Salary/benefits up 5.9%.

Local teachers will soon see more money trickling into their paychecks.

Salary and benefit negotiations between the Gothenburg Education Association and District 20 school board members were nearing November when an agreement was finally signed on Oct. 28.

Pay for new teachers has reached the $30,000 level for the first time.

Superintendent Mike Teahon said new teachers will receive $30,075 in base pay—a 2.6% increase—compared to $29,300 for the 2008-09 school year.

For all certified teachers, both salary and benefits went up 5.9%.

Last year's increase was 5.7%.

Teachers employed for more than a year in the district will be compensated according to their position on the pay scale based on years in the district and education beyond a bachelor's degree.

Yearly contracts begin Sept. 1 but because the agreement was signed nearly two months later, Teahon said teachers will be paid the difference through a special payroll for September and October.

Teahon described the agreement as competitive in the array of schools to which salary and

benefits are compared, noting that the schools are similar in size and location.

Another change in the agreement deals with insurance.

A $350 deductible now in effect will change to $600 on Jan. 1, Teahon said.

GEA chief negotiator Mary Meisinger has said that 2009-10 negotiations have taken longer than any deliberations in which she's been involved.

Meisinger has served on GEA's negotiation team for the past 15 years and has taught in the district 21 years.

She and GEA president Maggie Tiller declined to comment on the agreement.

Administrators received a salary/benefit increase of 4.99% while non-certified staff got a 5.8% raise last August.

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