

For Immediate Release

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Teachers Reach Tentative Agreement with Cincinnati Public Schools

Negotiating teams for the Cincinnati Federation of Teachers and the Cincinnati Board of Education announced today that they have reached a tentative agreement on new contracts for teachers and school support staff in Cincinnati Public Schools.

The agreement – which follows nearly a year of talks that were challenged by the difficult economy – must be ratified by a majority of union members and the school board. Union and district leadership deferred discussion of specific terms of the agreement until members of the CFT and the CPS clerical support union, the Association of Cincinnati Public Schools Office Personnel, could be briefed. If ratified, the agreement will replace the previous contracts, which expired at the end of 2009.

Both sides said they believe the tentative agreement lives up to expectations that negotiations would produce ground-breaking advancements to further strengthen teaching and learning in Cincinnati Public Schools, which is the highest academically rated urban district in Ohio.

“This tentative agreement continues the CFT’s proud tradition of being a national leader in working collaboratively to develop innovations to advance the professionalism of teaching and accelerate student achievement. It accomplishes our goal of having a contract that will support teachers and school staff and help students continue their academic improvement,” said Julie Sellers, president of the Cincinnati Federation of Teachers.

Cincinnati Public Schools Superintendent Mary Ronan praised negotiators on both sides for their perseverance to get to an agreement. “It took nearly 12 months, but I believe it was worth the wait,” she said. “Despite the difficult economic times, we have reached an agreement that is student-centered, fiscally responsible, and will support and enhance the quality of our great teaching staff. We will build on Cincinnati’s long history of working together to improve our schools and provide the city’s children the education they will need to succeed in the 21st century.”

For example, teachers and CPS have agreed to collaborate on the design and implementation of a new teacher development and evaluation system that builds on the Cincinnati system that has become a national model and includes student achievement as one measure of teacher performance.

Ronan also thanked the district's parents and community partners for their recognition of the importance of the negotiations as an opportunity to strengthen teaching and learning in the district.

"Throughout this process, our partners have consistently and publicly encouraged both sides to avert impasse and stay at the table to reach a transformative agreement, and we've accomplished that," she said.

Sellers said members of the CFT and the Association of Cincinnati Public School Office Personnel will vote on whether to ratify the tentative agreement on Dec. 15 and 16. Voting will take place at the school buildings where members work. Over the next week, Sellers and other union leaders will be meeting with members to explain the details of the tentative agreement and answer members' questions.

The Cincinnati school board will consider the agreement at its regular meeting at 7 p.m. on Monday, December 13, 2010.

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