



November 1, 2018

Negotiations Frequently Asked Questions

The possibility of a teacher strike raises many questions. Here are some frequently asked questions about a strike and the impact it may have on students and families. This offers general information, potential impact to students, and potential impact to teachers.

General Information

How soon after a strike vote is taken by RTPA membership can a strike actually happen?

There are multiple steps to complete before a strike could legally occur and the process could take months. These steps are required before a strike even though the District and RTPA engaged in them recently during the 2017-18 negotiation process.

The steps are as follows:

MEDIATION: On October 19 the state Public Employment Relations Board (PERB) appointed a mediator to assist RTPA and the District in reaching a settlement. Three mediation dates have been set - November 1, 8, and 14. The mediator can decide to extend the mediation process beyond these dates or certify the parties to fact finding if an agreement cannot be reached.

FACT FINDING: If mediation is unsuccessful, RTPA and the District would enter fact-finding. This is a process where a 3 member panel (one member chosen by the District, one member chosen by RTPA, and a neutral panel chair agreed to by both parties) reviews all of the offers from both parties and the District's finances to recommend the terms of a settlement that is issued in a report. Once the report is issued and before it is made public, the parties must engage into negotiations based on the fact finding report.

STRIKE: If the union exhausts the state's impasse resolution process, then legally a strike can occur.

At any time during this process the District and RTPA can continue negotiating to reach an agreement which is what occurred when an agreement was reached for the 2017-18 contract.

The District remains fully committed to finding a fair resolution and finalizing a contract that supports both students and our employees. We are especially optimistic about the hard work that has been done by both teams including reaching six tentative agreements and one memorandum of understanding during the past two months.

Is there going to be a teacher strike?

That is unknown at this time and dependent on the Rocklin Teachers Professional Association (RTPA). What we do know is RTPA has requested a compensation increase of 14.7%. The District has offered a compensation increase of 4.65%. The increase for the current year will be in addition to this year's longevity increase and pension contribution increase. Employee compensation increases, consisting of salary increases, benefits increases and increased pension contributions, total 30.69% over the past five years (through the 2017-18 school year). The district would like to continue to work with RTPA and reach an agreement.

Will schools be open during a strike?

Yes. Our district is making preparations for a strike that would allow us to keep our schools open. We are hiring and training substitute teachers, making arrangements for the safety of students and the security of our campuses, and preparing administrators to handle the challenges created by a teacher strike.

How will a strike affect my child?

The district will remain focused on student learning, and in doing so, RUSD would need to hire qualified special circumstance substitute teachers to provide daily instruction. In addition, the district would provide special curriculum aligned with the California State Standards and RUSD adopted curriculum to ensure students continue to learn and remain on track academically. In the event of a strike, it is likely that after school activities and athletics will be canceled.

How long will a strike last?

Only union leaders can answer this. Typically, however, teacher strikes can be as short as one or two days. Union leaders may choose to strike over several days or they may choose several single-day strikes.

Strikes are intended to cause disruption and they do. The district is taking every step available to minimize the impact of a strike on our school families.

What has RUSD offered teachers?

Since negotiations began, RUSD has made several different proposals to RTPA. Each of these offers sought to address concerns and demands made by union leaders in public settings and was rejected.

These proposals have included pay raises for teachers, collaboration on Special Education and plans for optimal School Safety. Our most recent offer is what the independent Fact Finding

Report recommends. The Fact Finding Panel was led by a neutral party chosen by both sides, whose primary job was to closely look at the school district's finances and come up with a fair settlement. (To see the most recent offer, visit <http://www.rocklinusd.org>)

How might a possible strike impact students?

Should I send my child to school during a strike?

Yes. Our schools will be open and our students will be supervised and educated by qualified substitutes.

Is my child required to attend school?

Yes. The Education Code of the State of California requires attendance in schools under compulsory attendance laws which states that "Each person between the ages of 6 and 18 is subject to compulsory full time education." (EC 48200). There are no exceptions made for a strike or other labor action.

If I choose to keep my child home from school in support of a teacher strike, will my child's absence be excused?

No. The Education Code sets very specific reasons a child may be absent from school. A strike is not one of those reasons. Students with unexcused absences are considered truant and are subject to the district's truancy policies.

Who will teach our children?

Substitute teachers who have the same qualifications as substitutes who work for our district throughout the year.

Will it be safe to send my child to school during a strike?

Yes, our district is taking every step available to ensure the safety of our students and the security of our campus' during a strike. We have made arrangements with local law enforcement agencies and with private security firms to ensure, for instance, that any traffic caused by picket lines or other strike activities do not compromise student safety.

What will students do in school during a strike?

Under normal conditions, substitute teachers use a lesson plan provided by the regular classroom teacher which is not likely to occur in the event of a strike. The district would provide curriculum that will enhance skills related to math, language arts, social sciences, science and physical education.

How might a possible strike impact teachers?

Will every teacher be on strike?

Each employee makes an individual choice whether to participate in a strike. The union can encourage its members to strike, but it cannot force any teacher to participate. Any teachers who choose to report to work during a strike will be allowed to do so.