

Bargaining
2010-2011

Wednesday, October 13, 2010

The meeting began at 4:40 pm

Present were:

Jenni Gilray –BRHS

Jim Drake-SSC

Darcy Hopko- SSC

Kathy Redmond -Palma Sola

Pat Barber- MEA

Carol Bell- King

Joe Stokes – SSC

Kara Carney- Daughtrey

Bruce Proud- MEA

Hank Groton- Mediator

Alan Ramos-SEHS

Sharon Scarborough- Sugg

Chuck Fradley - Wakeland

Rachel Bailey - Oneco

Melanie Newhall- Orange Ridge

Nancy Goux- Blackburn

Helen King- Sea Breeze

Also present were Forrest Branscomb and Nancy Paradise.

The minutes of October 1, 2010 were reviewed. The following change was made: “HMO is the richest plan in terms of benefits offered, followed by ~~Choice~~ Options and then the ~~PPO~~ Choice plan.” No other changes to the minutes were made.

MEA presented proposals for teacher bargaining unit - new Article IV “Teacher Rights” section 1, section 2 and section 3.

Confirmation of tentative agreements.

Health insurance proposal is to increase overall premiums by 19% to be equally shared between the board & employees.

Salary proposal is 1% increase plus additional \$500 on the top step of each schedule.

Terminal pay – retain current language.

Paraprofessional bargaining unit proposals – new Article IV “Employee Rights” (same language as teacher contract except referring to employees).

Health insurance eligibility – all full time employees working 20 hours or greater shall be eligible to participate in the health insurance plan. Health insurance proposal the same for teachers as it is for paras.

Current grievance procedure contract language for paras refers to them as teachers. The intention is to clean up this language.

Article XVII – add the words “discipline and” to “dismissal during the school year.” Terminal pay – retain current language.

Salaries - 2% increase in pay for each classification.

Management asked if MEA wanted to keep the plans the way they currently are without addressing the value/cost of each.

MEA believes both parties need to mutually agree on what the value of each plan is.

BCBS did not provide the same analysis as did Mercer as to the value of each plan. Wakely and BCBS also gave recommendations to make the plans viable.

Mr. Ealy from Mercer said that he did not include cost to employee in his calculation.

Management asked if MEA had a proposal beyond this year or for a period of three years.

MEA responded that both parties have a lot of work to do.

Management stated that in the Blue Care HMO plan expenses exceeding premiums we're collecting for that plan. Management's proposal is not BCBS' or Wakely's. It is Mercer's. Management is in favor of getting both of their opinions about Mercer's plan. Wakely's project scope was larger than Mercer's. Wakely is the district's actuary. They certify the insurance fund. Each year they review the district's plan and have discussions. Being in deficit – no way to get certified. No need to spend money to get certified when there is a deficit. Allison gets info from BCBS & Walgreens to provide an independent audit. Management asked if MEA's proposal does anything to help with the deficit.

Wakely's recommendation was to add 19% additional money, and that's what MEA's proposal is.

Management indicated that there were several reports from the actuary. The goal would be to find out which reports say "19%." Ealy's proposal was 19%. No, board contribution was 15%. The superintendent wants to address claim liability. Important we understand what liability is and address it over the next 3 years.

Management is looking for joint proposal from health insurance committee to make a recommendation for next year.

MEA indicated that there needs to be differentiation among plans so employees have viable options.

Management responded by saying that the only option proposed was premium increase because it's too late to make plan changes because our plan year starts Jan. 1. The district has a funding issue. Plan design changes were tried. The most cost to plan comes from only 15% of people. They are responsible for 80% of cost.

Management asked if in HIC was money supposed to be put into fund?

MEA stated that there were references to infusions of money that needed to go into health plan in budget. This was discussed in previous negotiations. There is a pattern of at least 2 times in 2 separate years ~ \$1.2 to \$1.7 million going in to health plan.

Management indicated that those conversations may have happened in previous bargaining sessions. The board said it should be a loan. Management indicated that they have never been given the direction the board's going to put in x amount of dollars in addition to board's share of premium. Interfund loans provide money to areas where the district needs money. Management wants to see the 60-day that's required. When the district has to spend the money it can't be invested. It reduces the district's ability to earn interest. The proposal was to loan the health insurance fund \$2.5 million. A loan does not reduce the deficit because the loan has to be paid back. There is permanent debt on financial statements. The belief is that the initial discussion was a one-time infusion in addition to board's share.

MEA distributed backup information for salary schedules for each bargaining unit in addition to a summary data page.

Management asked the rationale for 2% increase in pay for paraprofessionals.

MEA's response was that it was meant to counteract increase in health insurance cost and to address board's concern for lowest paid employees. The hope is that it would be seen by paraprofessionals as more equitable.

Management asked if MEA has any more issues or if MEA reserves the right to bring more.

MEA requested changes and modifications to board policy (Acceptable use policy, disciplinary issues.) Also, there is the issue of Race to the Top. MEA has requested draft of application. The agreement is to pull out any issues related to bargaining. It's MEA's understanding that the application is already going to DOE before MEA has a chance to review application.

Management stated that it's not a submittal of application. The actual submission is not until Nov. 9th.

MEA stated that the agreement was that MEA would review before the district submitted the draft to DOE. This was a mutual agreement between MEA and the superintendent.

Management stated that Lynette Edwards invited MEA to participate on committees.

MEA has the right to bargain before Race to the Top is implemented.

Management distributed terminal benefits language effective for employees hired after April 1, 2011. No changes to current employees. It would be a future decrease of liability. It would not be something that could happen for a minimum of 6 years.

MEA asked how the liability would change 6, 10, 20 years from now.

Management indicated that it's impossible to give a guesstimate. Employees have to be eligible to reach a retirement benefit.

Management distributed proposed health insurance benefits language and explained the proposals. Part of the discussion was the issue with those who work .4 not being eligible for benefits. Those affected include some SLPs and those involved in job sharing. Management also discussed the concept of changing the makeup of HIC. The intent is to make it equal in terms of membership. 2 reps from each bargaining unit, 2 AFSCME, 2 from district. Management distributed language that advancement on salary schedule would be determined through negotiations. Management will have more proposals.

Future meeting date – Wednesday, October 20, 2010 at 4:30 p.m. in PSC 1075 & November 4, 2010 at 4:30 p.m. in PSC 1075.

Adjourned at 6:20 p.m.