

Bargaining up-date -- October 2011

After all of the delays caused by the change in district personnel and leadership from the superintendent and the school board, the bargaining of the MSEA contract has resumed. As you know this is the third time that we have started bargaining with the district; each time it seems we start again from the beginning.

There have been 3 meetings between the MSEA bargaining committee and the district bargaining committee in the last month and there are 3 more meetings scheduled in the next few weeks. Many issues are at the stage where we can say that we have reached tentative agreement. There are still quite a few issues that are unresolved. Progress has been made in several areas and we are confident that most of these issues can be resolved.

As a result of our prior meetings with the district one change has occurred already. There is now a shortened application form for employees who wish to apply for posted positions. Check it out on line, current employees must choose the "internal portal" to get to this shortened application form.

The recent district change in procedure on the Code 8 has brought a new set of issues to the bargaining table. MSEA has proposed Personal Leave days and an expansion of the use of sick leave for bereavement and family care. (Code 8's are still available but are limited)

While we remain optimistic about the current status of bargaining, we are cautious about the economics of the situation. Step movement, improvements on the wage scale and insurance benefits are yet to be settled. We believe that the district wants to change the formula for insurance to cap premiums at the current dollar figure, which changes the outlook on premium dollars permanently.

We know of one other group that has reached agreement with the district, they received a modest settlement. We also know that most of the other groups have filed for mediation assistance with the Bureau of Mediation Services.

We hope to resolve most of the issues in the next few weeks and get to the core economic issues. Please watch for a meeting notice, perhaps in November.

Negotiation Team

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