

ELK GROVE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

EGU UPDATE

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ELK GROVE UNIFIED REQUESTS STATE MEDIATOR TO ASSIST IN RESOLUTION OF IMPASSE WITH ITS TRANSPORTATION UNION (ATU)

Bus Driver Shortage and ATU Negotiations Update

ELK GROVE, Calif. –October 14, 2021–The Elk Grove Unified School District provides the following District Update regarding the school bus driver shortage and information regarding the status of labor negotiations between the Elk Grove Unified School District (District) and the Amalgamated Transit Union (Union or ATU).

ATU is the union that represents bus drivers, mechanics, dispatchers, bus attendants, and other employees in the District's Transportation Department.

Bus Driver Shortage

Here is what the District is doing:

The District continues to actively recruit bus drivers and has one of the only paid school bus driver training programs in the state. The District currently has several candidates in their training and certification program and are constantly seeking additional candidates.

The District has also committed to purchasing a minimum of 25 new diesel school buses with air conditioning and has secured a grant to fund an additional 13 new electric buses with air conditioning, which will meet the District's current need for buses and is enough to replace the District's non-airconditioned bus fleet. The District's goal is for these new air-conditioned buses to be available to transport students by next summer.

Update regarding Negotiations with the ATU Union

The following provides an update regarding the status of negotiations with the ATU Union. Throughout the negotiations process, the District has been focused on addressing the impact that the lack of bus drivers has on its ability to transport its students, and its commitment to do what is best for students. At the same time, District officials have remained committed to providing all District employees with a comparable total compensation package.

Here is what the District proposed to the ATU Union regarding compensation increases:

➤ **Commitment to Pay the Highest Bus Driver Hourly Rate in Sacramento County.**

1. The District has proposed to pay all Bus Drivers the highest per hour School Bus Driver Rate in Sacramento County for three years based upon currently available one-time funding. Contingent upon future available funding, the District will work towards making this increase ongoing beginning in the 2024-2025 school year.

2. For its Bus Drivers, this means that, at a minimum, they will receive a 20% increase in hourly pay. Beginning Bus Drivers will make a minimum of \$21 per hour and Bus Drivers with six (6) years of experience and completion of training classes will make more than \$29 per hour.

➤ **Increase Compensation for all Other ATU Union Members.**

1. A 2% salary increase retroactive to July 1, 2020.

2. Another 2% salary increase retroactive to July 1, 2021.

3. Another one-time 2% bonus for the 2021-22 school year.

4. An additional one-time 2% for participation in four professional development/training days designed to improve services provided to students.

5. Participation in District-Wide Comparability Study. In addition, the District and the Board are committed to working collaboratively with the ATU Union and its other labor associations to identify additional job classifications to ensure that the District's compensation is competitive both internally and externally.

Here is what the District has NOT proposed to the ATU Union:

1. The District has proposed **NO** change to union employee pensions.

Public school district pensions for classified employees are governed by the State of California Public Employee Retirement System (CalPERS) through legislative authority and are not subject to change or reduction by the school district.

2. The District has proposed **NO** changes to employee retirement health benefits.

All unions and employee groups in the District participate in the Elk Grove Benefits Employee Retirement Trust (EGBERT). This Trust is a separate legal entity from the District and is governed by a board with representatives from each union and the District. The District has proposed **NO** changes to retiree health benefits.

3. The District has proposed **NO** changes to the longstanding ATU employer/employee shared-cost health benefit agreement.

Here is what the ATU Union is Proposing:

The following was proposed by the ATU Union for all ATU unit members:

1. A 10% increase in pay retroactive to July 1, 2020.
2. Another 10% increase in pay retroactive to July 1, 2021.
3. In addition, a 6% one-time bonus.
4. Additional pay increases beyond the proposed 20% ongoing increases and the 6% one-time increases for unit members based upon their experience and/or seniority.

Here is where we are now in the negotiations process:

The District and the ATU Union have been negotiating regarding compensation since May 21, 2021. Despite both parties' efforts, negotiations have reached an impasse, and both parties agreed to request the assistance of a State Mediator. While mediation is a confidential process,

the District will continue to share updates and information relative to the mediation timeline process.

On September 7, 2021, the ATU Union bypassed District negotiators and provided their last proposal publicly to the Board of Education.

On September 15, 2021, the District made a comprehensive package proposal to the ATU Union.

On September 20, 2021, the ATU Union requested additional time to prepare a response to the District's September 15, 2021 proposal.

On October 13, 2021, the ATU Union did not provide the District with a counterproposal during negotiations.

On October 13, 2021, the District requested that a State mediator be assigned to work with the District and the ATU Union to work through the impasse.

Online copies to [ATU's last proposal to the District, dated September 7, 2021](#), and the [District's last proposal to the ATU, dated September 15, 2021](#) are available to be viewed.

Despite this impasse, the District believes that both parties will comply with the California Educational Employment Relations Act (EERA), with its responsibilities to serve its students and to engage in good faith bargaining consistent with the statutorily mandated impasse process.

Ultimately, the District has been focused on addressing the impact that the lack of bus drivers has on its ability to transport its students, and its priority commitment to do what is best for its students. At the same time, the District is also focused on providing all District employees with a comparable total compensation package. To that end, the District would like to assure that it will continue to work to resolve the differences between the District and the ATU Union as quickly as possible and to keep the community informed of its progress.

About the Elk Grove Unified School District

The [Elk Grove Unified School District](#) (EGUSD) is the fifth-largest school district in California located in southern Sacramento County. EGUSD covers 320 square miles and includes 67 schools: 42 elementary schools, nine middle schools, nine high schools, five alternative

education schools, an adult school, one charter school and a virtual academy. Offering a multitude of educational programs, including over 60 career-themed academies and pathways within 13 industry sectors, we prepare our students for college and career by supporting them with the means to be creative problem solvers; self-aware, self-reliant, and self-disciplined; technically literate; effective communicators and collaborators; and engaged in the community as individuals with integrity. We integrate rigorous academics with career-based learning and real world workplace experiences and ensure that *Every Student is Learning, in Every Classroom, in Every Subject, Every Day to Prepare College, Career and Life Ready Graduates.*

For more information about the Elk Grove Unified School District, please visit www.egusd.net and follow us @ElkGroveUnified on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#), [YouTube](#) and [Eventbrite](#).

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