



## DPS/DEA Teacher Negotiations Meeting #3

### Minutes

Wednesday, April 28, 2021; 5:30 p.m.

Professional Learning Lab

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#### **Negotiators Present:**

**Representing School Board** – Moderator Steve Brannan, School Board Vice President Kim Schwartz, and School Board Member Michelle Orton.

**Representing Dickinson Education Association (DEA):** Dickinson Middle School Mathematics Instructor Diana Stroud, Berg Elementary Grade Five Instructor Karl Leggate, and Dickinson High School Mathematics Instructor Jay Schobinger.

**Others Present** – Kalindi Brandvik, Kayla Kilwein, Susan Pankowski, Donna Abrahamson, Toni Frank, Leslie Wilkie, Amy Wyant, Maggie Lehman, CaraLee Heiser, Nichole Tooz, Amy Sherer, Scott Schmidt, Leah Campbell, Fern Pokorny, Brenda Loney, Naomi Thorson, Sara Berglund, Kelly Smith, Jill Nelson-Wetzstein, Kathryn Mavity, Kim Stockert, Lyle Smith, Dakota Hayes, JoAnn Coates, Dave Michaelson, Assistant Superintendent Keith Harris, DEA President Shawna Knipp, Superintendent Shon Hocker, Business Manager Stephanie Hunter, Human Resources Manager Meghan Ziegs, Community Relations Coordinator Sarah Trustem, and Twila Petersen.

**Call to Order** – The meeting was called to order by Chair Steve Brannan at 5:30 p.m.

**Additions or Deletions to the Agenda** – There were no additions or deletions to the agenda.

**Review and Approval of April 19, 2021, Teacher Negotiations Meeting Minutes** – Draft copies of the minutes from the April 19, 2021, Teacher Negotiations Meeting had been emailed to the team before the meeting and were available at the meeting. Mrs. Schwartz moved to approve the April 19, 2021, meeting minutes as presented. Mr. Leggate seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken on the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

#### **Discuss Topics for Negotiations**

**Graduate Hours/Horizontal Movement** – Mr. Schobinger explained the DEA would like to request the language revert to the previous (2017-2019) contract. The DEA felt it would be an issue every year that the teachers are not negotiating since the District is required to issue contracts by May 1. DEA representatives distributed copies of page 6 of the 2017-2019 Professional Negotiated Agreement. The specific language for Graduate Hours and Horizontal Movement is as follows:

##### **B. Graduate Hours**

1. Full credit for graduate/undergraduate hours earned for initial placement and/or of advancement on the salary schedule must be in:
  - a. An accredited graduate program in which the major and/or minor (supporting area) is in the teacher's current teaching assignment.
  - b. Additional graduate hours earned in the major and/or minor (support area) field in the teacher's current assignment.
  - c. Additional graduate hours earned in educational areas related to the teacher's current teaching assignment.
2. Application for Additional Credit-Application must be made to obtain approval for credit. The following procedure shall be followed to gain approval:
  - a. Make application to building principal ~~by April 1. In special circumstances, the application may include anticipated courses not yet identified.~~
  - b. The principal submits application to the superintendent or designee for approval or disapproval ~~by April 10.~~
  - c. The teacher will be notified ~~by April 20~~ of the action taken. The teacher may request a review of the decision with the superintendent.

3. Teachers will receive fifty percent (50%) credit for graduate hours earned in educational areas unrelated to the teacher's present or prior work assignment.
4. When full credit is not granted, the administration will substantiate the decision in writing to the teacher involved.

C. Horizontal Movement

1. The Application for Additional Credit must be completed to receive credit for graduate course work which will be used for horizontal movement. A teacher may move horizontally as many lanes as credits dictate. All credits should be approved prior to enrollment in the course. Failure to do so may result in the course not receiving full credit.
2. ~~If an employee intends to request a horizontal move for the upcoming school year, the employee's notification of intention must be received by the Human Resources office by April 30.~~ All transcripts or verification of successful course work completion must be submitted to the CAO by the last Friday in August ~~if they are to be used for any salary schedule movement. Unless good cause is shown,~~ Transcripts received after this date, or courses which have not received approval for credit by application, will be credited to the following contract year subject to approval and verification.

It was satisfactory with the administration to revert the language to the 2017-2019 contract language. Mrs. Schwartz requested an opportunity to visit with Mrs. Orton. This topic will remain on the agenda for the next meeting.

Workload and Working Conditions – Mr. Schobinger said the DEA representatives have had a lot of discussions regarding online courses. He has also reached out to other teachers in the state regarding online courses. He stated if a teacher teaches an online class, it is an online class. He added it is different from a face-to-face class and it is a different preparation.

DEA representatives distributed proposed language for page 10 of the current contract under Working Conditions.

V. WORKING CONDITIONS

C. Online Classes

1. An online class is considered an individual class in an instructor's work load, different than a face-to-face class. A face-to-face class and an online class of the same name are to be considered two different classes.
2. Online teachers are subject to all applicable district policies.

