



December 2019

Are NUSD's class sizes higher or lower than its comparable districts?

- Unfortunately, the California Department of Education (CDE) does not seem to be tracking this information any longer. The most recent class size data available is from 2014/2015 and it shows NUSD's class sizes were, on average, 7% lower than our comparable districts.
- Based upon information from CDE's EdData website, NUSD's teacher to student ratio was 15% lower based upon 2017-2018 data, which is the most recent available.

What about student enrollment?

- The District receives enrollment projection data each year. This data projects declining enrollment moving forward. The largest factor is the significant drop in the birth rates for Marin County. For the past several years, the District had an average of 650 students enrolled in grade 12 and an average of 500 students enrolled in Kindergarten.

Is the total compensation (salary & benefits) for an NUSD teacher in-line with its comparable districts?

- As of the last agreement with NFT, the total compensation for an NUSD teacher was just over 100% of its comparable districts. This means that the total compensation package for an NUSD teacher is on par with our comparable districts.

What is the current cost of a 1% salary increase to NUSD?

- For NFT members, approximately \$415,000 a year.
- For all employees, approximately \$630,000 a year.

What salary increase do teachers get based upon advancement on the salary schedule?

- On average, most Novato Federation of Teachers (NFT) members receive a 1.5% salary increase each year for advancing a "step". This does not apply to teachers who have reached the last "step" on their salary schedule, Step 30.



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What have been the recent salary increases for teachers at NUSD?

- 2018: 2.06%
- 2017: 1.5% (\$1,100 per cell on the salary schedule)
- 2016: 5.0% (plus a one-time payment of \$1,500)
- 2015: 6.0% (plus a one-time payment of 2%)

What is the amount of cuts the District has made so far?

The District has cut [\\$4 million](#) from its budget over the past two (2) years to cover increased costs to the District, including for employee salary and benefits. Further cuts to programs and personnel are anticipated moving forward.

What is COLA?

- The [Cost of Living Adjustment](#) is a percent allocated by the State of California to local school districts to cover increased costs, year over year. This Cost of Living Adjustment is to address, or cover, state mandated increases to pension contributions, underfunded federally mandated programs, inflation, and increases to employee salaries.

Does NUSD receive more state funding due to the higher cost of living in Marin County?

- No. The COLA allocation formula is the same for all districts in California regardless of location. NUSD receives the same COLA as districts in counties with a lower cost of living.

What is the role of the Marin County Office of Education relative to the District's budget?

- The Marin County Office of Education has the statutory responsibility for approving the District's budget. They also provide feedback on our budget. In 2019/2020, the Marin County Office of Education approved the District's budget, but [cautioned](#) the District, and required a budget balancing plan be presented to them by the end of the calendar year to address the District's growing deficits.



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Do increases to pensions impact the District's ability to support programs and increase compensation?

- Yes. Mandatory District CalSTRS contribution rates (as prescribed by California law) have risen from 8.25% in 2013-2014 to 17.1% in 2019-2020. This impacts the District's ability to add or maintain programs and increase compensation.

What is the financial impact to NUSD of increasing pension contributions?

- The total impact of all pension increases (CalSTRS & CalPERS) to NUSD since 2013/2014 are \$4.5 million annually (the equivalent to 5% of the District's total budget).

What if the District and NFT cannot reach an agreement this year?

- Should both the District and NFT declare in writing to the Public Employment Relations Board (PERB) that negotiations are at an impasse, a mediator will be assigned to further negotiations. The mediator will then make a recommendation to the District and NFT. Should either party reject the mediator's recommendation, negotiations would then enter into fact-finding proceedings. The fact-finding panel will be charged with providing a fact-finding report and recommendations for settlement to the District and NFT.