

Teton County School District #401  
Minutes of 2014-15 Teacher Negotiations  
District Office  
Thursday, June 12, 2014 - 4:00 PM

**I. Open Session**

**Present:** Monte Woolstenhulme, Kimber Lundquist, Becca Ross, Elizabeth Smith, Rachel Bates, Susan Pence, Julie Gottler, and Mary Madsen.

**II. Call to Order**

Mrs. Smith welcomed those in attendance and led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**II. Open Meeting: Proposal for Agreement**

**A. Article 7 & 8: Benefits & Salaries**

Mr. Woolstenhulme and Mrs. Smith reviewed some numbers from yesterday, trying to find where they don't line up.

Both parties went into caucus.

Kimber reported that it is estimated for salaries to be about \$4 million. It is projected for the 2014-2015 year to cost the District \$465,130.95 per day in salaries.

Mrs. Smith asked about their bargaining unit. There are two people that are on the admin scale and on the teacher scale. Kimber said they both have teacher contracts. In ISEE you have to put people in boxes. Every person is different, the admin and teacher boxes is what fit closest for those two people.

Kimber noted that the Board approved full day Kindergarten. That adds half a teacher for the extension of that position. The district will also probably be extending a teacher/administrator position from PD money. They can only pay the teacher from PD money if they are an instructional coach. Mrs. Smith asked for clarification. Mr. Woolstenhulme explained that the District may receive \$80,000 for the next three years from this PD fund.

The Association went into caucus.

Mrs. Smith reiterated that the projected cost for next year should be \$4 million. She stated that new hires are usually less experienced teachers, which costs the District less. That savings should go towards getting the raise.

Kimber noted that when she is making the budget, it is impossible for her to know what type of turnover they are going to have. Mrs. Smith asked for clarification that the State funds the District for their teachers based off a scatter gram. Less experienced teachers means less money from the State. Mr. Woolstenhulme explained that the State is trying to accurately fund Districts

so they hire who they want to hire rather than picking and choosing how they can make money. Mrs. Smith asked that you don't save money by hiring lower people? Kimber replied, you cannot budget off that. Some years are up and some years are down.

Mrs. Smith said teachers deserve a raise. Kimber said she is not saying they don't. Mr. Woolstenhulme noted that there is money for teachers in leadership positions; only for certified staff. If a teacher learned or took on a leadership role, they could get money for that. The State is making the money very exclusive. Mrs. Smith said she wants to benefit all teachers. She feels the Leadership Committee will decide where that money goes.

Both parties went into caucus.

Mr. Woolstenhulme stated they looked at the request for insurance benefit increase and salary increase. He wants to pay as much as he can. It is Idaho's job to fund public education. Since the 2008-2009 year, there has been a decrease in funding. Last year the District had to make cuts, because the decrease in funding was catching up to them. This District has been very unique. While other Districts have done major cuts since 2008, Teton was able to maintain the number of staff, pay higher and not make cuts until the 2013-2014 year.

He would propose that the District increase the insurance benefit for all employees to \$430 according to hours worked. That will cost the District an additional \$83,905. Mrs. Smith stated it wouldn't cost \$83,905 for certified to get that benefit. Kimber replied that there is Idaho law which basically says you need to keep benefits comparable for certified and classified staff. Mr. Woolstenhulme noted that one benefit of putting that money towards insurance premiums is it is not taxed on the employees.

Mrs. Smith asked how many new hires the District will have next year and where they will be on the pay scale. Kimber said so far there are two new hires that it will be their first year teaching, but one of them thinks she has additional credits that will move her lanes. Mrs. Smith said she shows that eight people will be returning that will be at the \$31,750 and one new person at \$31,750. There should be some money there they can pull from. Kimber stated that the State is only going to give the District \$31,750 for those employees and that is what she has in the budget. When she makes the budget, it is a snap shot in time. Every week there seems to be changes to it, she cannot always make the adjustments right away.

Mrs. Smith mentioned that the State gave the District money to hire a math or science teacher. She then stated that money could go towards a pay increase. Kimber said that money was already included in the budget.

Mrs. Smith said she appreciates the additional \$40 to go towards benefits and that Monte is looking out for all employees, but she is only here to bargain for certified staff.

The Association asked to go into caucus.

