

Teacher compensation package set for 2 years

Written by Elizabeth Barrett
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Not only will teachers get a 4.8% increase in compensation, including salary and benefits, but an agreement is also set for a 4% increase next year.

District 20 school board members agreed to the proposal at their Monday night meeting and the agreement was ratified by a majority of the Gothenburg Education Association who met at noon Tuesday in the performing arts center.

Total compensation will increase 4.8% when the contract begins Sept. 1. Base pay, for beginning teachers, rises 2.9%

The compensation package goes up 4% next year with base pay, rising to \$32,400.

Last year's compensation package reflected a 2% raise and was a yearly settlement as compared to the two-year agreement this year.

Wyatt: Salaries competitive

Nate Wyatt, chief school board negotiator, said the two-year contract keeps District 20 competitive with schools of similar size and geographic area.

Wyatt said the board appreciates and is proud of the teaching staff.

Travis Coe, GEA president, said he thought an upbeat local economy and more state aid were factors in the increase given to teachers.

Coe said the teacher negotiations team enjoyed a positive process and was happy to reach a

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mutual agreement.

“It was a smooth and enjoyable process,” he said.

Other packages settled

In related action, the board approved a 4.4% increase in salary and benefits for non-certified staff in 2012-13.

Non-certified staff are employees who don't have teaching certificates such as custodians, paraeducators, secretaries and others.

School officials said compensation for non-certified staff is based on job category subgroups and compared to others performing similar work.

Administrators will receive a 3.76% raise in 2012-13.

Their salary and benefit package is based on comparisons with schools of similar size and is figured much the same way as certified staff compensation, officials said.

Wyatt said the board feels that both groups do an outstanding job.

Speech language pathologist Erin Feather led negotiations for the GEA.

Before agreeing to the settlement Monday night, District 20 board members went into closed session for about 45 minutes.

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