



August 17, 2021

## **e-Bulletin**

*This email is going to all PFT Members*

Dear PFT Members,

Welcome Back! Last year, teachers adapted to limitless changes and challenges in the face of the pandemic. Though we are still experiencing changing direction from the CA Dept. of Public Health, I know we are all hopeful this will be a more normal year. Here are a few informational updates:

### **State & PUSD Budget and Negotiations**

The State Budget has been finalized and PFT and PUSD will begin Interest Based Problem Solving sessions (negotiations) in early September when enrollment is more firmly established. Enrollment and attendance determine most of our ongoing funding. PUSD lost close to 1,000 students in 2020-21. Current enrollment remains lower than what has been built into the budget. However, enrollment is still being finalized as students add and drop during the beginning of the school year.

The budget is challenging to interpret this year, with a great deal of one-time funding that can be used over multiple years. How these revenues and expenditures are reflected in the multi-year projection adds to the complexity. The good news is there is also a significant amount of on-going money to discuss. We will be researching the salaries of districts with comparable funding as well as neighboring districts to see how we compare to remain competitive. We have been and will continue to study the state budget and its impact on PUSD's funding to see what can be achieved on behalf of PFT Members. CFT, our state affiliate, will be supporting us in our study of the PUSD budget this year. We will be sending a bargaining survey to you soon to determine your interests.

### **2021-22 Staffing**

Class Size Reduction: Our district is receiving 10.6 million in one-time funds from the state In-Person Instruction Grant. This money has been allocated for health and safety needs such as cleaning and disinfection, PPE, social and mental health support services, and class size reduction. Since this grant is one-time money (not on-going money) these expenditures are temporary. The total allocation for 2021-22 class size reduction is approximately 4.35 million and resulted in the following temporary changes:

- Staffing ratio at grades 4 and 5 was reduced to 29:1 with a cap of 31 (rather than 31:1 with a cap of 33).
- 1.5 additional FTE were provided to each middle school and 2.5 additional FTE were provided to each high school. This strategy was used to allow the creation of additional sections to bring down class sizes where possible (with a focus on collaborative classes that sometimes cause other sections to be much larger). These funds added 25 total teaching positions at the middle and high school level combined.

Secondary: Secondary sites are beginning the year with the typical class placement process. Secondary schedules are always in a state of flux for the first two weeks of school as sites work to balance classes and adjust to changes in enrollment. Secondary staffing is not a perfect science. For example, student schedules interfere with balancing classes when a few too many students are in one class but there are not enough students to add a section. Class size targets are used for core classes. These are not hard caps, unfortunately, but they are targets. Sites must make a good faith effort to meet the targets. If it is not possible to meet the target, core classes should not be far from the target.

- Middle School uses a staffing ratio of 29:1 (this is not the actual class size due to prep periods and other factors), and a target for each core class period of 34 or fewer (all Language Arts & Social Studies, all Math, all Science).
- High School uses a staffing ratio of 31:1 (this is not actual class size due to prep periods and other factors). The class size target for each class period is 38 (all English, all Math, all Science, all Social Science, & all World Language). 9<sup>th</sup> grade English, Chemistry, Biology, and Integrated Math I and II have a target of 35.

Elementary: Except for the changes at grades 4 and 5 listed above, class size caps remain the same as last year with a cap of 25 at TK and 26 in grades K-3. These are “hard caps” in general ed at TK-5 and are tied to state funding. In a typical year, elementary classes exceed the cap by one student on a rare and exceptional basis only. Please contact PFT if you are being asked to go over the cap.

Preschool: A 1:12 adult to student ratio should be maintained in all classrooms, with a 1:8 ratio maintained by PUSD preschools whenever possible during the instructional portion of the day. Please let us know if you are asked to go over these ratios.

Special Education & Inclusive Practices in the Gen Ed Setting: Special Education caseloads will be provided to PFT each month by the Special Ed Dept, and your Special Education UBC Team will monitor them to ensure consistency across the district. PFT will remain a member of the Inclusive Practices Advisory Board to support Members as this model is implemented. Please contact PFT Director, Crystal Ochoa, at [cochoa@powayteachers.org](mailto:cochoa@powayteachers.org) or call 674-2800 with caseload or other questions related to special education.

Connect Academy, Poway Home Education Program (PHEP), New Directions (ND), Poway Virtual Courses (PVC): These specialized programs should still honor the targets established for each level described above. If you are asked to go above the targets, please contact PFT.

Class Size Review at all Levels: The PFT/PUSD Joint Staffing Team will soon be reviewing class sizes by teacher, content, and school to identify any areas of concern. If you have a specific question or concern, please contact PFT Director,

Patrick Keough, at [pkeough@powayteachers.org](mailto:pkeough@powayteachers.org) or call 674-2800 so we can follow up.

### **COVID-19 Information**

We are meeting with Learning Support Services (LSS) and Personnel Support Services (PSS) this Thursday. We will be discussing implementation of the new CDPH guidance requiring districts to track the vaccination status of employees and to require weekly testing for unvaccinated employees/those who decline to state.

Preschool: Licensed preschool programs are still operating under the childcare COVID decision tree from the end of last year. You should have been provided with additional supplies (masks, gloves, and hand sanitizer).

TK-12: This link to the district website provides information for parents on the latest COVID-19 guidance <https://www.powayusd.com/en-US/Communications/School-Reopening>. You will find the most recent PUSD Guidebook posted here, as well as copies of recent communications the district has sent out regarding COVID-19.

Your principal has or will be providing you with guidance for employees on things like masks, physical distancing, visitors and volunteers, Back to School Night, assemblies, contact tracing, etc. Your PFT Reps also have this information and can provide you with assistance.

I have attached a copy of the latest *COVID-19 K-12 Decision Trees*. I have also attached information on *Supplemental Paid Sick Leave*, which can be accessed for the COVID related reasons outlined in the document. This leave is available through Sept. 30. I have contacted CFT to ensure they are lobbying for an extension of this leave.

Please let us know if you have questions or need support. Have a great first day tomorrow!

Kelly

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