

PCTA: Bargaining Minutes

5/21/24

Admin Building

Present: Lee Bryant, Janet Cunningham, Dan Perazzo, Tracey McConnell, Paula Texel, Gary Jeppeson, Dave Richmond, Dena Collins

Meeting began at 4:00 pm

Introductions and welcome made by Paula Texel, Chief Human Resources. Welcome and introduction from Gary Jeppeson, newly appointed Chief Financial Officer.

Ms. Texel provides the bargaining team with agenda of our first meeting. The district will provide the union information on the current finances. The finance books do not close until June 30, health care is being reviewed and the district is continuing to review unit allocations. These unknowns will continue to impact the total budget available to provide employee increases. Handouts have been provided: 3 documents (24/25 Available Funding Comparative, Student Comparative, CPI index).

Mr. Jeppeson walks the team through the first document, current available funding comparatives. State is providing additional increase in dollars, however, the family empowerment scholarship is taking much of the allocation. The school district is a flow through for these dollars that are provided to private and charter school students. For the 24/25 school year there has been an increase of \$36,152,447 from the previous school year for the Florida Empowerment allocation. The document also provides information on categorical funding. Pinellas County has received a decrease in categorical dollars for the 24/25 school year. Overall, \$11,998,153 is available in new state funding to be utilized for salary and health care increases. The second handout provides information on the change in student enrollment over the last 5 years. It also points out the increase in the Family Empowerment Scholarship dollars as the state has increased the students eligible to participate. We are now seeing the impact of students that have never enrolled in a public school and the impact it is having on district funding. The final handout is a graph of the consumer price index as compared to increases over time for Pinellas County employees.

Ms. Texel provided additional information from the handouts. Approximately \$6.8 million is needed for a 1% increase in pay for all employees. This amount does not include referendum dollars. This year, we have looked at district cuts (unit reductions), from all sites, not just schools. We are expecting additional information on cost savings with the district cuts in the new few weeks. Our required fund balance, per board policy, is 5%. We are at approximately 5.1%. Referendum allocations, including any increase, are received in June. The district is predicting a \$540 increase to the current allocation utilized in teacher salary. The referendum is tied to property value, and we have seen an increase in property values. The other unknown in budget available for salary increases is the total amount of increase in health care. Our EWBS committee has met, our actuaries along with our Gallagher team and the district are working together to look at possible plan changes, closing out billing and other areas to decrease the total increase to the district impacting employees. The Supplement committee has met and is making a recommendation to increase supplements by approximately \$150,000. The district also needs to pay charter schools \$13 million from past referendum allocations, but not required to pay the full amount in one year.

Ms. Texel and Mr. Jepperson completed their opening presentation and asked the union for their proposal.

The union did not bring a proposal for wages, benefits, or language to the first meeting. Lee Bryant, President of PCTA, presented an overview of what the union seeks to accomplish at bargaining this year. He shared with the team that he was only bringing wages and benefits this year as the following year is an open book. The union requested to set up 2 meetings, possibly all day, during pre-school. The desire of the union is to settle prior to the students returning. Therefore, no proposal was brought to today's meeting and the team will not need to meet until the district closes the financial books.

Ms. Texel responded to the request of the union to resume bargaining in early August after the finances have been closed out and any additional changes in health care have been made. Ms. Texel pointed out finalized teacher evaluation scores will need to be determined for our annual contract teachers per statute. She shared, after speaking with district assessment team, state board doesn't meet until late July therefore teacher growth scores/final evaluation ratings will not be available until after the start of the school year. We will work as district to have these available as soon as possible.

The union and the district will come back in July to finalize the dates to continue bargaining.

Session ends at 4:41 pm