

## **PCTA/PCSB Bargaining Meeting**

Minutes

August 22, 2022

PCTA/PESPA Building

In Attendance: Paula Texel, Kevin Smith, David Richmond, Laurie Dart, Dena Collins, Paula Stephens, Ginger Brengle, Thomas Lee Bryant, Brian Bouton, Nancy Velardi, Lindsey Blankenbaker, Juliana Stolz

Bargaining adjourned at 4:38 pm

Lindsey opened discussion with announcing some members were unable to meet this evening. She confirmed the live streaming was now on and thanked the group for coming to the PCTA building.

Paula shared the last time our groups met was on August 11. On this date, the school district presented a proposal that was rejected by PCTA and we are looking forward to the counter offer today.

Lindsey shared since we last met 2 weeks ago, we had the opportunity to meet with the district team during the PESPA bargaining meeting- same sort of looking at the budget. Lindsey also had the opportunity to meet with Kevin Smith to look at the numbers, budget and closing of the year end books. This is a normal timeline to receive these numbers. She spoke to charts with the reserve- historical and how we line up with other districts. She learned about the family empowerment scholarship and how it has increased- doubled over the course of each year. This was part of the budget process beyond the control of the district. It was good a conversation to learn about the decisions that have been made.

Lindsey shared at the previous meeting it was frustrating from both sides. The meeting ended with PCTA leaving the table with frustration. Lindsey shared her group came back and discussed the proposal of an increase of 3.25% on average. Additional conversation of on going benefit the planning- 3- year benefit- increase in health insurance and the district absorbing the majority of the cost.

Lindsey wanted to take the time with the district group to explain why the 3.25% number was a shock- frustration to her members. Lindsey shared last year- long before she got here- there was this offer- there were other irons in the pot. We negotiated other things, there was the COVID Mou's. The union felt they hit a brick wall with the 3.25%. It came to light over the course of the year- 3.25 was part of a longer term-range plan. This was how it was presented. This allowed the salaries to stay steady. She shared the percentage amount did vary over the course of the 10 years. Lindsey continued to share, while planning is not a problem, if the plan is one sided, it is not reached in negotiations- this is not bargaining.

PCTA maintained the district did not move off the number- this is an issue. Lindsey speaks to using other funds- creative solutions- ESSER funds - and the district never moving off of the 3.25. Last year, it took to March 30 to ratify an agreement. The sore spot feeling was still there- not a true bargaining process. When PCTA received the counter- it hit in a way that any other amount would. The amount was symbolic- we hadn't moved past what got us stuck last year. It felt disrespectful to the bargaining unit. The only thing we could do was walk away from it. It was not about the calculation- it was about the memory PCTA had over the last 3 years. Lindsey continued with a conversation she had with the superintendent, Mr. Hendrick last week-it was respectful-however, we need to move forward with a willingness to be creative. Let's talk about ways realize - both sides committed to working together.

The way of work- the team doesn't want to go backwards. It wasn't fun, and it didn't show the respect educators deserve.

Lindsey shared further information from this past week's initiatives by the governor and her thoughts on those initiatives. Nancy shared she has no problem to make it easier for first responders- filling classrooms is a goal as long as they meet the educational requirements and also talked about programs we can offer for the support for the paras to be teacher. Paula shared the district is already in the process of working with our paras to teachers' programs.

Nancy shared her thoughts from over the last three years-it has been stated, pay and respect is paramount to the teachers. Our superintendent plans to put respect back into the classroom- let them do their thing- not guided by electronics and scripts. All of this was before the inflation- everything has moved up now- we can't pay the bills- feed the family. This is a well-loved profession but, if you can't feed your family or have a home, the respect is nice- but we need to keep our teachers in Pinellas. Allow them to be able to hold onto their homes- not worry about paying their bills. This why you see heartbreaking decisions- leave Pinellas- or go to other counties or states.

Lindsey shared that the last proposal was 11.3%. How we got there matches the rate of inflation that is specific to Pinellas. The district's counter proposal came in- there was a wide gap between them PTCA's first proposal would meet the consumer price index for the entire county. Took it further- because CPI is calculated year over year- 11.3% in July- how much it cost for basic needs year after year. PCTA went one step further- as a result of settling so late last year- seeing the 3.25% increase, they looked at other non-reoccurring elements. She stated, in the spirit of collaboration- we under a crisis- we have to come with something that is meaningful- we prepared a counter proposal. PCTA provides a counter proposal to all bargaining team members:

*"The parties enter an agreement to increase each annual instructional unit salary by 8.05%. They further agree to continue negotiation of the allocation of said increase, as well as any other compensation and contractual items mutually agreed."*

Counter is increase by 8.05% - according to PCTA data is behind the decision. It is the original proposal of 11.3% minus the 3.25% increase that they saw in March. PCTA believes this is obtainable- this is based on what are employees struggling with- this will keep employees in classrooms.