Mrs. Schwartz inquired if the other Districts in the state were placing language regarding online classes in the negotiated agreement. Mr. Schobinger responded that most of the people he has visited with, the online classes are separate from the face-to-face classes. He added a lot of schools are outsourcing it to North Dakota Distance Education. He feels there are unknowns with the online academy starting next fall and what courses will be offered.

Mrs. Orton felt more discussion would need to take place as this would need to be a Board decision. Mrs. Schwartz concurred. She added it was not in the current negotiated agreement.

Leave Language/PTO – Mr. Schobinger shared there is confusion which side should be introducing some proposed language on this topic. He summarized the language was agreed by all parties during the 2019 negotiations and the language was changed in the 2019-2021 negotiated agreement to PTO. In the spring of 2020, Board and administration needed to reverse some language pertaining to PTO due to potential adverse financial consequences to the District. It was his understanding this topic would be brought back to the table and the Board/administrator representatives would present some proposed language.

A three-page proposal from the DEA was distributed to the negotiators for VI. Leaves. Mr. Leggate explained the proposed language removed the term "PTO" and changed it to "Leave Time". He added that "Leave Time" included personal leave, sick leave, and bereavement leave. The proposed language also converted "days" to "hours". Mrs. Schwartz requested time to compare the language from the

current contract with the proposal and find the differences as they were not noted on the proposal. It would be reviewed before the next meeting.

Payment Procedures – This topic had been introduced by Board representatives. Board representatives requested to remove this topic from negotiations.

One-year Contract – Mr. Schobinger requested a rationale for a one-year contract. Mrs. Schwartz responded as of tonight the Board now knows that the state is providing a one percent increase. She noted the District is down approximately 280 students. A one-year contract would provide an opportunity to come back and look at the salaries again. The team could reconvene as early as December. Mr. Schobinger understood and inquired if other topics could also be discussed. Mrs. Schwartz was not sure. Chair Brannan thought the PTO language might also be revisited.

Salaries – The Board representatives had distributed a proposal with one percent on the base only, steps and lanes only, one percent on the base and including steps and lanes, and no percentage on the base nor steps nor lanes. The proposal had been drafted before today's announcement from the legislature.

Mrs. Schwartz said now that they know what the legislature is doing, she would like another opportunity to review. She explained the Board was starting with the premise that it would be just one percent on the base. At the next meeting, Mrs. Schwartz said they would present a proposal with one percent, one percent on the base, and steps and lanes. She added that knowing what the District is getting from the legislature makes a difference.

Mr. Schobinger shared amounts for the District's revenue, expenditures, and rollover in 2016-2017. He stated that the District has been very frugal over the years and rolled over anywhere from \$500,000 to \$3 million. Mr. Schobinger shared in 2016-17 the school district's revenue was \$43 million, expenditures of approximately \$42 million, and rolled over of approximately \$1.6 million. The following year (2017-18), there was revenue increase of approximately \$1.3 million and the District rolled over \$846,000. The next year (2018-19), the District went from \$44.7 to \$48.9 million in revenue, \$3.9 million more and rolled over \$239,000. In 2019-2020, the District's revenue increased by a little over \$4 million and the rollover was approximately \$291,000.

Mr. Schobinger stated he looked at the school district's percent of expenditure. He shared that over the last 2-year contract period the teacher's percentage of expenditure had decreased by 1.39% while the school administration increased by 0.1%, and the general administration increased by 1.98%. He compared the DPS to other top nine Districts in the state on percentage of expenditures and Dickinson teacher expenditure ranks #9 over the last four years. The DPS school administration rank #5, and the general administration have gone from being tied for #4 or #3 to #1 last year.

Mr. Schobinger added that in that same 2-year contract period it was discussed that the district wanted things to be equal and the same, fair for everyone. He pointed out that the average teacher salary only increased by 3.03% for an average increase of \$946 where the average administrator salary increased 10.15% for an average increase of \$6,355. Mr. Schobinger stated that the teachers have fallen further behind and that something needed to be done to get caught up. Mr. Schobinger said he would be willing to share his numbers. Mrs. Orton thanked Mr. Schobinger for the information.

Mr. Schobinger stated the average student-to-teacher ratio for DPS was #5 for the state. He added the average administrator-to-student ratio was #1 for the state.

Agenda Topics for the Next Meeting – Chair Brannan said the following topics would be on the agenda for the next meeting previously scheduled for Wednesday, May 5, 2021: graduate hours, workload and working conditions, leave language/PTO, and salaries.

**Debrief** – Chair Brannan summarized the meeting. He stated the minutes from the April 17 meeting were approved, the topic of Payment Procedures was removed from the topics, and a tentative agreement was reached on the one-year contract.

**Adjournment** – Chair Brannan declared the meeting adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

Dated this 28<sup>th</sup> day of April 2021.

DICKINSON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

  
By: Board Negotiator

DICKINSON EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

  
By: DEA Negotiator