



## **Moon Area School District**

**8353 University Boulevard, Moon Township, Pennsylvania 15108**  
**[www.moonarea.net](http://www.moonarea.net)**

**Megan Edwards, Public Relations Officer**  
**412-264-9440 ext. 1130**  
**[medwards@moonarea.net](mailto:medwards@moonarea.net)**

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### **Moon Area Board of Education and Moon Education Association Resolve Teacher Contract**

The Moon Area Board of Education approved a five-year agreement with the Moon Education Association (MEA) during the School Board meeting on Monday, June 27, 2011. The MEA voted to ratify the agreement on Tuesday, June 28. The Unfair Labor Practice Charge filed by the teachers on February 25 has also been withdrawn.

Both sides worked together to result in a fair and equitable agreement, effective from July 1, 2010 - June 30, 2015. "This joint resolution will allow Moon Area School District to continue to provide our students with the best programs and education possible," said Superintendent Dr. Donna K. Milanovich. The new contract marks a \$3.6 million savings for the district over the January 6 recommendations of Arbitrator Mark A. Winters. To view the arbitrator's report, please visit the district website at [www.moonarea.net](http://www.moonarea.net). "Financially, this agreement assures the stability of the district and positions the district for the future," commented Mark Scappe, Board President.

The resolution provides net salary and benefit increases averaging 3.1 percent over the life of the contract. This includes raises and step movement through the salary scale beginning in 2011-2012. The contract calls for a wage freeze in the first year of the contract for all staff members. The value of each individual salary step, except the maximum salary step, will remain at 2009-2010 levels through 2012-2013. This unprecedented freeze of those step values help to control the overall five-year cost of the agreement. Maximum step values have minimal increase over the five years of the contract of 0%, 1.08%, 1.07%, 2.28% and 2.23%.

Several changes related to health care will result in record savings for the district. Professional staff will move from a PPO to an HMO plan, with an estimated average yearly savings of \$182,000. Employee health insurance copayments will shift from a fixed amount to a percentage of the premium. By the final year of the contract, the percentage of premium contribution increases to 9 percent of premium with no cap.

Also as part of the agreement, the district agreed to recall any teacher furloughs from the 2010-2011 year, which included 4.5 positions eliminated May 9. This motion was approved by the Board of Education at Monday's meeting.

Class size limitations were placed in order to ensure that student-teacher ratios are as small as possible and within PDE guidelines. These include maximum 23 students for kindergarten; 26 students for grades 1, 2, and 3; 28 students for grades 4 and 5; and 30 students for grades 6-12.

The district will gain additional benefits under the new contract on a number of items including extending the teacher workday to 8 hours; increasing the number of teachers who can teach a sixth class at the secondary level; and up to 45-minute teacher meetings per day, a maximum four times per week. The ability to meet and

conduct professional development related activities will greatly benefit the students. "The time the district gained to work with teachers on professional development opportunities will translate into increased student performance as teachers incorporate newly learned strategies into their daily teaching," said Dr. Milanovich.

Talks between MASD and the MEA began in November 2009. The MEA's five-year contract expired on June 30, 2010.

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