

WNEA/WSD Bargaining Update April 2, 2009

The teacher team and the district team met April 2 from 8:00 am to 11:00 am at the district office.

WNEA team members present were Julia Luetkenhaus (chair), Scott Kiehl (WNEA president) Jennifer Berendzen (Holt), Marcia Petrus(Holt), Lynne Miller (Peine Ridge Elementary) and Steve Geiger (MNEA Uniserv Director).

District team members present were Susan Hladky (Human Resources), Kari Monsees (CFO), Susan Gauzy (Curriculum), Laura Smith (Heritage Intermediate), Ben Hebisen (Holt) and Phil Ragusky (Frontier Middle).

Tentative Agreements

A tentative agreement was reached on transfer policy. Teachers who have a letter of request or interest on file with human resources will be considered for transfer if a position becomes open after June 15. The district had proposed a June 15 deadline, after which no internal transfers would have been allowed.

A tentative agreement was reached on the WNEA proposal on plan time. Proposed language will encourage a 48 hour notice for teachers who must attend a meeting during plan time. In addition, teachers who lose more than one plan time per week, except for emergency or crisis situations, will be compensated for that time.

Continuing Discussion

The WNEA proposal on communications formalizes a monthly meeting between the WNEA head building rep(s) and the principal to discuss building issues and concerns. There is a consensus on this issue and correct language placement in the agreement will be determined at the next meeting.

The WNEA proposal to begin the pay schedule on August 25 beginning with the 2010 – 2011 school year will be taken by the district team to the board of education for further discussion.

The WNEA proposal on the secondary schedule will be discussed further by the district team. The district team agrees in principle that ongoing analysis is necessary but is hesitant to commit to a written agreement. The WNEA team wants to formalize the committee to provide a framework for moving forward on improving the secondary schedules.

Unresolved Issues

Binding Agreement

The district returned to the table with a counterproposal on the master contract. It again included just association recognition, payroll deductions, salary schedule, benefits, extra duty pay, and terms of agreement. The district's terms of agreement gave the board of education sole authority to approve an agreement or alter any agreements during the length of the contract.

The WNEA believes that both the teachers and the board of education have the right to ratify, or not, a negotiated agreement. The right to reopen negotiations on agreements should also be the right of either party.

The WNEA will bring a counterproposal to the next meeting.

WNEA President Release Time

The WNEA proposal for a ½ time release for the WNEA president has been flatly rejected by the district team. In spite of the fact that the local members have made a commitment with their dues dollars, and NEA and MNEA have given approval to grant funding, the district will not discuss the issue.

The WNEA team is disturbed by the lack of trust shown the association by the district on both this and the proposal on a binding agreement. Agreements on both issues would go a long way towards facilitating collaboration and problem solving where it is needed between the district and its teachers. The WNEA team will continue to work on bringing these issues back to the table.

The next bargaining meeting between the WNEA and the district is scheduled for Monday, April 20 at 11:00 am. This will follow the board of education meeting on April 16 when a new board will be sworn in.

If you have any questions, contact any member of your WNEA team.