

SRCS D and SRPE Negotiations Meeting

October 25, 2018

4:30 p.m., Canal Street Board Room

SRCS D Minutes

Present: SRCS D-David Gunter (Chief Negotiator), Dan Balsavich, Cheree Davis, Larry Herringer, Missy Floyd, Alexandra Timmons, and Jon Watts

SRPE-Rhonda Chavers, President SRPE (Chief Negotiator), Ruth Blackman, Marie Bodi, David Godwin, Landra McCrary, and Tam Strickland.

Guest present: Elizabeth Hewey

Mr. Gunter opens for SRCS D and mentions that although we may sometimes think we have conflict or issues, those issues are ultimately resolved but none compare to the devastation in neighboring counties affected by Hurricane Michael. Mr. Gunter asked that everyone be mindful of what these districts are experiencing and be prepared to see families from the impacted areas coming to our schools looking to restore some sort of normalcy with many of them coming with nothing but what they could carry. Everyone concurs.

Mr. Gunter presents *SRCS D Calculated Cost of SRPE 18-19 Salary Schedule presented 10/4/18*. Gunter details the different models on the chart and how they differ because of the timeframe referenced in the reports pulled by SRPE. Gunter notes those incremental differences can be addressed when we get closer on a decision/proposal. He also pointed out that the FTE was figured differently on 2033.23 (SRCS D in August) versus 2045 (SRPE in October). These differences are based upon a snapshot of FTE when reports are pulled. Gunter explains the zero amount for ROTC will be determined once any salary increase is agreed upon and has to be coordinated with the military branch associated with the ROTC units. The total cost for SRPE proposal is \$7,056,656.79 and not the \$3.5 to \$4 million estimated by David Godwin at the previous session. Mr. Gunter asserts this is not a feasible amount to be agreed upon.

Mr. Gunter distributes *Budget Issues with Bachelor Levels and Placement Schedule 18-19*. He clarifies this document is NOT a proposal and reminds attendees that the Executive Session had to be rescheduled to Oct. 30. Mr. Gunter reminds that in a previous negotiation SRCS D and SRPE feasibly talked about negotiated improvement and addressing it through the salary schedule proposal. Mr. Gunter says the superintendent is agreeable to a salary schedule adjustment as long as it is affordable. Mr. Gunter outlines the columns on the chart and clarifies that he shows that a uniform 1.83% (current salary schedule average for all levels) level increase does not keep pace and creates a negative adjustment for those in the 27-30 years column. Gunter then explained the 1.83% modified column showing there is not a negative number in the later columns and explaining the adjustments he made to keep it from taking away from the highest levels. Mr. Gunter highlights the text box which shows that the potential monies available are between \$4 and \$4.5 million, which he points out the 1.83% modified schedule exceeds.

Mr. Godwin clarifies that the \$4-4.5 includes benefits and Gunter says yes.

Mr. Gunter noted that the District was looking initially at \$2-2.5 million for salary increases through a percentage increase for employees but highlighted the fact that a salary schedule solution solves most is not all the current issues that both sides are aware exist . Mr. Gunter adds, “There’s a lot of value in solving some of these other issues.” Gunter adds that this solution is what he wants SRPE to consider going forward and what he will be recommending to the Superintendent and School Board. Mr. Gunter says that he would also like to look at the possibility of a two-year salary agreement which would allow the District to budget going forward and employees to plan as well. Gunter adds that if we look at this schedule model and come up with an affordable option, the district could pull military language change and let the current language stand because the current language issues would be solved with a schedule implementation. Mr. Gunter underscores that the documents presented detailing a possible solution are not an official offer/proposal but provide the parameters for both sides to work together to come up with an affordable solution. Mr. Gunter adds that the timing is very good and he can present something at executive session on October 30 if both sides can agree to some parameters to work within.

SRPE calls for caucus.

Upon the conclusion of the caucus, Ms. Chavers says this dollar amount leans in the dollar amount SRPE needs it to be. Ms. Chavers says she appreciates the offer and SRPE will counter. Chavers states that if SRCSD accepts this proposal, SRPE will pull all language changes and focus on the salary schedule solution. Chavers adds that SRPE wants to focus on the monetary aspect rather than the language.

Mr. Gunter reminds everyone we want to make sure any proposals considered are in compliance with legislation regarding Performance Pay Language.

SRPE presents *SRCSD Salary Comparison 2013-14 to 2018-2019* (the 18-19 bachelor column reference reported by SRPE on this document is not the current bachelor levels) and *SRPE Salary Proposal 10/25/2018*. Mr. Godwin details that we have raised the beginning teacher pay but those coming in with 10 years of qualified service are making less than those employed in 2013-14 (\$41,565 to \$39,296). Godwin says the implementation of Performance Pay and the compression created in the lowest levels of the salary schedule resulted in some levels not keeping pace. Godwin highlights what he contends are salary inequities which show the rationale behind the SRPE proposal. Mr. Godwin contends that SRPE wants to address those issues created which now exist in the middle of the schedule.

