



THE SUPPORTER

A PUBLICATION OF AFT 6049 OKLAHOMA

NEGOTIATIONS CONTINUE OVER EMPLOYEE WAGES

LOCAL 6049 LEADERS SPEND SUMMER MONTHS BARGAINING WITH T.P.S. ADMINISTRATION



As Tulsa Public Schools support employees prepare to return to work this August, one question remains on everyone's mind: will employees see a Union-bargained wage increase that matches the cost-of-living?

The 2013 Negotiations Team consists of 5 union leaders: Chief Negotiator Ed McIntosh (President,) Suzanne Wagner (Vice President,) Paul Lindsey (Treasurer,) Rick McCleanhan (Transportation) and Officer Annette Williams (Security).

These five were appointed to lead the union during contract negotiations this year.

"We try to appoint our team members from different departments to get an even representation," says President Ed McIntosh, adding with a smile, "and level heads. We always need level heads."

When discussing what might be in store for support employee's contract when all is said and done, McIntosh says "it's too early to tell, at this point. I'm hopeful, but I'm also a realist. A cost-of-living increase would be great, but with the effects of sequestration, and the cuts to education funding on both the state and federal levels, it's unlikely that TPS could even afford that kind of increase."

The district's negotiation team is scheduled to meet with the union team until a tentative agreement is reached, where it will then be voted on by both the School Board and the AFT Executive Board for approval. Following Board approval, AFT 6049 Oklahoma members will cast their vote to ratify the new Collective Bargaining Agreement. If the changes to the agreement are ratified by both sides, the new policies and wage

increases will be applied retroactively, dating back to July 1, 2013.

Suzanne Wagner, a longtime union activist and no stranger to the negotiations process, explained that she is "cautiously optimistic" about reaching an agreement this year, adding "there hasn't been any screaming or hollering, or rolling on the floor laughing by either side," after the initial proposals were presented this year, and she "thinks it will go smoothly."

Rick McCleanhan, unlike Wagner, is serving on the negotiations team for the first time this year, and has proved to be a great addition. When asked during a telephone interview why he wanted to step up to the challenge, he said, "I was curious about the behind-the-scenes process, mostly. I knew that if I wanted my voice heard, I had to stand up and get involved. After attending union meetings, it clicked for me that this is *our* union- not *the* union- we all have to get involved to make a positive change."

While all five members of the AFT's Negotiations Team have voiced a positive attitude about the tone of this year's discussion at the bargaining table, they know the fight isn't over yet. As McCleanhan noted one afternoon, "Anything can still happen, I can't make a call this early. It's my first rodeo, after all." Ed McIntosh, without missing a beat, reassured the team and quipped, "Don't you worry. We'll be great, just as long as you hold on tight to the reins!"

FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT

To my AFT brothers & sisters,

As we get ready to head back to school, I want to say how honored I am to serve as your President for a second school year. The AFT 6049 Oklahoma Executive Board & Officers are more dedicated than ever, and our strength and solidarity grows more determined every day.

My #1 priority this year is *communication*. Day or night, weekday or weekend, I am here for YOU. With a much stronger network of web-based, print-based, and face-to-face communication, I hope to build more union power for the TPS support employees and encourage open lines of communication between the Local 6049 Officers and our members, as well as

between our members and the TPS School Board and District Administrators. By working together to bridge these gaps, we can achieve our goals of improving the health and safety conditions for working families in the Tulsa community. In partnering with pro-union community organizations, supporting local and state elected officials who fight for working-class Oklahomans, and through targeted action with the collective bargaining process and issue-advocacy campaigns, I hope to raise awareness on worker's rights and improve the wages and conditions for all TPS employees, setting an AFT standard for public education and our community's schools. We're focused, proud, and ready to take a stand, and I hope you'll join us in solidarity as we work towards a brighter, better future together.

In unity,
Ed McIntosh

TPS Support Employees Wages Scheduled to Increase by 1.5%

Tulsa Public Schools District administrators, in an effort to retain hard-working employees and stay competitive with surrounding school districts, have awarded a one-time, single payment of 1.5% of each employee's hourly wages, retroactively applied to all hours worked during the 2012-2013 school year.

