



Staff Guild
Local 1521A

Negotiations Update - September 2026

Contract Negotiations Newsletter

Good Morning, Union Siblings 🙌

We will be returning to the negotiations table with management on Thursday, September 24, 2026.

Management will have a new Chief Negotiator, Zepure Hacopian, Vice Chancellor of Human Resources, as we continue negotiations for our successor agreement.

We anticipate resuming open negotiations in late October, where Unit 1 members will once again have an opportunity to observe the negotiations process. Please keep an eye out for future emails with dates, locations, and registration information.

We also want to thank all of our members who participated in the Remote Work and 4-Day Workweek (4DW) surveys. Your participation and feedback are extremely important. The Negotiations Team will use the survey results and member feedback as we present our proposals and priorities to the District at the bargaining table.

This is our moment to stand Strong. Resilient. Proud.

Because there is truly No Class Without Classified.

Negotiation Dialogue Chart

A snapshot of the proposals and counters exchanged with the District, July 30 to August 13, 2026.

AFT 1521A Proposals & District Responses

Article 3

Non-Discrimination, Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO), Diversity, ADA, Sexual Harassment, and Non-Sexual Harassment

AFT · August 6, 2026

We reintroduced Just Cause and progressive-discipline language taken from ELR's own SharePoint manual.

District · August 11, 2026

The District rejected the Just Cause and progressive-discipline language, citing PC Rule 735 on just cause and the existing dismissal and suspension procedures. They verbally committed to training managers on progressive discipline but will not agree to placing progressive-discipline language in the contract.

AFT · August 11, 2026

We countered: if we mutually understand progressive discipline is a problem in our District, why not codify it? We added and resubmitted an annual training clause for those who supervise and evaluate us.

District · August 13, 2026

They held their rejection of the new Just Cause and Progressive Discipline language, offering PC Rule 735 and Board Policy Rule 3430 regarding the management-training commitment as reference only, not for inclusion in the CBA.

AFT · August 13, 2026

We argued the proposal mirrors existing law and policy, and there is no reason not to codify it in our CBA. Doing so will help members understand their rights regarding discipline.

Article 5

General Provisions

AFT · August 6, 2026

We reduced our proposal to one line, stating if staffing levels are insufficient the District shall hire all impacted classifications, and

District · August 11, 2026

The District rejected our new proposal, stating existing language already captures the intent. They restored "upon request,"

removed "upon request" so that staffing and vacancy data are provided consistently. We added "non-classified" instead of "unclassified" to encompass more job titles that could potentially supplant our work.

rejected the new "non-classified" category on the view that "unclassified" suffices, and declined the new SFP-process language.

AFT · August 11, 2026

We clarified the language "shall strive" does not mean action once a deficit exists, and "non*classified" is needed to catch-all under HR Guide R-300.

Article 8

Work Environment

District · August 6, 2026

The District struck humidity levels, reiterated the idea that it is a recommendation, and rejected our proposal of being sent home if indoor climate does not improve. The District agreed to providing free access to on-campus fitness centers. They also held the district-wide WEC committee is bargained with the faculty and could not bargain us getting seats. On surveillance, the District noted a law firm has been hired to assess the issue and could not agree at this time.

AFT · August 6, 2026

We argued the article is missing a district-level counterpart to the campus-level WEC committee, and we proposed our own district-wide WEC committee.

District · August 6, 2026

The District acknowledged that the district-wide WEC should mirror the college level WEC as a future goal.

Article 11

Holidays

AFT · August 6, 2026

We proposed recognizing Diwali as a third floating wellness day, stating that we already gave up the half-day before Spring Break and merged Indigenous Peoples' Day and Lunar New Year in exchange for two wellness days.

District · August 11, 2026

The District rejected the additional wellness day and offered reconsideration if we were willing to amend our ground rules to look at all money-dealing articles together as a total-compensation approach tied to the 2.87% statutory COLA.

