprint monitoring fees.
- “Notice of Intent to Remove” form now included in the HCTA contract to further strengthen contractual language.

Is there a Cost-Of-Living Adjustment (COLA)?

The HCTA bargaining team worked hard to apply additional money to all salary scales in addition to the step movement to ensure all salary scales improved over last year. This year employees in the instructional and ESP units will advance their step based on verifiable and completed years of service on the new salary schedules that have base salary increases applied and be paid the millage supplement to raise annual compensation significantly.

A true “COLA” in accordance with the Florida Department of Revenue report for January 2025 is **2.9%** and is **2.5%** for Social Security in 2025. Unfortunately, **the Florida Legislature only funded a 0.78% increase** (*Approximately \$10.6 Million*) to the Base Student Allocation (*BSA is the flexible funding HCTA can negotiate for salaries*) for Hillsborough County for the 2025-2026 school year.

For the 2025-2026 school year our HCTA union was able to secure base compensation increases averaging from 2.26% and above for instructional employees and increases averaging 2% and above for ESP employees for a total compensation package of approximately \$40 Million.

Additionally, our union members led the grassroots campaign that decisively passed the Millage Referendum and negotiated a legally binding, contractual MOU which has secured significant base salary increases for employees. **For the 2025-2026 school year, all HCTA represented employees will receive raises averaging 15% over last year.** This does not include any additional supplements or one-time payments HCTA has continued to protect.

HCTA members and leaders are very aware that the cost of living in the Tampa area has skyrocketed over the years, and Florida has remained 50th in the nation for average teacher pay for the second year in a row. The main issue impacting HCPS funding and the ability for HCTA to negotiate more meaningful pay raises is due to the lack of budgeted money from the Florida Legislature and Governor. Thanks to the unregulated expansion of vouchers/scholarships to private and homeschools, public tax dollars continue to be funneled away from our public schools in Florida.

Providing equitable and meaningful cost of living adjustments for all employees will continue to be a high priority for HCTA in future negotiations and the work we do with lawmakers in Tallahassee on both sides of the aisle.

I heard the Governor added \$1.36 billion dollars to increase teacher pay. Why is my raise not higher?

This is the same talking point the Governor used last year.

Florida currently ranks #42 in per-student spending. The Senate and House proposals originally called for an increase of \$135 and \$62 respectively. The chambers agreed to allot \$5,372.60 to Base Student Allocation funding. This is a 0.78% increase, or roughly just \$41.62 per student compared to last year. With more than 200,000 educators in Florida, an increase of only \$101 million was allotted for teacher salaries statewide, which would work out to roughly \$20 more per paycheck per teacher. This does nothing to move Florida from #50 in the nation for average salary to the top ten and does nothing to include our ESP employees.



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This added funding fails to keep up with inflation and means that once again, districts and educators will be forced to do more with less. The only thing the budget guarantees is that Florida's teachers will continue to remain near the bottom in average pay.

We have an obligation to our students to ensure they have a world class, free, public education system that puts them – not corporate interests or political agendas – first. We, along with our state union affiliate, the Florida Education Association, will continue to fight for a budget that sets aside funding to make Florida's teachers rank top 10 in the nation in pay and to fund programs that Florida's students need to succeed.

Per capita new funds in the 2025-26 budget for teacher salary increases.

