



ATLANTA NEIGHBORHOOD
CHARTER SCHOOL

helping students learn to use their minds well

EMPLOYEE “QUALITY OF LIFE” - STRATEGIC INITIATIVE UPDATE
January 2018

Context

Faculty & Staff Development goal in strategic plan: *Be a school of choice for talented teachers and staff*

- Areas of focus for this initiative 2015-16:
 - Increase faculty/staff collaboration time - *revised elementary campus weekly schedule for Wednesday collaboration time starting in 2015*
 - Implement required TKES/LKES in as productive and least disruptive way as possible - *aligned TKES/LKES practices across campuses; advocated district and state for changes to TKES/LKES implementation*
 - Assess “quality of life” for teachers and staff - *established faculty/staff task force to assess teacher/staff satisfaction with working conditions, salary/benefits, overall employee engagement*

Context

Employee retention and engagement measures since 2014:

- Average % teacher/staff satisfied with ANCS (based on survey responses): 97%
- Average % teacher/staff “engaged” or “highly engaged” (based on questions from Gallup Survey of Employee Engagement): 93%
- Average annual teacher/staff retention rate: 94%

Quality of Life Task Force Recommendations

In 2016, the faculty/staff task force that assessed “quality of life” among ANCS teachers and staff confirmed high levels of satisfaction and engagement but recommended leadership team/board focus on following areas for potential improvement:

- ***Path for growth:*** Having a more clearly defined opportunities for professional growth for veteran ANCS teachers/staff
- ***Compensation:*** Absent following the APS salary schedule, establishing expectation about how compensation might grow during one’s time at ANCS

These areas have been our focus on this strategic initiative since 2016.

Actions Taken - Professional Growth

1. Articulated all current opportunities for professional growth and leadership available to ANCS teachers and staff
2. Developed **new teacher/staff “study grant” opportunity** beginning in 2017 to fund up to \$2,500 in extended professional learning experiences for teachers/staff who have worked at ANCS 5+ years

Actions Taken - Compensation

1. Ongoing annual **cost-of-living adjustment for all employees** - Overall 7-9% salary increase for all employees since 2014 (after no salary increases for 5 years due to local/state funding cuts)
2. Developed **guiding principles for compensation** reviewed by leadership team and quality of life task force
3. Leadership team and board used guiding principles and study of practices at other schools and nonprofits to **review and propose updates to ANCS compensation policy**
4. Proposed updates to compensation policy **presented to faculty/staff and board for feedback** in spring 2017
5. Key leadership team and board members **used feedback to make further revisions to compensation policy and reviewed updated draft with ANCS legal counsel**

Proposed Compensation Updates - Tenure Bonus Program

- ANCS currently employs 108 people with an average tenure at ANCS of 5.1 years
- Since 2014, 10 employees with at least 7 years experience at ANCS have left the school with growth opportunities and/or increased compensation frequently cited in exit interviews
- Proposed tenure bonus program: *In addition to any Board-approved cost-of-living adjustments...employees will also receive a lump sum bonus at certain points in their tenure at ANCS.... These tenure bonuses are awarded not only to acknowledge and reward an employee's longevity and sustained performance at ANCS, but also to encourage the employee to continue his or her employment with ANCS - see entire policy attached*
- Interval and size of bonus amounts determined based on practices from other industries

Proposed Compensation Updates - Tenure Bonus Program

- In alignment with current policy language, **propose adopting tenure bonus program effective with the 2017-18 school year** (first bonuses paid out by September 30, 2018): *maximum cost of bonuses in year one - \$83,500*
- For employees with 10+ years of tenure at ANCS but *not* at a tenure bonus interval in 2017-18 school year, **propose allotting additional one-time bonus based on most recent tenure bonus interval missed** (for example, an employee currently in 11th year at ANCS during 2017-18 school year would receive bonus amount for 10 years of service at ANCS): *projected cost - \$78,000*
- Average annual projected tenure bonus expenditure for 2019-2023 (based on current employees): *\$162,000*

Proposed Compensation Updates - Associate Teacher & Nutrition Staff Salary Scale

- The role of associate teacher has evolved significantly since school first opened
- Initially called “teacher’s assistant”, job responsibilities grew and salary scale adjusted accordingly in 2009
- Today, many associate teachers are certified teachers or working towards certification and hope to move into lead teacher position (53% of current ANCS lead teachers began as associate teachers) and the role is more involved and demanding than 10 years ago
- Though associate teachers have received same cost-of-living adjustments as all employees, starting salary level can put financial stress on associate teachers and salary scale no longer seems in alignment with the role
- Similar issues with salary scale for nutrition staff
- **Propose 10% across-the board increase to associate teacher & nutrition staff salary scale** starting in 2018-19 contract period - *impacts 14 associate teacher positions & 5 nutrition staff positions at projected cost of \$55,119*

Additional Actions Since January Board Meeting

- Proposed compensation updates presented by Matt, Kari, & Lia to teachers and staff at both campuses during faculty meetings in January
- Feedback survey distributed to all teachers and staff for 3 weeks in January/February
 - 84% of respondents “strongly agree” or “agree” that proposed updates are effective at meeting school’s guiding principles for compensation
 - Emphasis on desire to continue to consider annual cost-of-living increases in addition to tenure bonuses
- Finance/operations committee discussed policy updates at February meeting and recommends approval

Next Steps

- If proposed policy updates are approved, next steps:
 - *March:* Business office will work with each employee to verify current years of service to ANCS
 - *March-April:* Tenure bonus amount (projected impact: \$161,500 [includes \$78,000 in one-time bonuses for some 10+ year employees]) and associate teacher/nutrition staff salary increases (projected impact: \$55,119) will be factored into draft FY19 ANCS budget
 - *March-April:* Finance/operations committee will consider additional cost-of-living increases to propose in draft FY19 budget
 - *March:* Matt finalizing teacher/staff salary ranges to publish for new hires
 - *August-September:* Business office will notify all employees due to receive bonus and provide opportunity for employees to have bonus placed into 403(b) if preferred to being paid out to employee
 - *By September 30:* FY19 bonuses distributed