

News Release

DATE: February 4, 2011

NATIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT, NCETA REACH TENTATIVE AGREEMENT FOR THREE-YEAR PACT

NATIONAL CITY (Feb. 4) – A strike that had been scheduled to begin this morning by National City elementary school teachers was averted when negotiators for the National School District and the National City Elementary Teachers Association reached a tentative agreement for a three-year contract shortly after 2 a.m.

The 18-plus hours of bargaining, under a state mediator, on Thursday and early Friday ended a year of intensive bargaining when both sides agreed that teachers will take four unpaid “furlough” days in the current fiscal year as well as in each of the next two years. However, the contract language includes a formula for one or more of those days to be restored in either or both of the next two years if the district’s attendance-based “revenue limit” exceeds \$5,010 per student. One day will be restored for each \$35 the district receives over the \$5,010 per-student base revenue.

District officials had been unable to agree to fewer furlough days in the next two years after losing 18 percent of the district’s funding from the state over the past two years and needing to cut an additional \$3 million to stay within projected revenues over the next two years.

“We’re ready to reduce and even eventually eliminate the number of furlough days if the state restores enough funds for us to be able to do so,” said Dr. Chris Oram, district superintendent. “Meanwhile, we have no choice but to live within our means and keep expenses in line with revenues.”

Class size and the school calendar were two other major issues that had frustrated efforts to settle a new contract to replace the one that expired last June 30.

The new agreement caps classes at 30 students per for kindergarten through third grade and 33 students for fourth through sixth grades while keeping K-3 class sizes at 22 students for the current and next school years. K-3 class sizes would remain capped at 22 students in 2012-13 if state funding is at or above \$5,010 per student that year.

--continued--

NATIONAL CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT, TEACHERS AGREE ON THREE-YEAR PACT
Page 2

Other issues settled included language on transfers and reassignments, filling vacancies, and agreeing on the number of paid leave days for members who are on union business.

NCETA members and the district Governing Board will vote to ratify the agreement in the next week or two, Oram said.

“We’ve come through a very stressful period of time this past year when both sides have experienced great frustrations,” Oram said. “It’s now time to come together, put our differences behind us and refocus on providing the quality of education our parents and others have come to expect from our district schools. We have the finest teachers to be found anywhere and a new contract that is both fair and financially responsible.”