



Southwest Allen County Schools

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For Immediate Release

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SACS Board Approves New Teacher Contract

Agreement gives teachers first significant pay raise in several years.

FORT WAYNE, IND., Sept. 15, 2015 — The Southwest Allen County Schools (SACS) board has approved a new teacher contract that will give returning teachers their first significant pay raise in several years.

The board voted in favor of the one-year contract at its regular meeting Tuesday night. A change in the way funding is calculated at the state level for the current legislative biennium has allowed for the increases, which SACS and the teacher union agree are well deserved.

“Teachers have worked with the district to maintain our high academic success, even though the past state-funding formula penalized Southwest,” says Chris Broni, president of the Southwest Allen County Teachers Association and a fourth-grade teacher at Covington Elementary School. “We are pleased the state funding now recognizes the value of the work of our teachers.”

More than 80 percent of teachers who attended the union ratification vote supported the new contract, which goes into effect for the 2015-2016 school year.

The raises come on the heels of several years of contracts that have given teachers little to no increases. A teacher making the district mean salary of \$51,000, for example,

saw increases averaging just 1.5 percent over the last three years. Under the new contract, the average returning teacher will see a one-time 6.1 percent bump.

“We are so proud of how hard our teachers work for children,” SACS Superintendent Dr. Philip G. Downs says. “We are especially happy to be able to give this increase because our teachers have gone several years without seeing a significant raise. We are very grateful the state legislature has begun to address the funding gap between what schools get and what schools need to properly educate students. SACS is just now getting back to 2008 funding levels.”

Under the new contract, teachers are eligible to earn up to six performance-based units, valued at \$582 each that can be added to a teacher’s base salary. Units are earned as follows: four units for being rated “highly effective” or “effective” in teacher evaluations, one unit for experience that requires a minimum of 120 paid days during the previous year, and one unit for education that includes holding a master’s degree or completing a three-credit hour graduate course. Teachers can also receive a one-time stipend for a 97 percent attendance record. All raises are dependent on the teachers being rated “effective” or “highly effective.”

Teachers serving in extracurricular roles will also receive raises. Coaches, music directors and club sponsors will see stipend increases averaging 12.1 percent under the new contract. This is the first increase for these positions in nearly a decade.

“It’s nice to be able to give our coaches and club leaders a much-deserved raise,” Dr. Downs says. “They are still underpaid for the hours they put in and the valuable work they do for the children of our community.”

In other news, the board also heard a report on a Deliberative Dialog issue paper presented by Dr. Andy Downs and Dr. Mike Wolf of Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne (IPFW). The paper will guide a second series of community meetings to be held this fall. This year’s meetings will focus on the subject of school funding. Once set, those meeting dates will be shared via the school district’s website.

About Southwest Allen County Schools

Nationally recognized and locally known for its award-winning programs, high-quality staff, and strong parental and community support, [Southwest Allen County Schools](#) is dedicated to a shared mission of preparing today’s learners for tomorrow’s opportunities.

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