

NEGOTIATIONS MINUTES
MARCH 16, 2023
TROY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

District Members: Pam Hilliard, Negotiator; Lisa Hunter, Klaire Vogt, Superintendent; Theresa Priebe, Clerk

TEA Members: Crystal Tibbals, Negotiator; Matthew Bruns, Alison Bohman

The meeting began at 4:00 p.m.

Pam Hilliard welcomed everyone and asked that everyone state their name for the record. Pam Hilliard, negotiator on the Board side, Klaire Vogt, Superintendent, Crystal Tibbals lead negotiator for TEA this year, Matt Bruns, Alison Bohman, Lisa Hunter, School Board, Theresa Priebe, Clerk.

Pam Hilliard stated alright. Thanks. Alright, well I think we are going to turn it over to you. Do you have a proposal that you want to give to us?

Crystal Tibbals stated well, more talking points that we were just wanting to, I made several copies so everyone can look, and mostly just things that we want to sit down and discuss for like the good of everyone. You know, because we're all in this together and just some ideas that we had.

TEA Proposal 2023-2024

1. Reinstate the 2022-2023 Master Agreement for 2023-2024 with the following proposed changes:
 - a.) Movement on the salary schedule (steps and lanes)
 - b.) Salary increase—Discussion following the completion of the 2023 legislative session
 - c.) Insurance – How can the district help families cover insurance for dependents?
 - d.) Class size discussion – 7.06
 - i. Limit class sizes to 26 for 7-12 per grade level
 - ii. Possible re-wording of 7.06

Crystal Tibbals continued so just reinstating the Master Agreement for the next year 2023-2024 school year. Maintain movement of the salary schedule. We would like to talk about a salary increase after the legislation finishes up their job, so we know what kind of money we're looking at. We would like to have a conversation about insurance and things that we could maybe come up with as a team to help people that have dependents on their insurance and what possibilities there are to have a conversation and then the last item is just a conversation on classroom size and I did put the number in there possibly adding some limits to class sizes and maybe some rewording of when it does go over that amount. We just want to have some conversation.

Pam Hilliard stated alright, go for it.

Crystal Tibbals stated so yeah. Well, I think we need to kinda table salary conversation for just a little while. I think maybe table is the wrong word but push aside until some decisions are made. I know that JFAC has done the first step of that process and it looks very encouraging, but it's really nice to have everything solid before we start having serious conversations about that.

Klaire Vogt stated yeah, you never know what can happen in a week.

Crystal Tibbals stated, no, because I know, like Klaire tried to keep track of what the rules were, what was happening and it's nearly impossible to track what's happening and where they go and when they get voted down and they get amended.

Klaire Vogt stated they're in committee

Crystal Tibbals stated and this can wait. So, insurance. I'm not sure how much we can talk about that yet but at least we can just get our thoughts out on what we were thinking. Last year there was a whole discussion about moving over to the state insurance and all that and after sitting on the committee with the rest of the team, it was just so cost prohibitive. It was just not a feasible option for the District to opt into and so when we were at the negotiations table, we had talked about how to help with those things and stuff and there was a change that insurance was extended to all employees that worked over part-time which was incredible and we still have this piece with dependents and insuring family or dependents is just so amazingly expensive. We have staff members that work for the insurance and take home around \$100 a month and it's very heartbreaking and so it's something that I think we could maybe sit down and brainstorm some ideas to see what we can do to help people.

Pam Hilliard stated do you have some ideas?

Crystal Tibbals stated I don't have anything solid. Something I had thought about maybe and I don't know how feasible it is but just like a pot of money that the District has that can then be divided up amongst the people that have dependents and when it's all equally distributed and when the money is gone, it's gone. Just something to offset those costs a little bit. And it, like I said, I don't know if it is even a feasible idea to do but just something. I don't know enough about insurance personally and I haven't done a ton of extensive research into it. And so that's why I wanted to talk about it and see if anyone else had thoughts on it because we all have families and we all know how hard it is to do that and how important it is to have insurance.

Matt Bruns stated and I have a question, I guess, for just clarification. Has the insurance committee had any discussions or have they had any official meetings this school year?

Crystal Tibbals stated not this school year. No.

Matt Bruns stated okay.

Theresa Priebe stated we were kinda waiting to see what the legislature was going to do to see if they were going to put more money into it, which I believe they are. Because the support unit is broke out for insurance and discretionary. So a little bit more money was put in for health insurance.

Crystal Tibbals stated okay.

Theresa Priebe stated but until that's approved, we're just kinda at a standstill. So I think we were waiting.

Crystal Tibbals stated okay.

Klaire Vogt stated have you guys heard anything from any other districts that took the state insurance.

Alison Bohman stated I haven't heard anything.

Crystal Tibbals stated what I heard from visiting with IEA last year, there were two or three districts opted in throughout the entire state because it was so cost ineffective for districts to do it. There just wasn't the support. It didn't work out the way that it was supposed to work out and when people really dug in and looked at it, it wasn't a realistic option.

