

PESPA/Pinellas County Schools

Minutes

September 28, 2023

Admin Building

Present: Paula Texel, Kevin Smith, Dena Collins, Laurie Dart, Nelly Henjes, Lindsey Blankenbaker, Bryan Boughton, Toni Boston

Meeting started at 4:08 pm

The district begins with a welcome to the bargaining team. The district is prepared today with a counter proposal to share with the union. A packet has been provided to the team. The district has a salary grid to provide to the union. The proposal indicates those who are at the \$15.00 on the salary grid will receive an increase between 2.75% to 4.0%. For all others in the bargaining unit receive a 4.25% pay increase on a new salary schedule. Many employees received up to a 29% increase when the \$15.00 minimum occurred. The district has also proposed to reclassify the CDA's from D08 to a D09 which equates to an approximate 10% increase. The district agrees to pay for the following certification renewal: Certified Occupational Therapist Assistant License to the Dept. of Health- \$60 every two years; Registered Physical Therapist Assistant license to the Department of Health \$135 every two years; Certified Nursing Assistant \$55 every two years and the Licensed Practical Nurse License to the Board of Nursing \$75 every two years. The district will pay 80% of the increase to the health care premiums for all support employees covered by the bargaining unit. To clarify from the district, the F level on the D salary schedule to be added to keep separation with the new hires and allow some of the compression to be worked to assist employees.

The union agrees with the district with looking at the compression. The concern from the union is to make sure the employees are at a living wage and providing retention. The union clarifies that those in D05 G would be 2.75%. Those that are new to the district after ratification would not receive an increase and would start at the Level F. The Union is asking for the district to review support absences and compensation for coverage by another ESP's similar to teacher language.

Mr. Smith clarifies our compliance of class size amendment has nothing to do with financial penalty. The district continues to comply because it is the law. The district will quantify the request from the union.

The union's counter proposal was the no fee participation for wrap around services and pre-k. The district does provide the VPK program for 3 and 4- year old's for the extended day. This is not the wrap around services but the continued school day. The cost from the district \$65 per week for the 4- year old's and the 3-year old's is \$95.

The district responds with the information about the request for wrap around services provided for before and after school care. The employees receive approximately 25% discount or a sliding scale based on family size and income level. Middle Schools are provided free before and after school care except one school. There are many different programs that work toward providing and assisting families with care. The ask to quantify a free program not just for children of our employees, but grandchildren, dependents and wards of the state. The district replied that the ask could be up to \$7 million or more if only each employee had just one child in the elementary program for this group. The union asked if the district was going to add the coverage of fees for employees in the VPK program. The district responded they have no intention of not paying for the extended portion of the school day for the VPK program for employees.

Caucus 4:50 pm.

Return from Caucus at 5:22 pm

The Union thanks the district for the structure of the proposal. They add it goes along way with addressing compression. The union is asking for the exhibit A in spreadsheet form and asking for the total value. The CDA's are listed as a D08 to a D09 and not listed under 4. The ask for any of the professionals in the group that had licensures. The union is asking for the district to review the job descriptions and review those that need to maintain certifications.

Laurie Dart speaks to the press release that the union put out to the community. The union shared in the press release the average hourly rate for PESPA is \$15 an hour. This is mathematically impossible as there are over 2000 PESPA employees and a range of hourly rates. The district responded that the average salary for the PESPA group is \$17.15. We are trying to increase the salary for all employees. We are also working with the CDA's and this supports the district's strategic plan with the goals tied to early literacy. The cost to move the CDA's one pay grade is over \$300,000. The district feels this a very good offer and values our CDA's.

Meeting ends at 5:34 pm