

THE SCHOOLS PHILLY STUDENTS, FAMILIES & EDUCATORS DESERVE

[**DRAFT**]

[NOTE FOR THE FIRST DRAFT] In Fall 2019, the PFT will return to the negotiating table with the School District. In May 2016, after years of organizing, including an 1000-person walkout, educators finally won a PFT contract. Across the country, from Los Angeles to West Virginia, our colleagues in other cities are demanding stronger contracts – *and winning*.

Now is our chance to lay out the schools that Philadelphia's students, educators and families deserve. This document was developed by rank-and-file PFT members who compared existing PFT contract language with contract language from other cities. This document will now be edited by PFT members via school-level Contract Action Teams.

1. LOWER CLASS SIZES FOR BETTER TEACHING: We need class sizes caps that make learning easier for our students, with maximums of 25 for grades K-3, 26 for grades 4-5, 27 for grades 6-8, and 28 for grades 9-12. Class size limits must further account for teachers' ability to meaningfully support all students, with reductions in class size according to the need to provide accommodations, modifications, and individualized instruction for students with disabilities, English language learners, and others. Most importantly, we need enforcement policies that hold the District to class size mandates, such as forming a class size committee to negotiate in each school.

2. HEALTHY SCHOOL BUILDINGS: We need facilities that are free and remediated from all lead, asbestos, mold, and pests. All school buildings should meet EPA and OSHA standards. We need fully-furnished classrooms, playgrounds with safe and accessible equipment, comfortable temperatures, and well-stocked and fully-functional bathrooms. When buildings break down, we need high-efficiency replacements.

3. LIBRARIES, ART, MUSIC, & PE FOR ALL STUDENTS: We need to invest in educating the whole child by ensuring that all students have access to the arts, music, and physical education. All schools should have a fully-staffed library and full-time art, music, and gym teachers.

4. PHYSICAL, MENTAL, & DEVELOPMENTAL HEALTH: We need a full-time nurse and school psychologist in every school every day, as well as staffing increases for occupational therapy, physical therapy, and speech and language pathology. Student ratios and workloads should be reduced to the nationally-recognized standards for counselors, nurses, and related service providers in urban schools. All related service professionals need a healthy and private office space in which to meet with students.

5. CULTURALLY-SUSTAINING & DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE TEACHING: We need curriculum that reflects the backgrounds and cultures of our students, allows educators to teach to our fullest capabilities, and teaches students the skills they need to be powerful learners and citizens. We need to limit standardized testing to no more than ten hours over a single school year, so that educators can teach. We need our curriculum to center the contributions of marginalized people from different cultures, genders, sexualities, and abilities.

6. TREAT ALL PFT MEMBERS AS PROFESSIONALS: As professionals, we need appropriate and relevant professional development which focuses on educator growth – and, to ensure that we get it, we need the right to determine for ourselves, building by building, how to use the majority of our P.D. time. We need to reduce required paperwork and testing so we can focus on instruction. When testing is necessary, we need to use evaluations that are fair, humane, and based on best practices. We need systems of accountability which flow *up* the chain of command as well as down: we must be able to participate as equal partners in site selection decisions, to evaluate our building administrators, and to have open channels for transparency and feedback on School District decisions. We need structures that hold bullying principals and administrators accountable.

7. FAMILY FRIENDLY POLICIES FOR EDUCATORS: We need quality healthcare that sustains our families. We need parental and family-friendly policies, including six weeks of paid parental leave, private clean spaces and break times for breast pumping, a personal day for parents to attend to their own children's education, and a change to the 3-5-7-9 attendance policy, which penalizes working parents.

8. RESTORATIVE JUSTICE & TRAUMA-INFORMED SCHOOLS: We need policies to stop the school-to-prison pipeline and to support students dealing with trauma. We need more full-time mental health professionals and social workers in every school to help students with their social-emotional needs both inside and outside of school, as well as investment in sufficient staff and training for proper implementation of restorative practices. We need ongoing professional development for all school staff that speaks to the experiences of the majority our students, such as trauma-informed practices, anti-racist training, and de-escalation.

9. RECRUIT & RETAIN EDUCATORS OF COLOR: We need strong action to recruit, support, and retain teachers of color. We need paid mentorship programs for veteran teachers of color to support new teachers, and pathways to encourage high school and college students of color to enter the field of education. We need the District to collect and publicize racial and ethnic demographic information of its employees annually in order to show growth towards this goal.

10. STRONG SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES: To provide the best education to our students with IEPs, we need sufficient staffing and service provision for every student to have access to quality services and education in a timely fashion -- not just compliance to avoid lawsuits. Special Education teachers and related service providers need class size limits for instruction, an efficient online IEP system, and release time to administer assessments. SELs need additional release time to appropriately service students and support teachers. We need to address the massive racial, gender, and class inequalities faced by the majority of our students with IEPs.

11. SUPPORTING IMMIGRANT STUDENTS & FAMILIES: English Learners need more ESOL teachers, and smaller class sizes for ESOL and Dual Language programs. We need fewer required tests for ELs to maximize needed instruction time, more bilingual psychologists and teachers, and dedicated staff for newcomer students. Our schools need more Bilingual Counseling Assistants (BCAs) with fewer school assignments and competitive salaries compared to other interpretation jobs. We need enough BCAs and translation staff to serve our students and families in all of the languages they speak, especially for students from unrepresented and underrepresented communities.

12. PARAPROFESSIONALS & SCHOOL STAFF: All PFT members must make a family-sustaining wage and be brought up to parity, particularly paraprofessionals and secretaries. These school staff provide essential services in our classrooms and school communities, and they deserve higher wages, professional respect for their roles, and quality training and orientation. Paraprofessionals and school staff need opportunities for real professional development, tuition reimbursement, and pathways for teaching and advancement.

13. PARENTS AS PARTNERS: Parents and families must be recognized as integral partners in their children's education, and in the success of schools overall. We need parents and families to be fully informed about the conditions in their children's school buildings, to be represented in hiring decisions for principals and staff, and to be actively included in ensuring that all students needs are met.

14. END CONTRACTING-OUT & CUTTING OF PFT POSITIONS: We demand that the School District stop the practice of contracting out labor, especially where PFT positions have been cut and then replaced by non-union labor. Furthermore, we demand that all school district positions which have been replaced by outside contracting be restored.

15. FULL FUNDING FOR OUR SCHOOLS: We need increased funding for our schools on the federal, state, and local level, including Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILOTs) from local universities and an end to Philadelphia's 10-year property tax abatement. To maximize the public schools budget, we need a moratorium on new charter schools, and standards of accountability for existing charters.