AFT · August 11 & 13, 2026

We declined the offer to look at monetary articles under a total-compensation approach, noting we have historically never negotiated this way, and we restated that Diwali is going to be observed by the state regardless, a floating wellness day is the practical fix.

Article 17

Professional Development and Retraining

AFT · July 30, 2026

We presented a revised proposal of \$450,000 total tuition reimbursement, individual reimbursement of \$6,000, and at least \$50,000 for staff development split among the nine colleges and the District.

District · August 6, 2026

The District claimed status quo for \$200,000 total tuition reimbursement; however, they agreed to raise individual reimbursement to \$6,000.

AFT · August 11, 2026

We countered with a \$400,000 total tuition reimbursement and \$45,000 for staff development, a total ask of \$245,000. We argued members surpass the \$200,000 for tuition reimbursement, and staff development funds of \$15,000 have gone unchanged since the early 2000's.

District · August 13, 2026

The District cited budget concerns and kept individual reimbursement at \$6,000 and staff development at \$15,000. They also denied our "funding shall not be delayed" clause, citing existing purchase-request processes, and repeated they are open to movement under a total compensation approach.

AFT · August 13, 2026

We argued the access delays originate from inconsistencies across worksites, not the existing processes. We also presented a District budget analysis showing the over-projected deficits against the posted surpluses and comfortable reserves. We framed the \$245,000 as an investment in the classified-to-leadership pipeline.

Article 19

Leaves and Absences

AFT · July 30, 2026

We proposed a new Section D defining Intermittent leave, to stop redundant re-submission of paperwork within the same 12-week FMLA period. We also proposed a consolidated ADA-obligations section codifying existing law, temporary and permanent accommodation, the interactive process, an ADA coordinator at a different worksite to reduce bias, and leaves not counted against attendance. Additional proposals included expanded bereavement to include aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, cousins, fiancés, and a close friend; automatic approval of leave paperwork

District · July 30, 2026

The District asked clarifying questions, such as where this language should be placed, and whether the parental-leave compensation mirrors the newly passed law. The District did not counter and will reconvene in the following weeks.

without a signature when a member is incapacitated; and 14 weeks of paid parental leave under the new California law plus an additional 12 weeks of half pay for parental leave.

District Proposals & AFT 1521A Counters

Article 10 Vacation

AFT · August 6, 2026

We sent the District's vacation article back as a rejection and proposed collapsing the accrual schedule to match SEIU 721 (15 days to start, and 30 days at 20 or more years of service) and removing the denial-predicate on the 80-hour cash-out. We argued that vacation cannot be denied aside from an untimely submission.

District · August 11, 2026

The District rejected the accrual proposal and the additional paid service days, said it is comfortable with the existing cash-out process, and floated a total-compensation approach and amending the ground rules as a way forward.

AFT · August 11 & 13, 2026

We left the chart as previously submitted, since the District entered no rejection or status quo. We submitted a cash-out window of January 1 through June 1. We declined to reopen ground rules and reiterated a discretionary benefit should not hinge on a denial.

Article 14 Transfer and Reassignment

AFT · August 6, 2026

We agreed to portions of their proposals; however, we continued to push for distance protection for satellite campuses, with compensation when a reassignment exceeds 5 miles.

District · August 11, 2026

The District defaulted to existing language and withdrew previously agreed-upon language about involuntary transfer being a last resort. They argued since their involuntary-transfer process was rejected, the related language agreed upon no longer applied.

AFT · August 13, 2026

We rejected their withdrawals, characterized them as regressive bargaining, and restored the previously agreed-upon language. We proposed distance protection in the form of additional compensation for at least two years when the new worksite exceeds five miles away — not limited to mileage reimbursement, nor continuing indefinitely. We also rejected the proposed "no interview" language as incompatible with the merit system. We agreed to remove "arbitrary and capricious" and resubmitted with language about the receiving campus and their efforts to hire.

Article 22

Grievance Procedure

AFT · July 30, 2026

We accepted only a typographical correction to this article; the rest stayed the same.

