



Dickinson Education Association / Dickinson Public School Board
Negotiations Meeting No. 3
Minutes
Tuesday, May 16, 2023; 5:00 p.m.
Professional Learning Lab

Negotiators Present:

Representing the School Board - School Board President Michelle Orton and School Board Vice President Kim Schwartz.

Representing the Dickinson Education Association (DEA) - Dickinson Education Association President Shawna Knipp, Dickinson High School Chemistry and Physics Instructor CaraLee Heiser, Lincoln Elementary Fourth Grade Instructor Karl Leggate, Dickinson Middle School Social Studies Instructor Alyssa Wagner, and Dickinson Middle School Science Instructor Gretchen Flatz.

Resource Individuals - Superintendent Dr. Marcus Lewton and Business Manager Stephanie Hunter.

Others Present – Human Resources Manager Meghan Ziegs, Assistant Superintendent Keith Harris, Lee Mehrer, Carolyn Carroll, Maggie Lehman, Shelly Wolberg, Nichole Tooz, Chelsea Hartman, Jolene Gress, Tammy Meschke, Angela Ernst, Brenda Loney, Gregg Bertelsen, Susan Moberg, Naomi Thorson, Jenna Cranston, Rachel Burns, and Twila Petersen.

Call to Order – Dickinson Education Association President Shawna Knipp, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Approve the May 2, 2023, Teacher Negotiations Meeting Minutes – Chair Knipp noted the May 2, 2023, meeting minutes had been emailed in advance to the team and a copy was available. Mrs. Heiser moved to approve the May 2, 2023, Teacher Negotiations Meeting minutes as presented. Mrs. Orton seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken on the motion. The motion carried unanimously. The minutes were signed by the parties.

Approval of Financials – Chair Knipp noted as per the Ground Rules, “It is understood that the teams will agree on the financial information at the third meeting.” Mrs. Orton moved to approve the financials as presented at the May 2, 2023, Teacher Negotiations Meeting. Mr. Leggate seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken on the motion. The motion carried unanimously. A tentative agreement was signed by the parties.

New Topics for Discussion – Chair Knipp noted as per the Ground Rules topics were allowed to be added until the third meeting. She asked if there were any new topics to present. Mrs. Heiser referenced the DEA’s proposal which was recently sent out and stated the DEA negotiators requested to add the topics of paid time off (PTO) prorated days and also the topic of sick leave payout amount for retiring individuals for their accumulated sick days. Mrs. Schwartz stated the Board negotiators had no new topics to add.

Prioritize Topics for Discussion – Chair Knipp noted the DEA’s May 16, 2023, counteroffer. Mrs. Heiser suggested when prioritizing topics, salaries be placed as No. 1, followed by PTO days, and payout for accrued sick leave. Chair Knipp suggested discussing (the topics within) the counteroffer presented by the DEA. Mrs. Schwartz suggested after that to add the topic of grammar and language cleanup.

Rationale and Proposals of Topics for Discussion – Mrs. Heiser referenced the DEA’s proposal dated May 16, 2023. She stated the “DEA members would accept the School Board’s offer of the .5% added to the base, all steps and lane movement, and career increments on the current salary schedule for (the) 2023-2024 school year along with the offer to transition to the salary schedule option No. 1 for the 24-25 which will include the double steps for all employees” (qualified certified employees). Mrs. Heiser added the recommendation from the DEA was to establish a prorated schedule of PTO for years of service. Instead of receiving 13 days of paid time off (PTO), the DEA’s proposal had a graduated scale in increments of four years with one PTO day added for each additional four years of service beginning at zero years and up to 35 years of service. 0-4 years of service would be granted 13 PTO days. A maximum of 35 years of service would be granted 20 PTO days. Mrs. Heiser stated the rationale for the prorated PTO days was the same as the rationale for the increase in sick leave payout (for retiring teachers submitting their resignation before March 1) from \$20.00 to \$50.00 per day. They understand the new salary schedule will be attractive to new teachers. They also wanted to reward the veteran teachers with additional PTO days and sick leave payout.

Superintendent Lewton asked for clarification and confirmation the DEA was maintaining the Board’s offer for the career increments for anyone in 2023-2025. Mr. Leggate responded that was accurate.

Mrs. Schwartz responded to the DEA’s offer. She stated she and Mrs. Orton wished to thank the negotiators for presenting the counter proposal. They were grateful for the willingness to the two-year proposed salary schedule. They acknowledged teaching was difficult and demanding and teachers need to have time off throughout the year. The Board negotiators also acknowledged the importance of teachers being in the classroom as this has a great impact on student learning. They also felt teachers should be rewarded for their good attendance.

On behalf of the Board negotiators, Mrs. Schwartz presented the following to the DEA’s current counteroffer. Modifications to the DEA’s offer are noted with red text.

