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Mission:

Ravenswood City School District empowers every student to fully engage critically and creatively in their education with the skills and mindsets necessary to successfully fulfill their unique potential.

For Immediate Release: November 18, 2021

Ravenswood City School District and Ravenswood Teachers' Association Approve Groundbreaking New Contract

The collaboratively-developed contract introduces a more holistic evaluation process, and increases teacher compensation by 10%, making Ravenswood teachers among the best paid in the Bay Area

November 18, 2021: Tonight, the Ravenswood City School District Board of Trustees approved a groundbreaking new contract that makes Ravenswood teachers among the best paid in the Bay Area, and introduces more holistic and meaningful evaluations. This contract reflects both the deep trust between district and RTA leadership and a uniquely collaborative approach based on shared interests.

According to Ravenswood Board Chair Mele K. Latu, "Ravenswood recognizes that the strength of our schools lies in the strength of our staff. We need excellent teachers and staff for our students to thrive. This new contract allows us to retain and attract exceptional team members, and helps us develop our team to higher and greater levels of excellence."

The new contract increases pay by 10% in the current school year, on top of a 5.5% increase in the 2019-20 school year, and raises the starting salary for new teachers by 20%. This puts Ravenswood teachers among the highest paid in the Bay Area, with the top-paid teachers ultimately earning up to \$133,950 per year. According to Superintendent Gina Sudaria, "this contract is a major step toward correcting a longstanding, inequitable gap between teacher pay in Ravenswood vs. other local districts, which previously could be ten to thirty thousand dollars per year."

Ravenswood Teachers Association (RTA) President Ronda White praised the agreement, noting that "in a departure from convention, the Ravenswood Teachers Association and the Ravenswood City School District have boldly chosen to exemplify what public education leadership is by standing with and in support of its greatest resource, its educators. 95% of teachers in the Bay Area take on second jobs just to make ends meet at home. This contract treats educators as professionals, with salaries and step increases that reflect a professional scale. *This is huge.*"

"The updated evaluation process provides more meaningful and holistic feedback throughout the year, allowing teachers and principals to focus on improving their practice, for the benefit of their students," according to Supt. Sudaria. Staff will create portfolios of evidence throughout the year, including professional goals, informal and formal observations, self reflection and other



artifacts of practice such as student and family feedback. The process differentiates between staff who are still developing their skills, and those who have demonstrated strengths and are integrating and innovating on their craft. RTA President Ronda White explains “this evaluation process uses state criteria and allows educators to set their own professional goals, allowing for teacher initiative, creativity and innovation. Ravenswood educators will have the opportunity to expand their professional aspirations, and better inspire their students to dream and fly.”

The new compensation system also offers the opportunity for teachers who demonstrate mastery of their skills to advance up the salary scale more rapidly. The more meaningful evaluation process makes it possible to confidently link bigger raises to the evaluation of teacher performance. According to Superintendent Sudaria, “the system is designed to be flexible and fluid, reflecting the growth of unit members throughout the year. It will help us retain high performers - keeping our best teachers in our classrooms year after year. And it will help us recruit for all positions, especially those hardest to fill.”

Also noteworthy is that in a time of heightened labor-management tension and strike threats in many districts across the country, Ravenswood has developed a more collaborative union/district relationship. The district and the union collaboratively identified common interests, and developed the framework for a new compensation and evaluation framework. Instead of formal exchanges of paper proposals, the negotiating teams collaboratively outlined and co-constructed new language over a period of a few months. The final proposal was ratified with support from 83% of RTA members, and was approved unanimously by the Ravenswood Board of Trustees on November 18, 2021.

Ravenswood City School District is committed to paying for the compensation increases in this new contract in a way that continues to ensure the fiscal viability and sustainability of RCSD. The first three to five years of the contract are expected to be paid for through generous support from the [Ravenswood Education Foundation \(REF\)](#). Longer term, the district is pursuing leasing two properties to cover the majority of the cost of compensation increases.



About Ravenswood City School District: Ravenswood is a TK-8th grade public school district located in East Palo Alto and East Menlo Park, California. They serve 1,530 students in transitional kindergarten through eighth grade, across three elementary schools and one middle school. Ravenswood is proud of its diversity, with 99% of district students identifying as Latinx, African American, Pacific Islander, and/or multiple races. Our mission is to empower every student to fully engage critically and creatively in their education with the skills and mindset necessary to successfully fulfill their unique potential.

For more information, please contact Ann Waterman Roy, Strategic Pandemic Recovery Consultant at aroy@ravenswoodschools.org or 617-821-1094.