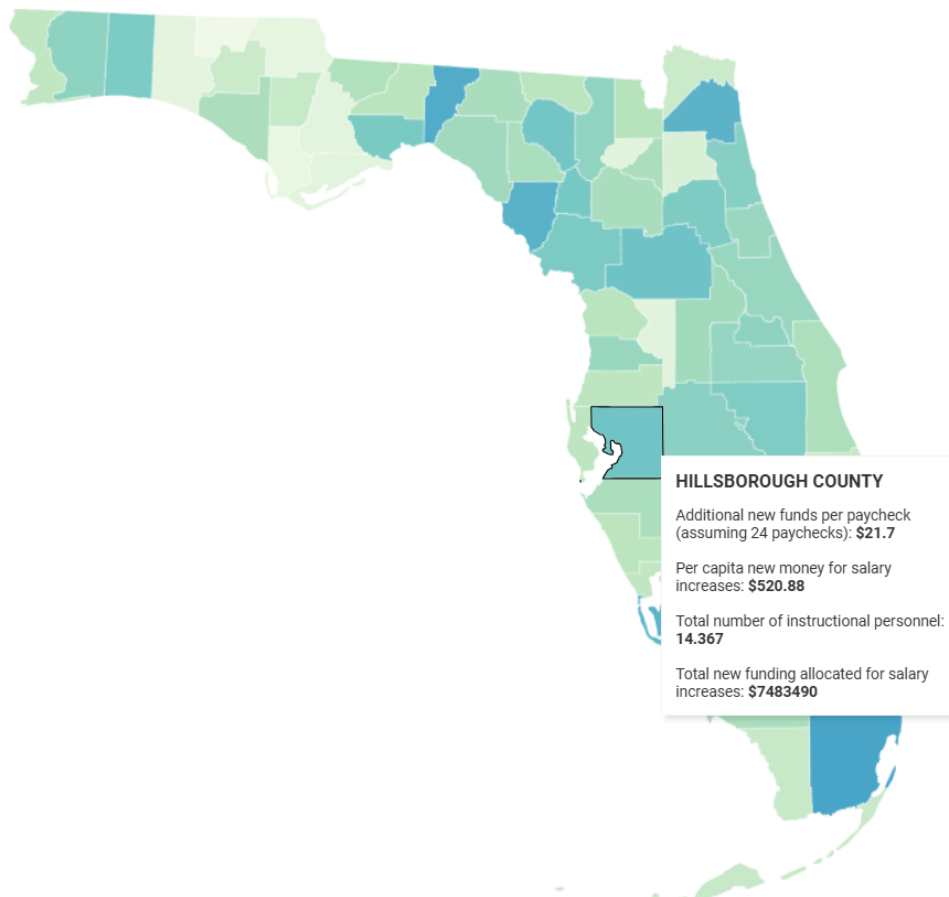
FEA and our local unions advocate every day for teachers to be paid what they are worth.

Despite claims of "record funding," this year's budget allocates less than \$20/paycheck in new money for teacher raises.

As we have done for years, our unions will fight to get raises far and above what the state has offered.

We know that \$20 a paycheck is not enough of a raise to keep up with inflation and we will not be intimidated into backing down. We will continue speaking truth to power.

362.98 807.49





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SOME FEFP BUDGET DETAILS RELATED TO THE GOVERNOR'S CLAIM OF INCREASING TEACHER PAY BY \$1.36 BILLION:

2025-2026 FEFP - CONFERENCE REPORT, JUNE 13, 2025
Public Schools Funding Summary, Comparison with 2024-2025 Third Calculation
STATEWIDE

