



## SUNSET RIDGE SCHOOL DISTRICT 29

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*Cultivating a learning community that engages the hearts and minds of students, one child at a time*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **SUNSET RIDGE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND SUNSET RIDGE EDUCATION ASSOCIATION APPROVE 5-YEAR COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT**

*Northfield, Illinois – August 29, 2014* -The District 29 Sunset Ridge Board of Education and the Sunset Ridge Education Association (SREA) are pleased to announce the approval of a five-year collective bargaining agreement, effective September 1, 2014 through August 31, 2019. The agreement ensures the District will continue its tradition of recruiting and retaining outstanding educators while adapting to the economic challenges facing public education.

The agreement includes a 4.5% market adjustment in the 2014-2015 school year. Salary increases in subsequent years of the agreement are tied to the property tax extension limitation law (“Tax Cap Consumer Price Index (CPI)”) and teacher performance. Teachers will have the opportunity to earn additional compensation above the Tax Cap CPI based upon their participation in professional development activities, attainment of District-wide goals, and their individual performance ratings. The contract includes one additional student attendance day, as well as repurposing of existing meeting time to increase opportunities for teacher collaboration. The contract also includes a collaborative mechanism to ensure benefit offerings are managed within tax cap CPI growth.

“The excellence of our District is directly tied to the excellence of our teachers. This agreement ensures we are able to recruit outstanding new faculty as we celebrate the retirement of a significant number of Sunset Ridge teachers over the next two years,” said Sean O’Grady, President, District 29 Board of Education. “It also ensures that we maintain our commitment to financial stewardship while appropriately rewarding teachers based upon their performance.”

“We are very pleased that the priorities of the SREA are successfully addressed in this contract. This agreement reflects the importance placed on teaching excellence and also addresses the District’s fiscal responsibilities,” said an SREA representative.

The parties used Interest Based Bargaining (IBB) in the collective bargaining process. “The IBB process was a significant change to previous negotiations at Sunset Ridge. IBB allowed the parties to better understand one another and reach an agreement that was beneficial to all-constituent groups. Not only did we solidify an agreement that is innovative and rewards excellence, but we

strengthened relationships in the process,” said Debbie Papas, Vice President, District 29 Board of Education.

“IBB allowed the parties to focus on common goals in a non-confrontational atmosphere. Our students are the true beneficiaries of a process which encourages frank and open discussion on topics of mutual concern and promotes respectful communication. The parties’ goals were successfully met through this unique process,” said an SREA representative.

### **About Sunset Ridge District 29**

Sunset Ridge School District 29, located in Northfield, Illinois serves approximately 500 students in two schools (Middlefork School: grades K-3 and Sunset Ridge School: grades 4-8). Deeply committed to its mission statement, “To cultivate a learning community that engages the hearts and minds of students, one child at a time,” the District has a long history of innovative and differentiated education, strong parental involvement, and high student achievement.

For additional information, please contact Dr. Ed Stange, Superintendent of Schools.

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