

South Butler County School District

Negotiations Update

September 27, 2017

To provide the public with accurate information regarding the status and progress of the negotiations with the South Butler County Education Association (PSEA/NEA), the Board is posting this Negotiations Update, which summarizes the Board's efforts to reach a new Collective Bargaining Agreement ("CBA" or "Agreement") with the District's teachers.

- The parties held a bargaining session on Tuesday, September 26, 2017.
- The bargaining session began with the teachers requesting a sidebar discussion. A sidebar discussion usually involves a smaller number of people from each side and off-the-record confidential discussions intended to help the parties find common ground outside of the formal larger group bargaining process. Unfortunately, sidebar discussions can also simply be used as a tool that allows the union to continue to make unreasonable proposals about which they do not want the public to know. If both parties negotiate formally at the bargaining table and not in sidebar discussions, all members of both negotiating teams are present and involved, and information can be shared with the public.
- Despite these concerns about the process of sidebar discussions, board members agreed to meet in sidebar to hear the union's positions on the issues since the teachers voted two weeks ago against the state mediator's recommendations in Fact Finding. Two board members and two teachers met with the state-appointed mediator for approximately 30 minutes. The board members listened to the teachers and there was a brief discussion. Afterwards, the representatives returned to their respective groups to relay the information exchanged during sidebar discussions. At that time, the board members felt that the sidebar discussions were not productive and respectfully asked the teachers to come to the bargaining table. The teachers did not indicate a willing to return to the bargaining table so the board members provided the teachers with a written Proposal through the mediator. A copy of the Board's proposal is attached to this Negotiations Update.
- The teachers chose not to respond to the Board's Proposal so the bargaining session ended at approximately 9:30 p.m.
- The teachers' union is seeking:

- A seven (7) year contract with wages increases fully retroactive back to July 1, 2014.
 - Wage increases that exceed 2.5% in 2014-2015; 3.75% in 2015-2016; 3.85% in 2016-2017; 4.0% in 2017-2018; 4.0% in 2018-2019; 3.9% in 2019-2020; and, 3.85% in 2020-2021. Full payment for all wage increases back to July 1, 2014.
 - Guaranteed post-employment health and dental benefits for eight (8) year of husband and wife coverage, or twelve (12) years of individual coverage.
 - No changes to the current health care plan through June 30, 2018. The current health care plan has been in place since July 1, 2010. Elimination of the current monthly premiums of \$40/month for individual and \$50/month for family health care which have not increased since July 1, 2013. Elimination of all co-pays. HSA accounts that will allow employees to use district funding first for health care expenses before employees incur any out of pocket expenses for their health care (up to \$650 for individual and \$1300 for family coverage).
 - Continued restrictions on the district's administrative ability to schedule the 7 hours and 30 minute work day for instructional time
 - Continued tuition reimbursement at the current levels.
 - Continued refusal to attend all open houses
- Solicitor Breth indicated, "Board members continue to be disappointed with the union's entitlement mentality and demonstrated lack of concern or respect for the financial burdens placed upon the residents of the school district. The teachers are not willing to come to the bargaining table and compromise and work to reach a labor agreement so that the district can move forward and focus on education. They are solely focused on attacking the character and reputation of existing board members to get teacher spouses elected to the school board in November. That's not good faith bargaining."
 - The next bargaining session is scheduled for Monday, October 2, 2017 at 6:00 p.m.