	2024-2025 Third Calculation -1-	2025-2026 Conference Report Calculation -2-	Difference -3-	Percentage Difference -4-
Major FEFP Formula Components				
Unweighted Total FTE	3,181,118.76	3,234,902.49	53,783.73	1.69%
Weighted Total FTE	3,531,596.88	3,457,442.84	(74,154.04)	-2.10%
School Taxable Value (Tax Roll)	3,633,728,396,941	3,835,299,661,042	201,571,264,101	5.55%
Required Local Effort Millage	3.087	3.087	0.000	0.00%
Discretionary Millage	0.748	0.748	0.000	0.00%
Total Millage	3.835	3.835	0.000	0.00%
Base Student Allocation	5,330.98	5,372.60	41.62	0.78%
FEFP Detail				
WFTE x BSA + CWF + SDF (Base FEFP)	19,062,644,416	18,815,244,199	(247,400,217)	-1.30%
Classroom Teacher and Other Instructional Personnel Salary Increase	1,254,607,800	1,356,579,107 *	101,971,307	8.13%
DJJ Supplemental Allocation	2,619,525	2,571,114	(48,411)	-1.85%
Educational Enrichment Allocation	833,448,236	848,223,651	14,775,415	1.77%
ESE Guaranteed Allocation	1,293,529,266	1,366,259,120	72,729,854	5.62%
Mental Health Assistance Allocation	180,000,000	180,000,000	0	0.00%
Safe Schools Allocation	290,000,000	290,000,000	0	0.00%
Student Transportation Allocation	556,584,049	565,994,313	9,410,264	1.69%
Federally-Connected Student Supplement	16,144,826	16,183,980	39,154	0.24%
Academic Acceleration Options Supplement		596,771,896	596,771,896	
.748 Mill Discretionary Compression	446,455,416	462,526,214	16,070,798	3.60%
State-Funded Discretionary Contribution	44,865,875	46,623,031	1,757,156	3.92%
Total FEFP	22,726,291,609	23,190,397,518	464,105,909	2.04%
Less: Required Local Effort	10,377,115,280	10,906,834,048	529,718,768	5.10%
Gross State FEFP Funds	12,349,176,329	12,283,563,470	(65,612,859)	-0.53%
Proration to Appropriation	(230,930,211)	0	230,930,211	-100.00%
Educational Enrollment Stabilization Program	118,001,049	0	(118,001,049)	
Net State FEFP Funds	12,236,247,167	12,283,563,470	47,316,303	0.39%
State Categorical Programs				
Class Size Reduction Allocation	2,752,103,988	2,732,978,359	(19,125,629)	-0.69%
State-Funded Discretionary Supplement	616,070,303	858,566,695	242,496,392	39.36%
Total State Categorical Funding	3,368,174,291	3,591,545,054	223,370,763	6.63%
Total State Funding	15,604,421,458	15,875,108,524	270,687,066	1.73%
Local Funding				
Required Local Effort	10,377,115,280	10,906,834,048	529,718,768	5.10%
.748 Mill Discretionary Local Effort	2,609,307,687	2,754,051,978	144,744,291	5.55%
Total Local Funding	12,986,422,967	13,660,886,026	674,463,059	5.19%
Totals				
Total Funding	28,590,844,425	29,535,994,550	945,150,125	3.31%
Total Funds per FTE	8,987.67	9,130.41	142.74	1.59%
Percent State Funds	54.58%	53.75%		
Percent Local Funds	45.42%	46.25%		

This amount maintains 24-25 funds

This amount is the 25-26 increase



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Why does HCTA take credit for the Millage?

Because without HCTA's organizing, this referendum would not have passed. Previous referendums failed under district leadership alone, but this time HCTA led the campaign and it passed decisively. This victory resulted in \$6,000 for Instructional and \$3,000 for ESPs for four years, on top of bargaining raises. We've always said it's not a replacement for bargaining, but it's real money in your paycheck.

What if I still have questions?

For answers to your questions, feel free to contact our office at (813) 238-7902. As you review the new salary schedules and start to formulate questions regarding your compensation, it becomes abundantly clear: joining our union is not just beneficial, it's vital. **Here's why:**

- **Collective Strength:** Together, we have the power to negotiate fair wages and benefits that reflect our dedication and expertise. By uniting as a union, we amplify our voice and ensure that our concerns are heard and addressed.
- **Advocacy Power:** Our union advocates tirelessly on behalf of educators like us. From lobbying for increased education funding to fighting for better working conditions, our collective efforts make a significant impact on policies that affect us all.
- **Legal Protections:** In an ever-changing educational landscape, the legal protections provided by our union are invaluable. They ensure fairness in the workplace, protect against arbitrary decisions, and provide recourse when issues arise.
- **Professional Support:** Beyond negotiations and advocacy, our union offers professional development opportunities that enhance our skills and contribute to our growth as educators. This support is crucial for our continued success and fulfillment in our careers.
- **Solidarity and Unity:** Joining our union isn't just about individual benefits, it's about standing together in solidarity. Together, we strengthen our profession and ensure that our voices are heard loud and clear.

Join us in our union and let's make a difference together. Let's continue to build a strong and unified front for the betterment of our profession and the education of our students. We know our students and staff deserve more.

[Click here to join us in this fight to ensure that happens!](#)