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UFT, City Reach New Contract Deal

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The United Federation of Teachers and the City of New York today reached a tentative agreement on a new two-year contract that would give every teacher at least a 7.1% raise and boost the most experienced teachers to more than \$100,000.

The pact – which includes a \$750 cash payment and a \$1,000 longevity increase for educators who stay in the system for five years – brings the total cash value to more than 8% and means New York City public school teachers will have received salary increases of 40% or more between 2002 and 2009. It also includes raises to keep pace with rising drug costs, enhancements to extra-curricular activities – and there are no givebacks.

“This earlier contract provides real stability and certainty for our members and includes no more time, no givebacks and a raise for all our members that gets our most senior teachers to a milestone \$100,000,” UFT President Randi Weingarten said. “This is great news for our educators and the 1.1 million children they serve.

“With this agreement, we and the city, working together, have been able to continue to raise salaries and provide the kind of competitive pay that helps attract and retain the best possible teachers for our children,” she said. “When Mayor Bloomberg came into office, salaries lagged behind those in the suburbs. This settlement, if ratified, will mean that between 2002 and 2009 teacher salaries will have risen by at least 40%. Finally, we are making real progress.”

Under the agreement, which must be ratified by the UFT’s rank-and-file members, educators would receive:

- A 7.1% increase over 24 months, ending in October 2009. The current teachers’ contract runs through Oct. 12, 2007. Teachers would get a 2% increase in the first year, beginning Oct. 13, 2007, and another 5% effective May 19, 2008. The contract would expire Oct. 31, 2009.
- A pensionable \$750 cash payment.
- A 5-year \$1,000 longevity increase. Combining the salary increase, cash bonus and longevity increase brings the total cash package to 8% over the life of the contract.

- A top salary for teachers of more than \$100,000.

Examples of teacher raises:

	Current	Oct 2007	May 2008
Three years	\$51,102	\$52,124	\$54,730
Six years	\$52,947	\$54,006	\$56,706
10 years	\$73,656	\$75,129	\$78,886
Maximum	\$93,416	\$95,284	\$100,049

The agreement includes several non- economic issues. One – a proposal similar to one Weingarten made two years ago -- would refine the Peer Intervention Program so that teachers who are struggling can be evaluated by independent third-party experts, agreed to by the DOE and the union, who can get educators the help they need.

The UFT began bargaining with the city shortly after it formed a bargaining coalition with 19 other municipal unions to try to head off the city’s strategy of settling low with one union and imposing the same terms on the others. After the coalition was formed, DC 37 reached a no-giveback contract in July that paid 6% over 20 months -- much better than the city’s final offer before the coalition was announced.

“When a window of opportunity opened this fall to close an early deal, we grabbed it,” Weingarten said.

“This contract not only brings real gains, but provides stability and certainty that our members can plan their lives around. It demonstrates our strength as a union and recognizes the hard work our members do every day for our kids in our schools. When the contract is no longer an issue we can go back to the hard work of teaching.”

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