



Bargaining Fact Sheet – Safety

We Want Safe and Supportive Schools

As educators, we believe a safe and supportive learning environment is one of the cornerstones for creating great public schools.

We want PPS to be a place where students can make mistakes and be welcomed back into their classroom communities.

But we know that interventions are needed for this to work, and many students will require ongoing support. Indeed, the entire District needs reliable, consistent systems in place if we want to foster safer schools.

Serious Safety Concerns in PPS

Unfortunately, in many buildings these systems and supports are completely absent, and in recent years safety issues—including physical attacks on building staff—have increased exponentially.

As a result, more and more educators do not feel their schools are safe.

For example, 14 percent of licensed educators in PPS reported they did not feel their school environment was safe in 2014, according to the TELL survey. Two years later, that figure rose to 20 percent, and in PAT's own safety surveys the percentage is even higher.

We know a school that's unsafe for staff can't be safe for students.

Restoring Transparency for Referrals

We've had countless reports over the past several years of administrators systematically suppressing and under-reporting discipline problems, not filing

referrals, and changing them once they're in Synergy.

This is why one of our bargaining proposals is to ensure that educators can write referrals at any stage of the process, and can always find out how referrals they've written are handled.

We're hopeful that under the new leadership the District can correct its past practice of cooking the books, but it lingers on in some buildings.

This is no solution to discipline problems. And if we can't restore transparency to our referral process it will only deepen mistrust and undermine the District's credibility.

Developing Interventions

In the absence of a plan from the District, PAT has used our current negotiations—and our interim safety bargain two years ago—to push for specific solutions to the safety crisis in PPS.

When we were bargaining over safety issues two years ago, the District agreed to establish some basic system-wide expectations, such as:

- Collaboratively developing a school climate plan with building educators.
- Holding a professional development day focused on school climate issues at the beginning of the year.
- Developing and promoting a set of standard interventions available across PPS.
- Instituting a rapid response team to immediately address extreme safety concerns in PPS buildings.

Unfortunately, the District has failed to honor its agreement with PAT, and most of these basic steps have not happened.

Giving Students the Supports They Need

The recent move by Superintendent Guerrero and the School Board to close the middle and high school Pioneer programs also demonstrates how far PPS has to go before its leaders fully understand what it takes to support students in the least restrictive environment possible.

Whether it's the chronic shortage of para-educators or the absence of specialists like therapeutic intervention coaches, psychologists, and occupational therapists, these lack of supports mean that many students end up in more restrictive placements than would otherwise be possible.

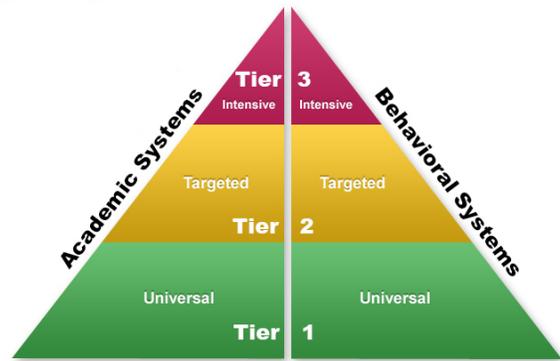
These, along with other factors, such as the lack of dedicated de-escalation spaces and an insufficient number of staff trained on nonviolent crisis intervention, are also contributing to the safety problems rippling across buildings.

PAT fully supports enhancing compensation and improving working conditions for para-educators and therapeutic intervention coaches so PPS can staff these necessary interventions.

PAT Contract Proposals Address Safety

Once again we're proposing contract language that will begin to address the serious safety issues in PPS:

- **Honor Past Agreements** – The first step to rebuilding trust is following through on the safety agreements we developed in collaboration with the



District over the 2015-16 school year and settling the safety grievances we've been forced to file.

- **Fully Fund Rapid Response Team**
One of the most concrete gains we made two years ago was the creation of the rapid response team. The District needs to fully fund this program, and it should be expanded.
- **Develop and Fund Interventions for Unsafe Behaviors** – State law requires an intervention prior to returning students to the classroom following an incident that causes harm, or was likely to do so. The District needs to develop and implement those interventions.
- **Restore the Full Continuum of Special Ed Services** – PAT supports expanded options such as learning centers and behavior classrooms, as well as ensuring that mainstreamed students have adequate supports.
- **Allow Educators to Write Referrals At Any Stage of Referral Process and Track the Results**
- **Develop Supports for Educators who have been Threatened or Injured at Work**
- **Guaranteed PD Day for School Climate Work at the Start of Year**