Ms. Chavers says that the *SRPE Salary Proposal 10/25/2018* schedule would be good for retention and might prevent employees from seeking opportunities elsewhere.

Mr. Godwin says the new salary total of the SRPE proposal includes those with advanced degrees but excludes the eight salaries for ROTC positions. Gunter reminded everyone that we had previously discussed how ROTC would be coordinated with the military branch associated with each unit.

Mr. Gunter speaks of the challenges in structuring a salary schedule solution due to varying numbers of employees at each of the levels. Gunter reminds everyone the numbers of units the two groups are working on differ from 2045 (SRCSD) to 2033.23 (SRPE) creating some of the difference in total cost estimates but he notes again that this difference can be accounted for as a final solution is potentially identified.

Ms. Chavers reminds the group the advanced degree amount is based upon the current instructional base pay for the salary schedule (\$36,076), not an individual teacher's current salary level. Chavers also reminds the group that while advanced degrees are based on the current year's schedule all supplements are based on the prior year's schedule.

Mr. Godwin says that the new schedule proposal gets the majority of employees impacted by the compression in the current schedule back to where they would have been if they had started on 13-14 schedule, and Godwin suggests it is about as fair as SRPE can get it.

Mr. Gunter states he recognizes what Mr. Godwin is doing in the SRPE proposed model and has few questions regarding the calculations. Gunter again noted that the differences in the number of units used for a basis should be easy to remedy. Mr. Gunter details the facts of how when working with payroll, finance works to 5 decimal places and rounding then benefits the employees. Mr. Gunter states the *SRPE Salary Proposal 10/25/2018* is very promising and has potential. Gunter pointed out the issues he is aware of when building a new schedule in the finance system pointing out that the numbers in SRPE proposal may need to be adjusted to make sure it comes in at a total cost that is affordable.

Mr. Godwin clarifies some of the rounding issues noted by Gunter in the finance system and states that SRPE would consider adjustments in order to make the proposal affordable.

Ms. Chavers says SRPE will agree not to have any new language with this proposed schedule is SRCSD accepts.

Mr. Gunter questions how performance pay would be addressed in order for the District to comply with the statute.

Mr. Godwin passes out *SRPE Proposal Salary Improvement Formulas October 25, 2018*. He says the "X" could be a dollar amount of anywhere from \$1 to \$100.

Ms. Chavers distributes *Walton County School District: Classroom/Non-Classroom Instructional Performance Salary Schedule* as an example of how Performance Pay is calculated. She also presents *SRPE Language Proposal-1*.

Mr. Gunter reviewed the language presented by Chavers and noted (notes on page) somethings will need to be adjusted with the proposed language on performance pay to meet statutory requirements. Gunter reminded that the statute states the Instructional Personnel's prior year's salary and performance pay constitute base pay for an employee. Mr. Gunter says that if any language we use will need to align with the language of the statute. Gunter states that the proposed language is a good basis and can easy be adjusted to align with the requirements of the law.

Ms. Chavers states that she can pull the language in legislation and will look at the statute to clarify language.

Mr. Gunter reminds everyone of the changes and details about how COLA is defined in statute which differs from the historical definition and use.

Ms. Chavers responds that SRPE has to work on the language.

Mr. Gunter also clarifies that SRPE is not looking to structure a schedule in the same manner as Walton County has done. Both Ms. Chavers and Mr. Godwin agree that change is not desired by SRPE and points out the Walton plan was used to show how it had been done in another district.

Mr. Gunter points out the SRPE proposal addresses the current issue with awarding military credit and compression. Gunter again asks if SRPE is willing to consider a total amount lower than their proposed cost of \$4,821,755. Gunter also asks if SRPE is agreeable to the District making modifications in the SRPE model as calculations are being verified through the finance system in order to offset any potential increased cost created by the issues that arise when the model is built in the finance system which were discussed earlier in the session.

Mr. Godwin acknowledges he has seen the issues Gunter is referring to in the SRPE calculations and points out that a change in one decimal point can change the figures significantly.

Mr. Gunter underscores the Superintendent's desire to resolve this issue and get money to the employees as quickly as possible. Gunter again asks if SRPE will give him some flexibility in working with their proposed cost, as there could be inflated cost due to the 5 digit rounding. Gunter asks SRPE, "Are you stuck on this exact number?"

SRPE calls for a caucus.

Upon the resumption of the session, Mr. Godwin says SRPE does have flexibility and understands the issues Gunter will have to contend with in building an affordable schedule.

Mr. Gunter says he will know better once the model is built in the finance system. Gunter says that if both sides can work together in the established parameters and can tentatively agree, then he can take this recommendation to the School Board and Superintendent during executive session on October 30th. This timeline would make it possible to potentially reach a settlement and possibly ratify before the next board meeting on November 15, 2018. Gunter notes his desire to get any issues addressed with the SRPE proposal in hopes to have the contract approved by November board meeting.

Ms. Chavers says takes about a week to get ballots out to instructional staff.

Mr. Gunter affirms he will take this information to the Oct. 30 Executive Session.

Both sides have nothing further, and another session will take place Nov. 1.

Meeting adjourned at 6:01 p.m.