

# Faculty union approves salary agreement with Cal State

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Cal State faculty union members have approved [a deal](#) to boost salaries that was struck with management last month and averted a massive strike at the nation's largest public university system, officials said Tuesday.

Salaries will increase by 10.5% over three budget years, and, as part of the compromise, the union agreed to double the time it would take for a professor to be vested for retiree health benefits.

The faculty union conducted online voting for a week last month. Voter turnout was 63%, and 97% were in favor of the deal, according to the California Faculty Assn., which represents more than 26,000 professors, lecturers, librarians, counselors and coaches in the Cal State system.

"This agreement is an important step toward normalizing salaries for public state university faculty," said union President Jennifer Eagan, a professor of philosophy and public affairs and administration at Cal State East Bay.

The agreement needs final approval by the Cal State Board of Trustees, which is scheduled to meet May 24-25.

In a statement Tuesday, officials with the Cal State chancellor's office said the university was "pleased" with the union's vote to support the negotiated terms.

A tentative agreement was reached last month as faculty members were gearing up for an unprecedented five-day strike that would have disrupted operations across all 23 campuses. University officials and union leaders had been at odds for almost a year, and [pressure was high](#) over what appeared to be a stalemate.

The union had demanded a 5% pay raise, presenting data that showed faculty members were underpaid compared with peers at comparable institutions. Cal State Chancellor Timothy P. White countered with a 2% offer, arguing that any more would jeopardize other important priorities, such as increasing enrollment and supporting vital student programs.

Officials were able to reach a last-minute agreement that accommodated the union's demand for a 5% general raise on June 30. Then on July 1, a 2% raise will take effect, giving faculty essentially a 7% salary increase.

In July 2017, the remaining 3.5% increase will be added, and faculty who qualify for service credit will receive an additional 2.65% increase.

Because the salary increases will be paid out over time, White said, funding for Cal Stat's other priorities will not be cut.

All told, the 10.5% increase will cost the Cal State system about \$200 million.

Administrators have identified about \$68 million so far. Gov. Jerry Brown has set aside an additional \$125 million for Cal State in the 2016-17 budget, and lawmakers said they are working to increase funding in the coming months.