

SRCS D Representatives: David Gunter, Darren Brock, Warren Stevens and Tonya Shepherd

SRPE Representatives: Rhonda Chavers, David Godwin, Marie Bodi, Landra McCrary, Tamela Strickland, Ruth Blackman, and Jeanette Miller

The meeting was called to order at 4:31pm. Rhonda Chavers introduced the negotiation team members from both sides of the table. SRPE requested to go first.

David Godwin handed out *Attachment 1* (Comparison of Instructional Salaries). Godwin stated that salaries decreased after going to a 6-period day. According to this comparison, Escambia was able to increase their instructional salaries by going to a 7-period day. Additionally, Okaloosa gave its instructors a 7.29% difference (\$3,763). Godwin claims SRCS D is not competitive with neighboring counties.

Attachment 2 (2015-16 FLDOE FEFP Calculations). 4th calculation, shows the district was given \$190 million. 60% of total operating budget is spent on employee salaries. Per the *2016-2017 Salary Cost*, the school district was spending about \$85 million on instructional salaries, \$17 million on ed-support for a rough total of \$117 million. Per the *Salary Cost from February 2016*, the district spent about \$17 million on ed-support, \$86 million on instructional again for a total of \$117 million.

Per the *K-12 Total Funding*, the difference between the 4th calculation and the 3rd calculation, the district has about \$8 million in "new money." Per Godwin, district is spending about \$600 thousand less on instructional salaries and \$154 thousand more on ed-support salaries. Right now, the district is spending about \$450 thousand less on salaries Godwin stated that the district has received \$8 million new dollars and not a penny of that has been spent on salary increases for the 2016-17 school year.

60% of the "new money" would be \$5,140,632 and 88% of the amount spent on salaries for all employees is spent on salaries for employees in the SRPE bargaining unit.

SRPE has proposed that the district spend \$2,863,388 on salary improvements for employees in the SRPE bargaining unit. Godwin states that he knows some of the monies are restricted, but that still leaves several million to do other things with. Godwin stated that the district should not be coming down, but coming up. Because of the aforementioned financials presented, SRPE is holding to their proposal of 2.770% average for salary increase. The district got the \$5.5 million and it's up to the district to come up and get this contract settled.

Chavers stated that if the district would have got cut money instead of getting \$5.5 million they would probably want to reduce their offer. Gunter stated that you generally don't go backwards on an offer once it is on the table. Someone from the crowd stated "let's keep it at the 1.8%." Chavers stated, "Let's go up. It's really hard for us to think you all are in financial woes." Gunter asked if SRPE was standing on the last offer of 2.77% average, Chavers said "Yes, that's all we have."

At 4:50pm, Gunter requested a caucus.

Meeting resumed at 5:08pm.

Chavers asked Gunter if he had any questions. Gunter said, "I thought y'all were through." Chavers said, "No, we want to refresh everyone on the contract language."

Chavers read some of the comments from last school year's Studer Group employee engagement surveys. One of the comments read, stop hiring so many administrators and hire teachers; they're in high demand.

Chavers asked where would we get quality teachers to fill the positions if we go to a 7-period day if we can't fill what we have? The Teacher Recruitment and Retention Committee meets tomorrow to discuss an upcoming job fair, but why would people want to come here if they can go to Escambia and Okaloosa.

Bodi presented *Attachment 3*. She stated that the concern has been consistent over the last few years related to the district leadership, specifically, the Superintendent. She pointed out that the Studer Group stated "of particular concern are the three superintendent items as the eleven other items all scored at the 88th percentile or higher."

Bodi presented *Attachment 4*, related to administrator comments for teacher recruitment and retention. The categories were: quantity of applicants, quality of applicants, and declined positions for employment. Per the administrator comments, it parallels SRPE's concern that "quality" applicants are lacking. According to Bodi, the district has 13 long-term subs; jobs are not being filled with full-time instructors. Bodi stated that SRPE has continued to present language that would aid in this recruitment and retention of teachers.

In *Attachment 5*, Bodi pointed out that all around us, people are getting raises (referenced the Sheriff's departments recent release about deputy raises). She stated that when competitive wages become a priority, this is what happens.

Attachment 6 – surrounding Panhandle School Districts' Master Contract Language regarding Conditional Annual Contract Employee Employment Renewal. Chavers stated that this district wants to continue to promote cronyism and nepotism and cherry-pick those they hire.

Attachment 7 – Senate Bill 736. Bodi pointed out the legislative intent of this language. Chavers stated that this district is getting left behind under the current leadership.

