

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 Thursday, February 29, 2024 in the community room in the GLR central office building in George. Those in attendance were Board members Austin Lloyd and Andrew Sprock, Superintendent Tom Luxford, School Business Official Cathy Bonestroo, GLREA representatives Nyla Hellinga, Valecia West, Kim Dykstra, and Ben McCray. Mr. Luxford thanked everyone for taking the time to meet.

Hellinga presented the GLREA initial proposal recognizing the proposal is from the association but representing all staff from meetings, emails and conversations held including with teachers who are not part of the union. It was recognized that we are all working towards the same goal of hiring and retaining skilled teachers. GLREA proposal was for a 6% increase on teacher salaries requesting that a flat rate does not fairly compensate a veteran teacher, a non-salaried benefit award of changing the 3rd personal day to not taking a sub deduction for the day and paying out the first 3 personal days instead of the current 2 for unused personal days. Paying out the retired teachers for their unused sick leave was also requested to be reinstated at \$15/day. A 5-year contract with salaries reopening each year was also proposed to assist with helping the bargaining unit with the recertification elections.

Lloyd thanked the association for meeting and all the work they do. After a brief break, Lloyd presented the initial proposal from the district. Enrollment and the high costs of open enrollment for the district and the net new money and decreasing enrollment projections were shared. Focus and time has been committed by the district on developing teachers for life-long learning. PLC time and the high absence rate was noted as a concern with the contract language not followed for no leave on PLC days and coming off the comprehensive list but now on a targeted state list. Culture and negativity in the district and the need to work together to improve the work environment and the impact it also plays on retaining teachers was shared including the role modeling for mentorships. Competitive salary to recruit teachers perspective was shared and the hindrance as to how TSS money is split at GLR as mentioned in past discussions. In being fully transparent, the plan is to change from percentage of salaries to a flat rate splitting out TSS evenly by FTE for all eligible staff in the district with a plan to transfer balances from flex funding to longer term teachers to avoid a decrease in TSS salaries.

Lloyd shared the district is in agreement for the 3 days instead of 2 for personal leave non-sub deductions with days 4 and 5 sub deductions and paying out for the first 3 personal days not used at the sub rate adding any time off over the 5 personal days will be both a contract and TSS reduction. District is also ok with the sick leave payout at \$15/sick day for retirees' sick day balances and in agreement with a 5-year agreement. The SSA rate is not yet passed, so the district is using an estimated 2.5% SSA for negotiations. The district's initial proposal was a \$500 flat rate increase on the 23-24 salaries pro-rated based on FTE and a base salary increase of \$250 per base pay level. Splitting the TSS evenly allows a greater increase for newer staff for competitiveness and providing a phase in adjustment for those who would have seen a TSS decrease plus an additional TSS contribution through flex funding resulting in increases ranging from 3%-7.44% for master contract staff.

Discussions were held about the possible minimum teacher salary legislative potential impact and the ability to come to a tentative agreement with the next negotiations meeting date set for March 13.