Kevin Smith asked a clarifying question – Does each individual receive an 8.05% based on annual instructional unit?

Lindsey recognizes there are legal restraints- over the course of last 10 years- 20. There are new constraints with higher percentages of salary given to HE, E Those on the grandfather schedule must be lesser percentage than the performance schedule. This proposal is to increase all annual salaries by 8.05%.

Paula requested time for the group to discuss. Bargaining paused at 5:09 pm for discussion. District members leave the room.

District members return- 5:23 pm

Paula thanked the group for the time- Mr. Smith will speak to the financials.

Kevin shared that 8.05% will be approximately 33 million dollars, without looking at performance- we have a total of \$18.4 million for all groups. Currently speaking, we are at a \$7-10 million in deficit in closing of the books. This amount is higher than we can meet you.

Paula will bring back a counter, we will go back to look at other options- what else we can put together for our next counter.

Lindsey shared - one of things we looked at when being presented \$18.4 million- looking at attrition, the surplus, veteran teachers leaving- we talked about the referendum. Currently salaries are calculated inclusive of the referendum- this is a challenge as it's about \$40 million a year- that is recurring versus non- this could not stop. The union mans the referendum- our public could look different at this. We are looking at what it could take- looking at different numbers- we took the lead from the presentation . Look at the way the referendum has changed each year.

Thomas Bryant shared information from a salary schedule, comparing years of service 10 years ago to those now. Kevin Smith responded with an explanation of the flattening of the salary schedule over time, as a result of new salary legislation- we had to flatten the schedule. Dave Richmond also confirms, in these specific years- we had to flatten the schedule. Thomas asked, if you are a year 25-26 year teacher, how do you feel respected? Dave Richmond shared this was negotiated- a while ago- because of the grandfathered schedule- this is why you see the discrepancies. There were bigger increases in years early. If you pull the old salary schedule you would see bigger increase in those years.

Kevin Smith requested to see the analysis of the salary schedule that Thomas speaks to.

Lindsey shared there could be a legal impact if the referendum goes away. We are open to discuss how looking at the referendum in a different way. When we see a historic allocation to the reserves- when we look at the reserve being doubled what the board policy plus the savings at the end year that goes in to the unassigned. How much of these funds should be accessed? How much of the ESSER funds have been left at the end of the year- a special reserve to dismount once the funds have sunset. Kevin shared the reserves from ESSER funds allows us to absorb when we don't have funds.

Lindsey then shared a video interview with the secretary of education - from a news broadcast to show the district how we can use the ESSER dollars. Lindsey shared this video was reflective of the conversation that she had with the superintendent.

Laurie Dart stated that 8.05% on average - is approximately \$33 million. We have not not quantified for each individual employee but, it will be significantly higher – and asked what is meant in the proposal- by any additional compensation. We are trying to get some parameters on this proposal.

Lindsey has other ideas about compensation- increasing the advanced degree supplements.

Laurie asked again for the total amount requested. There is a total amount available - based on what is available- where we can close the gap. We need a full number.

Lindsey replied this is something we have worked on last year- increased about in other supplements- differences on what these meant. When we say 8.05%- it's on salary.

Laurie asked again for the total dollar amount requested and that we understand PCTA is looking at using ARP reserve.

Nancy said when we agreed on the arts, athletics supplements- we would go back and forth- each year.

Laurie- asked again, how much?

Lindsey stated - 3.25 % on advanced degree supplements.

Laurie shared previous proposal had a proposed increase to the other supplements.

Lindsey- we had said with ongoing discussions- stance so far- find way to absorb the insurance increase- we stated that when we spoke last.

Laurie responds, \$33 million in salary, \$1.5 million all of the health care and the 3.25% on the advanced supplements.

Lindsey states, it all comes from one pot- we believe there are other ways of funding. \$1.5 for health care is all 3 bargaining groups.

Kevin asks what do you think the total is?

Nancy would love to have it priced out- Nancy communicated with April- the amount if you don't participate in the district health insurance- 1500 back to the employee for the year.

Kevin- we are currently are highest amount provided to employees across districts.

Paula shared what other districts pay for non-insurance holders.

Nancy wants to mention- you asked about lobbying for the Family Empowerment scholarship- we have been lobbying for the least 20 years for better funding. FEA had a whole campaign. We should be lobbying for our schools- proper funding. It is very non-transparent for the public- it is not the case and public is misinformed. I think we should be asking for better funding all the way around.

Lindsey shared there has a couple of outstanding issues- functions of the contract need to get together. Paula will get the dates to them.

Tomorrow is election day- go vote.

September 6 confirmed next date for bargaining.

Meeting concludes: 5:55 pm