This payment will be posted during the first full pay period of the traditional school year, and will calculate all hours worked (including sick time, vacation time, personal business days, and any other paid-time-off) from July 1, 2012, as long as staff members have been rehired at the start of the 2013-2014 school year. Based on last year's hourly rate of pay, employees can expect 1.5% for each hour worked in one lump sum, granted during the first payroll period after classes resume.

The one-time payment is helpful for 9 and 10-month employees who have spent their summer months without a paycheck, and District administrators and AFT leadership are hopeful that this will ease some of the financial strain that these employees face when waiting for their first paycheck of the year, which

would ordinarily be September 6th.

The 1.5% "retention raise" is a good-faith effort to maintain strong working relationships between District administration and our working professionals, an act that was strongly supported by AFT Local 6049 leaders.

The one-time payment will remain outside the scope of the AFT's union negotiations, and it will not affect Local 6049 proposals or the bargaining process itself. The AFT Negotiations Team will proceed with their efforts to push for higher wages and raises in base salary, and the 1.5% awarded to all staff will not affect the decisions or outcome of the 2013-2014 contract negotiations.

Even though this retention payment will not be taken into consideration as contract negotiations continue, AFT leaders have supported and applauded the action, stating that it will boost morale and provide much-needed financial relief to all employees, especially 9 and 10-month staff members.

•For specific questions about your one-time retro payment or to calculate your projected earnings, feel free to call your AFT Local 6049 office at (918)-587-0886.

....Did Ya Know?

In your Collective Bargaining Agreement, you can find information about your **rights and responsibilities when providing a doctor's note during sick days** by looking up Article 23, on page 21. There are only five separate conditions in which a supervisor is within their rights to request a physician's note before paying you after you take a sick day:

1. After three consecutive days of absence (Amended September, 2012)
2. After any absence when the employee has had excessive absences or pattern absences in the past.
3. A sick day is claimed on days of unusual or inclement weather
4. A sick day is claimed on days immediately preceding or immediately following holidays or non-work days, other than weekends.
5. A sick day is claimed during the last four weeks of employment.

•AFT Local 6049 staff will include the "Did Ya Know?" segment in every newsletter, highlighting workplace rights and contract language that are important for all TPS employees to know. Know your rights, stay informed!

Note: If you or your coworkers feel that your workplace rights have been violated, and/or if the Collective Bargaining Agreement procedures aren't being fairly practiced at your worksite, contact your building union representative or call your Local 6049 office right away.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

•All updates about the upcoming 2013-2014 Collective Bargaining Agreement will be made available through your worksite building representative. If you don't currently have an AFT building representative at your worksite, updates on your workplace rights can be found on your Local 6049 Oklahoma Facebook page and online at: ok.aft.org/aft6049oklahoma

•Local 6049 is currently looking for activists to serve on our event-planning committee. We are planning a back-to-school community picnic for September 2013, and we need volunteers to help make it a success! If you or any of your coworkers have a knack for party-planning, contact your AFT offices ASAP, at (918)-587-0886 for details on how to sign-up!

•Communicating with your AFT leaders has never been easier! In June, your Local 6049 union offices launched a brand new Facebook page, a public space for our AFT members to communicate about issues that are important to them. "Like" [AFT Local 6049 Oklahoma](https://www.facebook.com/AFTLocal6049Oklahoma) on Facebook to tag and post photos from union events, stay updated on T.P.S. news, and learn more about our activist efforts for 2013!

•Your AFT Local 6049 Organizer, Emily Wallace, and President Ed McIntosh, will be visiting TPS campuses and worksites during the 2013-2014 traditional school year to meet with all of you! To request a meeting at your worksite, learn more about our community outreach and political activist efforts, or to view a calendar of worksite meetings and union events, visit us online or send Emily an email at: ewallace@tulsacoxmail.com for more details.

The Supporter is published by:

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