Attachment 8 – Bodi presented quotes from 3 School Board members (Jennifer Granse, Scott Peden, and Carol Boston). Bodi stated that there needs to be improvements in salaries, but nothing has been done. Bodi stated that we have a problem and the community is concerned.

Gunter asked for clarification about where it shows that the contract renewal language was ruled lawful. Bodi stated that she did not say that in her presentation. Chavers stated that we are not going to chase the rabbit down the hole here. Godwin stated that SRPE is talking about conditional renewal, not automatic. Those are the terms, "conditional" and "automatic." Chavers stated that this language is why people can go over there, buy a house or buy a car and not lose their job. Chavers stated that she wonders about this March vote for 1/2 cent sales tax and the sentiments of the voters. How many people are going to vote for that? SRPE is not going to come out against it, but she'll be surprised because of the money management that has been happening here.

Gunter stated that he wanted to clarify where this language has been shown to be lawful? Bodi stated that they have not been challenged in court in 6 years. Gunter stated that the courts do not determine if this is lawful, that based on state law this is up to the School Boards who are the recognized legislative bodies. Chavers stated that no one has gone to court on it. Gunter noted that SPRE has members claiming and posting there are court rulings to the same. Gunter stated that special magistrates do not make rulings; they offer an opinion and make recommendations. Gunter stated that he's reading in comments that people post and they're getting that misinformation from somewhere. Chavers said reading information on social media is like reading the National Enquirer. Godwin stated that social media is not the source of critical information. Gunter stated he agreed but the misinformation is showing up in emails and direct communication as well. Godwin acknowledged he had seen some of the emails with the misinformation and had addressed some of them himself. Gunter said he is trying to get clarification because there is too much misinformation that is then promoted as fact. Gunter stated that we need to make sure we are being accurate when we represent things...on both sides. Godwin says, let's be clear, the School Board could approve that language (referring to renewal language) if they choose to do so.

Gunter responded to Godwin that since he asked that question he would go ahead and present the information on the next item from the Board and Gunter distributed *Attachment 9 – House Bill 373. A School Board may not award an annual contract on the basis of any contingency or condition not expressly authorized in this section; or alter or limit its authority to award or not award an annual contract as provided in this section.* Gunter clarified that this is just a "bill" at this time. Gunter acknowledged it is proposed pending legislation and he believes there is a companion bill but does not have that information. This has a long way to make it through the process but the intent here is to once and for all clarify the original intent of SB 736 and would essentially end renewal language in all contract statewide.

Chavers said this looks like the district is going to use the aforementioned to see what happens with the progress of the bill before offering teachers any language to a contract...in light of pending legislation. Gunter affirmed that that would be the position of the Board in light of pending legislation.

Gunter presented *Attachment 10 – SRCSD Negotiation Facts*. Gunter presented all of bullets. Godwin sought clarification on the totals of part I. Chavers clarified and Gunter added to her clarification. Godwin says that this is irrelevant...let's not go back to what the budget was in July 2016, but let's use what we have now. Godwin said to let's clarify that going from \$182 million to \$190 million is not a 1.7% increase. Gunter says that in 15-16, if you were highly effective, you got a 2.91% increase, effective – 2.18%, and grandfathered got a 2.18%. In 14-15, highly effective got a 4.0% increase, effective, 3.0%, and grandfathered 3.0%. In 13-14, highly effective got a 3.5% increase and ed-support got \$800. In 12-13, all employees received 3.34% increase in salary improvements. In 11-12, all employees got a one-time bonus of \$1,050. Gunter stated that over that span of time an individual employee could have gotten as much as a 16.25% increase their salary. This is not an average.

Gunter stated that this was presented to address some of the misinformation out there that the district has not given any significant salary increases over the last few years. He went on to state that in reference to the information presented about the deputies, they are compelled to give a salary

increase because they have gone a quite some time with not much ability to improve their wages. Bodi stated it was because they are focused on retention and recruitment. Chavers stated that our beginner teacher salary is slightly higher, but we can't retain them; just like school psychologists. Godwin stated that even though the starting salaries a slightly higher, teachers see how quickly they can advance.

Godwin stated that we want to recruit new teachers, but we also want to keep the good teachers that we have. If we go to a 7-period day, we will have to hire roughly 250 new teachers. Bodi stated that with our beginning salary the way it is, according to administrators, we still aren't getting quantity and quality. Gunter remind SRPE that the beginning salary is the way it is now because SRPE negotiated it that way in the last settlement and lowered the placement schedule for 16-17 lower than the Grandfathered schedule.