Kimber and Mrs. Smith compared their numbers. One of the differences was that some teachers teach during a prep hour. That difference is \$22,410. Mrs. Smith noticed that there was money for counselors; she asked what that is for. Kimber explained that it is for extended contract days. Last year only one high school counselor had extended days, this year both counselors will have extended days.

Both parties went into caucus.

Mrs. Smith stated she would like to focus on what the Association proposed last night, which was a \$60 increase to their Blue Cross benefit, life insurance increase, and a 2% salary increase. They accept the \$40 Blue Cross increase that Monte proposed. She would still like to ask for the 2% raise and a life insurance increase.

Mr. Woolstenhulme said he has a duty to all staff and so has to calculate for all staff. Mrs. Smith said everyone all at once doesn't get a raise. Mr. Woolstenhulme stated with the Affordable Health Care Act, there has to be more compliance to equitable compensation. They have to show how benefits are being apportioned. Other districts have gotten in trouble for having different benefit packages for different employees. Kimber noted salaries do not have to be the same, but for Idaho law benefit packages must be equitable.

Mrs. Smith said she is only bargaining for certified employees; please come up to the 2% raise. Mrs. Pence asked that at least a small amount.

Mr. Woolstenhulme stated the State has cut 12%. Compare Teton's salary schedule to others in Idaho; Teton pays more. The District moves people when they get 9 credits verses 12 like the state does. The whole bottom left side of the schedule is frozen for others while this district has more room for experienced teachers.

Mrs. Smith said it is \$36 a month per person in the bargaining unit to get the raise. Mrs. Pence stated that the cost of living here is higher than other areas. She thinks the percentage of the budget that it would take for teachers to get a raise is a very small amount.

Mr. Woolstenhulme stated that the District worked to restore cuts. They pay teachers more than what the state gives us. This depletes the fund balance. If the Association would like to talk about going from 9 credits to 12 credits to move lanes, then yes some money could be freed up to increase pay. He asked what other cuts they can make to give more.

Mrs. Smith asked that the money that the District offered to put towards increasing employee benefits be put towards teacher salaries instead.

Both parties went to caucus.

Mr. Woolstenhulme said, you are saying rather than putting \$40 more per month increase for all staff, you would rather that go to salary just for certified staff. Mrs. Smith responded yes.

Mr. Woolstenhulme said that by not doing the increase of benefit for all staff, they would be able to give just certified staff a 1.5% salary increase.

The Association went into caucus.

Mrs. Smith said in the spirit of good faith, they would like to accept the offer. Mr. Woolstenhulme asked, a 1.5% increase for certified staff? Mrs. Smith responded yes. Mr. Woolstenhulme said that estimate works for now, but it poses a risk for further financial impact.

Mrs. Smith said in Article 7 they will leave the Blue Cross benefit at \$390. She read Article 7, Items 1 and 2 with both parties agreeing. She then read Article 8.

Caucus.

Mr. Woolstenhulme said teachers should still start off at \$31,750 then after that then they should figure for the 1.5% increase. Bachelors 9 increased a little more than 1.5% increase. Kimber stated that the State requires to pay first year teachers the base pay.

Mrs. Smith read over the narrative on the salary schedule. It was agreed to remove one sick leave day per month and 4 personal days because it was stated elsewhere in the agreement. They left the extra duty. They took out the timing of when teachers have to be there. Item E is out. Item F will become Item D. Article 8A references Appendix 8.

#### **A. Unfinished Articles**

Mrs. Smith asked if on Article 5, 6F if they should keep it since it reflects back to policy. Mr. Woolstenhulme asked to change that from outline to reference. Mrs. Smith said yes.

Mrs. Smith moved onto Article 6 pertaining to PERSI. Mr. Woolstenhulme said he is fine with keeping it at 180 for sick days.

Mrs. Smith stated that completes the loose ends. Mr. Woolstenhulme reviewed previous articles and agreed.

Mrs. Smith thanked Mr. Woolstenhulme for the opportunity to form a partnership. She thanked her team.

Mr. Woolstenhulme said thank you. He then asked what is next. Mrs. Smith said she will put it together in one whole document. They will wait till July to ratify the agreement. Mr. Woolstenhulme asked when the Association will ratify it. Mrs. Smith said they will do so before the July School Board Meeting.