

GEORGE-LITTLE ROCK COMMUNITY SCHOOL  
BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES

The George-Little Rock Board of Education committee representatives and George-Little Rock Education Association (GLREA) representatives met for initial proposals on Wednesday, February 23, 2022 in the superintendent office in the GLR administration building in George. Superintendent Tom Luxford opened the meeting at 5:30 pm by thanking the association representatives for attending. Those in attendance were Superintendent Tom Luxford, Board Members Austin Lloyd and Andrea Johnson, Board Secretary/School Business Official Cathy Bonestroo, and GLREA representatives Nyla Hellinga and Valecia West.

Nyla Hellinga presented the initial proposal from the teacher's association welcoming the opportunity to collaborate for the well-being of teachers and ultimately our students. She presented when we all work together positive outcomes are the result. All stakeholders agree to hiring and retaining qualified staff. Key points shared are staff working more hours than ever before with shortages of substitute teachers, still trying to recover learning loss, teachers changing instruction approach which increases planning and instruction with many teachers leaving the profession due to burnout, stress, and low pay. She also noted we already have difficult positions to fill with a competitive job market. Early retirement package was not offered in part due to a teacher shortage. Retain qualified teachers and not be revolving door needs to be the focus as students bear the brunt of staff shortages. Inflation was also noted as a concerning trend. February and March 5.7% inflation with next couple months projected over 7%. Last year total package increase of 1.84% with others over 3% last year. Education association acknowledges enrollment concerns noting an increase in students but also an increase in open enrolled out students. General fund spending and fund balance recommends 5-15% of unspent balance ratio and fund balance ratio 43.9% recommended not to exceed 20% with over 2 million in the fund balance. GLR base wages are comparable but mid-tier and veteran level employees are behind.

GLREA initial proposal was focused on hiring and retaining teachers with the proposal of retaining all current contract language in a 3-year agreement with salaries opening every year and offering a \$1400 retention bonus for all teachers pro-rated based on FTE.

Lloyd recognized and expressed appreciation to the representatives stating we share the same goals and want to continue to have good people at GLR and retain amicable nature of negotiations. Retaining teachers is a need as have seen too many go. He also recognized that we must remain viable for years to come. Lloyd shared the mid-tier to veteran staff concern and expressed desire regarding how the TSS money is separated and not most beneficial to getting new staff as many others split it evenly versus by salaries.

Superintendent Luxford presented the initial proposal from the district. Initial proposal presented was to offer \$1000 increase from 2021-2022 salaries pro-rated based on FTE noting last year higher increase than years before. Initial proposal significantly more than past settlements with minor changes to the contract for clarification and a 2 year master contract. Minor contract changes included changing serious family illness to an overnight hospitalization requirement same as classified staff language. Contract will continue contract days at 190 for 1 FTE and continue the additional professional development day paid extra at per diem rate.

After separate discussions, the GLREA agreed to a 2-year contract, and contract language change and proposed a counter offer of \$1250 increase. Hellinga recognized the work of the school board members. Lloyd expressed appreciation for the work they do as representatives for the staff.

Discussions were held with a tentative agreement reached on increasing the teacher salaries for 2022-2023 a flat rate of \$1150 over the 2021-2022 individual teacher contract salary for 1.0 FTE with it prorated based on FTE level, have a 2-year master contract agreement until the end date of June 30, 2024 with salaries open annually and with the language changed as presented. GLREA representatives will present the tentative agreement during their ratification meetings and get back to the district before Friday, March 4, 2022.

The meeting closed at 6:57 pm.