

August 9, 2017 Bargaining Update

WHERE WE STARTED (June 20, 2017 bargaining session)

Article 23 of the CBA states that "*during the 2016-17 fiscal year, the parties agree to re-open negotiations on compensation and one (1) non-economic article of each party's choice.*"

In the June 20th bargaining session the following proposals were made by OSEA:

- OSEA's non-economic proposal included an addition to Article 2 (Management) of the 2015-18 CBA. Proposed was language surrounding The District's contracting of work/duties to any outside company, employee group or volunteer.
- OSEA's compensation proposal included a cost of living (COLA) increase, as well as a restructure of the classified pay scale to include wages proportionate to the increase of Oregon minimum wage and Ashland living wage.

The June 20th bargaining email, emailed to the membership on June 26th, included the rational and detailed information surrounding the OSEA proposals. For more information, please see that update (attached).

In the June 20th bargaining session the following proposals were made by The District:

- The District's proposal included a cost of living (COLA) increase.
- The District did not include a non-economic proposal.

A meeting was scheduled for August 9th at 9:00AM to continue bargaining.

WHERE WE HAVE BEEN (August 9, 2017 bargaining session)

There were no significant changes to proposals brought forward by either The District or OSEA.

- There was no change to OSEA's non-economic proposal.
 - Your bargaining team spoke to the importance of not subcontracting or using volunteers to provide bargaining unit work on a consistent basis. The team understands that volunteers are an important part of our community and our schools. The district and staff depend on them to help bridge the gap of what state funding cannot provide for in The District. The bargaining team's intent in beginning this discussion with The District is for them to understand that daily work, with consistent hours, working the duties described in a classified worker's job description is not supported by OSEA. The team feels that this is not an acceptable use of a volunteer and a bargaining unit employee should be used to fill that position.
- Changes to OSEA's compensation proposal included a change to the verbiage of the original COLA proposal for further clarification. In addition, there were corrections to some calculation errors of the pay scale restructure which was presented in the June 20th proposal.
 - Your bargaining team spoke to the importance of the restructure of the classified pay scale. If the district does not begin to move all wages on the pay scale, rather than just the bottom wages that are below minimum wage, the middle of the pay scale will collapse. Minimum wage is increasing 6% per year. Over the next 5 years, minimum wage will be 38.5% higher than the bottom classification on the

current pay scale. Each year, more and more classifications on the first step will need to be raised the 6% just to meet the Oregon minimum wage. Within only a few years, the same thing will happen to second step wages. It is in the best interest of the district to begin to look at how they will get the classified pay scale raised at a rate of 6% or higher or lower steps will meet the higher steps. In addition, it is becoming increasingly difficult to not only retain classified staff, but to even fill positions due to the fact that the classified pay scale is not comparable to some surrounding districts, other jobs with similar duties and most importantly, does not provide an income high enough to prevent many of our classifieds staff from struggling to pay their monthly expenses.

- There was no change to The District's original proposal

Both OSEA and The District presented documentation to support their position and time was spent reviewing and discussing the issues surrounding the proposals. After a lot of discussion, our scheduled caucus (a closed meeting for each side to privately discuss the proposals) began and there were many important considerations discussed by your bargaining team.

After carefully considering proposals brought forward by both sides, the effect that continued unresolved bargaining is having on The District and classified staff, the fact that we will begin bargaining the 2018-2021 contract bargaining in just a few months, and some restrictions the district has regarding implementing any increase in wages beyond what the budget committee has already approved for the 2017-2018 school year, your OSEA bargaining team decided to do the following:

1. Table the non-economic proposal and pick up the conversation as part of the 2018-2021 contract bargaining.
2. Accept the COLA increase proposed by the district with the understanding that the OSEA bargaining team is committed to working with the district towards a future implementation of a restructured pay scale that targets all classifications at all steps on the pay scale. We hope that The District recognizes the necessity of a restructure and that it is in their best interest to plan to get to the 38.5% within the next 5 years to meet the increase of Oregon minimum wage.

WHERE WE ARE TODAY

A tentative agreement (TA) has been signed by both OSEA and The District. The TA states that ***The salary schedule for the 2017-2018 school year represent a 2.5% applied increase to the 2016-2017 salary schedule and an additional 2.25% applied to that.***

WHAT COMES NEXT

A ratification date has been set for September 7th – The membership must vote to approve the TA between OSEA and The District before any increase in compensation can be implemented.

Please attend the OSEA chapter meeting to vote! Please watch for additional info on this upcoming meeting.

The compensation increase will be effective July 1, 2017. We are working on an agreement for The District to provide a separate retro check for classified workers whose contracted days begin early enough that they have already received their first paycheck for the 2017-18 school year or will receive a paycheck on August 30th, prior to the ratification vote of the membership.

Today, your OSEA bargaining team sent a letter to The District to request to schedule a date for the bargaining teams to meet to continue work towards a resolution of the 2015-16 reopeners. Recent bargaining sessions have left us hopeful that we will be able to reach resolution soon.

CLARRIFICATION WITH A Q&A

We understand that this may be confusing and spark questions about the 2016-17 salary schedule, which did not increase from the 2015-16 salary schedule with the expected COLA. Below is a Q&A that may answer some of your questions:

How is there a 2016-2017 salary schedule when there was no COLA increase in 2016?

When the district was forced to raise the salary for one classification on the scale due to the increase in minimum wage, it changed the 2015-16 schedule. That was the only change, the remaining wages on the scale remained the same, making up the 2016-17 salary schedule.

What happens to the COLA I was supposed to receive at the start of the 2016-17 school year? The compensation reopeners bargained in the 2015-16 sessions stay with 2015-16 bargaining. Any TA agreed upon and signed in **2016-17** bargaining, for the 2017-18 school year, do not affect the unresolved bargaining from before last year which is still unresolved.

What happens to the COLA I was supposed to receive at the start of the 2016 school year? Once the bargaining is resolved for 2015-16, our hope is that you will receive a check which equals the difference in what you were paid and what you would have been paid had you received the 2.5% COLA for the 2016-17 school year only. This is yet to be determined and will depend on the agreements between The District and your OSEA bargaining team.

Why 2.5% with an additional 2.25%? Had the COLA been implemented, as proposed in the bargaining of the 2015-16 reopeners, the 2016-17 salary schedule would have reflected that 2.5%. The intent was to increase the 2016-17 salary schedule by an additional 2.25% for the 2017-18 school year. This TA accomplishes both without waiting for the 2015-16 bargaining to be completed.