



## Division of Higher Education

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Johnny Key  
Secretary

Maria Markham, Ph.D.  
Director

July 6, 2022

The Honorable David Wallace, Chair  
The Honorable David Hillman, Chair  
Arkansas Legislative Council – Personnel Subcommittee  
State Capitol Building  
Little Rock, AR 72201

Dear Senator Wallace and Representative Hillman:

Pursuant to Arkansas Code Annotated 21-5-1409 (c) (1) (B), I am requesting your review of a salary adjustment of more than two percent (2%) provided for all classified employees at Southern Arkansas University (SAU) for Fiscal Year 2022-23 due to a request of a two and a half percent (2.5%) COLA for all classified, non-classified and faculty employees. A letter from SAU is attached to provide details and justification regarding this request.

Should you require additional information, please let me know and I will be happy to provide.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Maria Markham'.

Maria Markham, Ph. D.  
Director



## Southern Arkansas University

Office of the President

June 10, 2022

Dr. Maria Markham, Director  
Division of Higher Education  
Arkansas Department of Education  
423 Main Street, Suite 400  
Little Rock, AR 72201

Dr. Markham,

The Southern Arkansas University System Board of Trustees approved a FY2023 cost of living adjustment (COLA) of 2.5% for SAU employees during its regularly scheduled meeting June 9, 2022. An estimated cost for the COLA was included in the FY2023 budget presented to and approved by the Board during this meeting. The COLA will only be distributed to employees as an increase to base salaries provided that fall undergraduate enrollment meets budgeted projections.

The most recent COLA SAU employees received was 1.5%. This conservative approach was directly related to uncertainties surrounding the global pandemic. The 2.5% proposed COLA for FY2023 provides the 0.5% salary adjustment that was previously withheld. Due to current inflation and difficulty retaining employees in a competitive job market, the Board and SAU Administration believe a 2.5% COLA is paramount for institutional effectiveness.

I am asking for your approval of the 2.5% COLA for full-time SAU employees for FY2023 under the conditions mentioned above.

If I can be of any further assistance, please reach out.

All the best,

  
Trey Berry

**From:** [Shawana Reed](#)  
**To:** [Chandra Robinson \(ADHE\)](#)  
**Subject:** RE: SAU 2.5% COLA request for FY2023  
**Date:** Monday, June 20, 2022 3:15:31 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

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**Caution:** This is an external email and may contain a suspicious subject or content. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments. When in doubt, contact [DHE.Help.Desk](#).

Faculty	166,000
Non-Classified	174,000
Classified	37,000
Total	<b>377,000</b>

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

----- Original message -----

**From:** "Chandra Robinson (ADHE)"  
**Date:** 6/20/22 2:53 PM (GMT-06:00)  
**To:** Shawana Reed  
**Subject:** RE: SAU 2.5% COLA request for FY2023

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Shawana,

Thanks!

Also, please provide the cost for each category:

- Faculty
- Classified
- Non-Classified

*Chandra Robinson*

Program Coordinator  
Arkansas Department of Education  
Division of Higher Education