

To: All Employees; School District of Whitefish Bay
From: Mark S. Kapocius, Director of Human Resources
Re: FAQs about Compensation, Benefits & Handbooks
Date: August 18, 2011



Background

Dating back to last spring, the District has consistently communicated that we are committed to minimizing the impact of the new laws (Acts 10 & 32) (as well as the significant loss of revenue authority) on our employees.

In memos to employees on March 16th, April 29th and June 16th, the District has provided feedback to employees with regards to group health insurance, retirement contributions, and the development of employee handbooks. Those memos can be reviewed at:

http://www.wfbschools.com/district/director_human_resources.cfm

On August 3rd, the Board of Education adopted handbooks for teachers, secretaries and para-professionals.

The following FAQs are intended to provide teachers with additional information about the handbook (“Instructional Employee Employment Provisions Handbook”) and its application to our teaching staff.

Q: Where can find the employee handbooks?

A: All of the handbooks can be found online at:
http://www.wfbschools.com/district/director_human_resources.cfm

Q: What is happening with health insurance?

A: As a result of our need to reduce costs, while trying to balance the interests of employees, the District made some slight changes in the plan design. WEA Trust remains our insurance carrier. For more information about the plan design changes, please view the April 29th memo.

Q: Will I be paying more for health insurance?

A: No. The employee contribution remains at 8%. In fact, as the costs of health insurance in 2011-12 are less than they were in 2010-11, the employee contribution towards health insurance for 2011-12 is less than it was last year.

Q: What is the status of early retirement?

A: Every employee group has some form of early retirement program, wherein an eligible employee may continue to receive group health insurance after employment ends. Furthermore, some employee groups (including teachers) are eligible for severance payments upon retirement. Providing these benefits continues to be a significant cost for the District. Continuing to offer these benefits, in their current form, is unsustainable. Over the course of this year, District administration will review these benefits with the goal of providing a recommendation to the Board that balances the District's ability to pay with the goal of attracting and retaining key employees.

Q: Is the cash-in-lieu of health insurance still offered?

A: Yes. Employees who decline group health insurance receive \$8,712 annually.

Q: Will tuition reimbursement still be offered?

A: Yes. However, tuition reimbursement will expire on January 31, 2012. Accordingly, all proof of payment and official grade reports must be received prior to January 31, 2012 in order to receive tuition reimbursement. Please note that teachers taking coursework as a result of their District-approved mentor training will continue to be reimbursed.

Q: How does this affect those enrolled in the Mentor/Teacher Induction program?

A: For those enrolled at Cardinal Stritch University in the District-approved Mentor program, a comparable stipend (to the tuition reimbursement) will be offered.

Q: Will my lane advancement on the salary schedule be recognized?

A: The District recognizes that many teachers have prepared for lane advancement over the course of several years by taking graduate courses, above and beyond what is required for licensure. However, the District is awaiting information from the Wisconsin Employment Relations Commission (WERC) relating to the costing of base wages. As we obtain more information from the WERC, and evaluate our ability to pay, we will be able to provide a more definite response. In the meantime, teachers should plan to submit evidence of credits prior to the deadline of *September*

30th. It should be noted that nearly all District employees have had their salaries frozen at 2010-11 levels.

Q: What is going on with the employee contribution to WRS?

A: All eligible public employees in Wisconsin participate in Wisconsin Retirement System (WRS). The pension program has an “employer” and “employee” contribution. Historically, the District paid the employer and employee contribution. Now, the District is limited to paying the employer portion.

Q: How will the new “employee” contribution to WRS affect my paycheck?

A: The employee portion of the contribution towards WRS is listed under the “deductions” on your paycheck. (*Remember: payroll information is online at Skyward Employee Access*). The employer contribution is listed under “benefits.” For the 2011 calendar year, the employee contribution is 5.8% of your salary. The deduction is done on a pre-tax basis.

Q: What changes were made with personal days and personal business days?

A: In the past few years, teachers have had both a personal day and a personal business day. In order to utilize a personal business day, however, the teacher needed to demonstrate that the reason met a certain standard. Now, teachers will have two personal days and teachers won’t be required to offer an explanation for the absence. Personal days will still be subject to the date and maximum number restrictions, however. Further, as personal days are used, they will be deducted from the teacher’s overall sick leave bank of twelve (12) per year. Personal day requests still must be made in advance using the same form and process.

Conclusion

The District is committed to providing timely information to all employees. As more information becomes available, we will be certain to communicate to you as quickly as possible. Should you have any questions about the contents of this memo, please feel free to contact any building or District administrator.