- Add .5% to the base wage on the 2022-23 Salary Schedule for the 2023-24 school year.
- Provide step and lane movement for qualifying staff.
- Grant career increments of 5% of the BS+0 cell to all teachers who qualify for career increments in the 2023-2025 biennium.
- Transition to the Option 1 salary schedule for the 2024-2025 school year.
- Grant double steps and regular lane changes on the new schedule for qualifying employees.
- Provide career increments of \$775 per year for employees qualifying for step 26 or higher in lanes BS+32 – MS+16.
- **Paid Time Off (PTO) leave based on the employee’s years of service as a certified teacher for Dickinson Public Schools.** The current agreement is 13 days for all years of service.
 - 0-9 years within the District, 13 days of PTO
 - 10-19 years within the District, 14 days of PTO
 - 20+ years within the District, 15 days of PTO
- **Early resignation notification before March 1 will be compensated for accumulated sick leave up to 120 days at their time of departure from the District at a rate of \$35.00 per day.** The current agreement is \$20.00 per day.

Mrs. Heiser requested an opportunity to caucus. At 5:10 p.m., the meeting recessed to caucus. At 5:17 p.m., Chair Knipp reconvened the meeting.

Mr. Leggate asked for clarification/confirmation regarding the double steps for the second year; he inquired if it would work for the career increments also. He used an example and asked if a person in the career increments on the new salary schedule would receive \$775 twice. Mrs. Hunter responded using an example of someone on step 25. The teacher on step 25 would receive the base amount and then also (step) 26 and (step) 27. She clarified the teacher would get the base plus \$775 for (step) 26 and \$775 for (step) 27. Chair Knipp asked if the teacher was not on any schedule, would the teacher still get career increments? Mrs. Hunter responded yes; the teacher would get career increments.

On behalf of the DEA negotiators, Mrs. Heiser thanked the Board negotiators for listening to their concerns and meeting in the middle. She said the DEA negotiators were comfortable taking the offer to the DEA (membership) team for a vote to ratify.

Superintendent Lewton suggested members of the negotiating team meet and review the proposal to do grammar and language cleanup. That committee would meet on Wednesday, May 17 at 3:30 p.m. at the Central Office.

Schedule Fourth Meeting – Superintendent Lewton suggested scheduling a meeting to review and sign the minutes from today’s meeting. The date and time would be announced later.

Debrief – Human Resources Manager Ziegs summarized today’s meeting. The minutes from the May 2, 2023, meeting were approved as presented and signed by both parties. The financials from the May 2, 2023, meeting were approved. The DEA presented two new topics for discussion; PTO prorated leave based on years of service and accumulated sick leave. As per the Ground Rules, this was the last meeting to add topics. The topics for discussion were prioritized. The rationale was shared for the DEA’s counteroffer which included the new topics of paid time off and accumulated sick leave payout.

At the last meeting, both parties presented proposals. Prior to today’s meeting, the DEA had emailed a counter proposal. That proposal was referenced in today’s meeting. The Board negotiators presented a counter proposal at today’s meeting. Tentative agreements were reached on the following topics within the proposal from both the DEA and the Board: salaries which includes the horizontal movement and the career increments, PTO language, accumulated sick leave, a two-year agreement, and language and grammar cleanup.

The next meeting has not been scheduled but members of the team will meet to review the 2023-2025 proposed Professional Negotiated Agreement for it to be presented to the Dickinson Education Association and School Board for ratification.

On behalf of the Board negotiators, Mrs. Schwartz stated she and Mrs. Orton were extremely grateful to the DEA negotiators for their willingness and commitment to work with the School Board, the superintendent, and the business manager in negotiations. Mrs. Schwartz listed each DEA negotiator individually by name. The Board negotiators were “appreciative of the work done by the Superintendent’s Advisory Committee which spent hundreds of hours collectively to collaboratively solve challenges.” Mrs. Schwartz listed each member of the Superintendent’s Advisory Committee. The willingness of all individuals to work together provided a satisfactory outcome for all. “Gratitude does not equate to money, but it does foster a positive atmosphere in DPS for teachers and students. It is evident DPS teachers are dedicated to their profession.” The Board negotiators also appreciated the time dedicated by DEA President Shawna Knipp. DEA President Knipp thanked the School Board for working with the DEA and coming together and meeting them halfway on the DEA’s proposal.

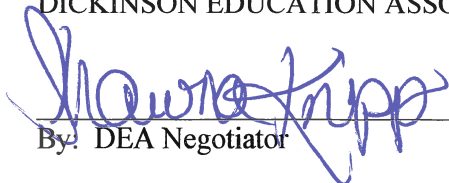
Adjournment – Chair Knipp declared the meeting adjourned at 5:25 p.m.

Dated this 25th day of May 2023.

DICKINSON PUBLIC SCHOOLS


By: Board Negotiator

DICKINSON EDUCATION ASSOCIATION


By: DEA Negotiator