

Contract Bargaining for the School Year 2011-2012

Wednesday, July 27, 2011

Meeting began at 3:35 PM

In attendance from Administration: Forrest Branscomb, Willie Clark, Chuck Fradley, Nancy Goux, James Horner, Scott Martin, Sharron Scarbrough, Joe Stokes and David Underhill.

In attendance from MEA: Pat Barber, Carol Bell, Kara Carney, Helen King, Maureen Marhold, Melanie Newhall, Bruce Proud, and Dawn Walker.

Scott began by indicating the issues management was taking off the table:

1. Paperwork Reduction
2. Teaching 6 of 7 at the high school level
3. Tobacco-free campus

What's left:

Salary

Health Insurance

Automatic step

Terminal pay

Transfer issue will be dealt with as an impact item of SB736.

Forrest will have information to share about life insurance.

Scott reiterated management's position on salary continues to be 2.75% decrease across the board. This can be shaped anyway we see it.

Forrest gave an update on the activities of the health insurance committee. Plan options were discussed. He stated that the committee prefers to keep the 3 plans we currently have. The committee believed that it would be beneficial to have consistency. The committee may look at premiums and benefit design changes within the 3 plans. The committee meets again on Tuesday, August 16, 2011. Committee members will receive information prior to the next meeting.

Scott asked if MEA is still looking at tabling salary until the health insurance committee makes its recommendation.

Bruce stated that MEA wanted to know if the district has carryover from this year to the next and what that is. In addition, MEA wants to see the district's annual financial report (AFR). MEA is looking for clarity on the financial condition of the district.

Scott stated that management can definitely bring that and that Jim Drake can come to bargaining. Aside from that Scott asked if MEA had any particular data request.

Bruce said, “no,” that MEA wants an explanation of the superintendent’s budget recommendation and the AFR.

Scott asked if there are any other issues to address since we met last time – other than automatic step and terminal pay.

Bruce said virtual school . . .

Forrest interjected that he was looking for language in the MEA contract regarding life insurance but couldn’t find it. MEA agreed to help him with that. Forrest said that the proposal was to move from the board paying 2x salary to 1x salary. Employees would have the ability to purchase 1 additional “step.” An open enrollment would be needed. The current rate is still in effect, and there will be no changes in rates. Forrest will get the rates and calculations to the board to estimate the savings. During open enrollment employees wouldn’t have the ability to exceed beyond the level they currently have (same policy as now).

Bruce distributed proposed language and went through each item regarding virtual education program teachers. Joe asked about the scheduling of inservice and record days. Bruce said that the intention was to have those days primarily to be the same as what’s on the adopted calendar. MEA doesn’t know who will be hired or when. That’s why MEA is bringing this forward.

Joe asked about a MOU.

Chuck asked about a job description.

Joe said the district expects to hire 8 full-time teachers. They hope to attract home school students and to meet state expectations of students taking on-line courses.

Forrest asked if these teachers would be on a school campus.

Joe said that they probably wouldn’t be.

Joe said that the potential for students is huge, especially considering the number of students needing credit recovery. There are 1100 home schooled students in the county.

Scott asked if any parameters have been put in place. He has concerns about the teacher-student ratio.

Scott asked about the concern of holidays and weekends.

Bruce stated that it’s hard to avoid communication with parents and students during those times once communication with them is established. The intention was to keep the language as minimal as possible as to what is known at this point.

Sick leave statement language

Bruce walked management through MEA's proposed language.

Joe asked for clarification of what the ledger of hours meant and when it would be reported.

(Joe departed.)

Paraprofessional language

Bruce walked management through MEA's proposed language. Scott asked if only those bargaining unit members identified would have a supervisor. Bruce was not sure if there were not other individuals out there with "supervisors" already (i.e. paras at MTI).

Bruce asked about furlough days for paras.

Scott said his understanding was what was reported in the superintendent's budget cut recommendation. He had not heard anything to the contrary. Bruce said that the superintendent's documents reflected a 1.08% reduction. However, 3 furlough days = ~1.5% This calculation is based on reducing the para calendar by 3 days out of the 195 or 196 day year. That equates to 1.53%.

A 25 minute caucus was called for management to consider MEA's proposals.

Resumed at 4:50 p.m.

Virtual Education Program Teachers

Scott said that there was a vacuum of knowledge about this topic. In general the proposal looks reasonable and consistent. He needs to consult with Verdya Bradley.

Sick Leave Statement Language

Scott said that again, this looks reasonable. He asked what kind of report MEA contemplated. Would on-line access suffice? He said that Joe said that everyone should have that. Bruce said that the statement doesn't need to be paper. Scott said that he would check with payroll regarding the feasibility. He doesn't anticipate a problem.

ESE Aides

Scott said that in general there is no problem incorporating the language we proposed. Supervisor – no issue. Scott asked how the current involuntary transfer process is inadequate. Bruce said that the issue is who the people are and where the assignment is.

Scott asked what Bruce meant by vacancy. Bruce said that it means there is a position open at the school. Scott will talk to Nancy Beal. Bruce said the language came from a conversation MEA had with Nancy Beal. David said the voluntary/involuntary process would apply to those individuals but at that

cost center. Bruce said that the intent is to allow the paraprofessional to stay at the worksite with the understanding that if they so chose it would be a different job classification. Scott said that he thinks one-on-one ESE aides have a particular skill set and the district would want to preserve them in that position.

Bruce stated that we would have to address aspects of teacher evaluation – highly-effective, effective and less than effective and their impacts on employees. IPAS' next meeting is August 3, 2011. We should have the ability to communicate about the teacher evaluation system at the same time as the report on health insurance.

Forrest restated the need to have an open enrollment for health insurance. He understands we need to let the process play out but things need to be coordinated before 8/16/11 for 1/1/12. Open enrollment is slated to be the last 2 weeks in September and the first 2 weeks in October.

Bruce said that ratification needs to occur.

Scott asked Forrest if the carriers knew changes were contingent on bargaining and that's a qualifying event. Forrest said "yes," and that the committee was just looking at total premium with the actuary. The discussion regarding the split has been deferred to bargaining.

Forrest said he would bring the life insurance information.

Scott said he would talk to Jim Drake, Verdya Bradley and Nancy Beal.

Future meetings:

Thursday, July 28, 2011 3:30 pm

Meeting adjourned at 5:10 pm