Godwin stated that in school year 13-14, the school district cannot take any credit for those salary improvements because that was "Rick Scott" money. Gunter stated he was noting the amount of the increase and that the settlement was based on the fact the dollar amount was agreed to in the settlement and then it was SRPE that made the decision to give 3.7% to the teachers and only \$800 to educational support. Chavers said, don't go there when a plumber without a college degree got a huge increase and someone just this year recently got a 46% increase.

Gunter continued with his presentation. Discussed the breakdown of the \$6,004,000 increased and unexpected costs since July 1, 2016. Godwin stated that the district could have made the decision to put the \$3 million the \$5.5 million in salary improvements. Gunter noted the expenses are about a 1/2 million over the \$5.5 million of new money.

Godwin stated that he believed we could have received \$0 funding and still received the \$704,000 in McKay Scholarships and DOE adjustments. Gunter said, "No, we would have had adjustment in those areas but this amount was related to the increase in enrollment." Godwin asked why they would get a McKay scholarship if they are in this school district. The McKay Scholarship allows them to go to another district. Gunter stated that the McKay Scholarship will still be there for multiple reasons and the enrollment originates with SRC and is then distributed in whole or in part to where the student receives services. Godwin asked about the other items represented in the \$6 million. Godwin stated that he believes these expenses would be there anyway so the district still has about \$5.5 million that they did not originally have and they still have should come up on there offer.

Bodi stated that she questions the need of these numbers. The \$700,000 for the OT and PT Contracts was inflated because Debbie Anderson only asked for about \$500,000. According to Bodi, Susan McCole told Anderson to budget high...just in case. Godwin states that the FCR is still where it needs to be even if the district went up a little more. The district ended last year with a 9.6% FCR which is well beyond where the district has to be. Godwin asked if the district's credit rating was based on actual or estimated. Gunter said he would have to get clarification on that.

Gunter did state that the Board has not authorized him to increase the offer previously proposed, but he does have something to present to SRPE. See *Attachment 11*. From the beginning, it has been the goal of the Superintendent and the Board to get money to the employees. He also wanted to clarify that the March 15th date that was presented in the last meeting was not a coercive tactic, but there are deadlines that the Board is trying to meet in order to avoid fiscal issues with audits and

grant funding. Gunter went on to say that if SRPE is truly interested in good faith, then the Board is making the ultimate good faith gesture with the MOU. **Gunter explained the purpose of the MOU is to let all employees benefit from the money that is currently offered and be able to pay retroactive pay to July 1, 2016 while at the same time letting SRPE continue to seek any potential increases by continuing the negotiating process.**

Gunter stated that he has talked to payroll and if SRPE signs the MOU it would be effective for the percentage increase to reflect in March checks and retroactive pay to July 1, 2016 would be ready by the end of April. Gunter pointed out that the Board's intent is to take care of the employees and get them a raise and retroactive pay now. The Board does not want the employees to continue to undergo the effects of a prolonged negotiations process. Gunter emphasized that the Board is giving up its bargaining position in the ultimate good faith effort to get money to employees, so don't tell me SRPE wants good faith and then don't take advantage of this opportunity. **"The Board wants the money to go to the employees now. Now!"** Gunter stated. Gunter noted there deadline of Wednesday for this offer so that it can be placed on the Board agenda and approved by the Board so the above timelines could be put in place for getting money to employees.

Chavers requested a caucus at 6:14pm.

The meeting resumed at 6:31pm.

Godwin stated that SRPE has considered the offer, has had their counsel to look at it, took a secret ballot of those present, and the vote was 31-0 for a NO. Therefore, SRPE is declining the offer. Chavers stated that SRPE has made a compelling case for additional funds. She also stated that she is unsure if the Board looks at the documents they present. We have a retention and recruitment problem and we need to do something about it.

Gunter clarified that SRPE is rejecting? The union said "Yes." Gunter asked is they would like to use more time since SRPE had until Wednesday and the answer was "No".

Gunter again pointed out that this would let the employees get the raise and retro offered now and SRPE could still seek more through the process. Gunter ask if SRPE would not reconsider and do not see this as a win-win for both sides? The answer was "No."

Chavers stated that on December 13th, this was the same offer that was on the table. The district now has more money and the offer has not been moved.

Gunter said that he will take this information to the Superintendent and the Board.

Chavers stated that if they go to impasse, they will take all language off the table, they will just talk money. Gunter asked Chavers if SRPE was declaring impasse and Chavers responded with "No".

Gunter noted that the last two session have taken place with basically no movement and that the Board and Superintendent would consider the options available moving forward and that impasse would certainly be an option at this point.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:36pm.