District · July 30, 2026

The District confirmed the article is unchanged apart from the grammatical correction and asked us to call it a Tentative Agreement (TA), stating that no counter will follow and the TA will be circulated for signatures.

✅ **Tentative Agreement reached July 30, 2026.** See the Tentative Agreements section below for the TA language.

Previous Dialogue Chart

For proposals and counters exchanged prior to July 30, 2026, members can review the previous dialogue chart below.

 [View Negotiation Dialogue Chart - July 2026](#)



Calendar of Meetings

Please review the upcoming dates and plan to participate. On days we are bargaining with the District, we encourage all members to wear **AFT 1521A or union gear** to show solidarity.

Negotiation Committee Prep Dates

Tuesday, September 22, 2026

Tuesday, September 29, 2026

Tuesday, October 20, 2026

Bargaining Dates

Thursday, September 24, 2026 Educational Services Center

Thursday, October 1, 2026 Educational Services Center

Thursday, October 8, 2026 AFT College Staff Guild

Tuesday, October 13, 2026 AFT College Staff Guild

Thursday, October 22, 2026 Educational Services Center

Thursday, October 29, 2026 AFT College Staff Guild



Tentative Agreements (TA)

We are pleased to report the following tentative agreements reached at recent bargaining sessions:

Bargaining timeline

-  06/11/2026 - Article 22 Management Initial Proposal
-  07/07/2026 - Article 22 AFT 1521A Counter 1
-  07/09/2026 - Article 22 Management Counter 1
-  07/23/2026 - Article 22 AFT 1521A Counter 2
-  07/23/2026 - Article 22 Management Counter 2
-  07/30/2026 - Article 22 AFT 1521A Counter 3
-  **Management TA, Verbal Agreement Reached July 30, 2026**

Article 22 - Grievance Procedure

Article 22(B)(1)

"Matters relating to the selection and/or hiring of employees except selection and/or hiring procedures." *(Grammatical correction)*

Members can also review the formal tentative agreement language documents below.

[View Article 9 TA Language](#)

[View Appendix A TA Language](#)

Note: All tentative agreements are subject to final ratification of the entire CBA by the Association membership and approval by the Board of Trustees.



Articles Opened This Cycle

This round of negotiations includes critical workplace issues that impact all of us: workload, equity, staffing, compensation, and the future of classified work.

 [Articles Opened This Cycle](#)



Negotiations Team

Chief Negotiator

President: Andrea Edwards

Co-Chief Negotiator

2nd Vice President: Sergio Becerra

College Representatives

Educational Services Center: Lara Meeks

East Los Angeles College: Chris Stychinsky

Los Angeles City College: Kelly Ryan-Rubio

Los Angeles Harbor College: Denise Faamasino

Los Angeles Mission College: Cesar Contreras

Los Angeles Pierce College: Melinda Ung

Los Angeles Southwest College: Ruben Villanueva

Los Angeles Trade-Technical College: William Madrigal

Los Angeles Valley College: Aleta Campbell

West Los Angeles College: Maritza Medina

Officers

1st Vice President: Jo-Ann Haywood

Treasurer: Jonathon Hooker

Recording Secretary: Kimberly Jovel

Grievance Secretary: Katreli Walker

Stay tuned! Future newsletters will include comprehensive negotiations updates and progress reports from your team.

Get Involved



Join Contract Action Team (CAT)

Negotiations are not just about who sits at the bargaining table, they are about building and demonstrating **member power**. If you're ready to be part of this negotiation cycle, we invite you to join our **CAT**.

United We Bargain. Divided We Beg.

CAT members help:

- Mobilize campuses
- Share accurate information
- Support actions
- Build visibility and solidarity

Contract Action Team (CAT) Interest Survey

Resources

[AFT 1521A Website](#)

[2023–2026 Collective Bargaining Agreement](#)



Questions? Please reach out to [Sergio Becerra](#)

AFT Staff Guild Local 1521A - A Union of Professionals