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Portage board settles contract

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The Portage County Board of Developmental Disabilities held a special meeting to approve a collective bargaining agreement the largest of its three union work units.

Members of the Portage County Educators Association for Mental Retardation, Unit A, voted to approved the new three-year pact.

The unit, which has about 100 members, covers Portage Industries and Happy Day staff.

Dr. Patrick Macke, superintendent of the DD board, said the agreement is retroactive to Sept. 1, 2009 and runs through Aug. 31, 2012.

The agreement calls for no increase in base salaries for the first two years and a \$500 increase in the base in the third year.

Also, after ratification, each member of the unit will get a \$1,000 lump sum payment.

"What we got was new salary schedules for every position within the unit," Macke said.

The new schedule compresses the number of pay steps "way, way down," he said.

"It address this question of long-term cost control. We end up with a two-tier salary schedule, with the new tier applying to new hires," Macke said.

The DD board has already approved a three-year pact with the 15-member Unit B which made up of service and support administrators.

Macke said that contract, which runs from Sept. 1,

2010 to Aug. 31, 2013, has no raises on the base salaries and no lump sum payment.

It still allows step increases in pay, he said.

Federal mediators were involved in negotiations for both contracts.

Negotiations with the third union, bus drivers represented by the Ohio Association of Public School Employees, are to start May 17, Macke said.