Pam Hilliard stated yeah, I don't know how something like this would work, but at the U of I they have where there's kind of a sick leave account that people can donate their leave to and then people can apply to get leave if they don't have it. I don't know if something like that could work where you're talking about creating a pot of money. So, if you have 100 hours of sick leave and you want to donate some of it to this pot, then the people who need it could apply to get it. There's a whole process related to that but

Matt Bruns stated I think we have something similar to that right, with the Sick Leave Bank.

Crystal Tibbals state yeah, sick leave.

Pam Hilliard stated that could be used for insurance.

Crystal Tibbals stated something different yeah. Because I do acknowledge like money just does not come from somewhere. It has to come from somewhere. I do get that. Just earmarking money as it come in with increases or I don't know. I don't know. Just to get the thought out. But this is still a huge area of need for many of our staff members. So, like Theresa said, it may be we kinda have to wait on to make any solid decision on.

Matt Bruns stated do we know what that timeline looks like probably within the next 2-3 weeks. What would you predict I guess.

Theresa Priebe stated April 19th we're having our post-legislative tour.

Matt Bruns stated okay.

Theresa Priebe stated we'll know something then.

Klaire Vogt stated that's here in Moscow. I think it's open to people to go.

Crystal Tibbals stated is it during the day.

Klaire Vogt stated what they do is they bring it back to you. They go over each House Bill, each bill that has passed and what's the new law and then Julie Oberle goes through the whole finances of it.

Crystal Tibbals stated that would be good. Maybe we should look into going.

Klaire Vogt stated I think it's open to everybody but it's a long day just warning you that by the time you get to Julie's thing, you're like okay.

Crystal Tibbals stated please make this make sense.

Crystal Tibbals stated so, if we just want to keep going pass that insurance for now and then the last thing is discussion on class size. So I did make a couple copies of our current Master Agreement so that it's handy. I don't have enough for everyone, but if anybody wants to look. We're looking at item 7.6 or 7.06 I think. I didn't mark it or anything fancy. Page 19. So right now it reads:

7.06: Class Size: In the interest of a sound learning environment, guidelines for maximum number of students are as follows: K-3 22 per classroom 4-6 26 per classroom. So the thought was possibly adding a maximum number for 7-12 as well. Student/teacher ratios are always the hot conversation and we do amazing work here and we can do amazing work because we have enough people to work with kids and get all the things and provide all the support and do that and we would just like to entertain adding a cap on that.

Pam Hilliard stated so do you have an idea on what you would like that number to be.

Crystal Tibbals stated well, 26 is already set for 4-6, so when we were visiting about it, it's a great number to continue with and continue the number of 26 students for 7-12 grade.

(Pause)

And then the second part of that be the possible rewording of that second portion. It says now that the ratio of general education students, special education students and inclusion students should be structured so that the class sizes are responsive to student needs when total class loads in a grade level exceeds class size guidelines, a meeting will be called by the superintendent to confer with the building principal, grade level and other appropriate teachers to determine the course of action. Goes on to say employment of a part-time instructional assistant will be considered if rebalancing class loads and/or redistribution of staff is possible. Recommendations must be advanced to the Board of Trustees for approval. The part we were looking at is that second to last sentence. *Employment of a part-time instructional assistant will be considered.* Right there. Just because we were thinking that part-time is very limiting and sometimes it may be more and just have more options available as part of that discussion. So we actually drafted a rewording.

Crystal Tibbals handed Pam Hilliard a copy of the rewording.

Crystal Tibbals stated I just took out the part-time mostly. It just had that employment of an additional staff will be considered if rebalancing class loads are/or redistribution if staff is needed to maintain a sound learning environment.

Pam Hilliard stated okay.

Klaire Vogt stated just take out part-time.

Crystal Tibbals stated the part-time piece. The employment of a part-time instructional assistant.

Klaire Vogt stated okay.

Crystal Tibbals stated don't want anything to be too limiting or constricting but just open it up for whatever is necessary.

Pam Hilliard stated okay. Do we want to break out so we can discuss it a little bit?

Crystal Tibbals stated sure. We can go to one of our classrooms.

(Chatter)

TEA team left room to caucus at 4:13 p.m.

Teams back at the table at 4:43 p.m.

Pam Hilliard stated we discussed it and I think we all are ready to agree to table A, B, and C until we know more from the legislature.

Crystal Tibbals stated okay.

Pam Hilliard stated on the class size, we discussed the 7-12 changing that to 26 and we would agree to that.

Crystal Tibbals stated wonderful.

Pam Hilliard stated on the rewording of that paragraph, instead of rewording that sentence, we are suggesting to eliminate it. Just taking that sentence out "*Employment of a part-time instructional assistant will be considered if rebalancing class loads are/or redistribution of staff is possible*". So eliminating that with the idea that right above it, it talks about a meeting with the superintendent and principal and discuss the proposals and take it to the Board. Why have any of that sentence in there?

Crystal Tibbals stated so stay as to determine course of action.

Klaire Vogt stated right. That the action could be varied.

Crystal Tibbals stated for whatever it needs to look like depending on the specific needs of the class.

(Chatter)

Crystal Tibbals stated it already has the stuff for a sound learning environment at the top. Because when I was typing that it was a little redundant.

Klaire Vogt stated The discussion we had through the years there's so many options. Sometimes you want another person there and sometimes you won't need anyone near you. Sometimes a class needs more even, sometimes even the smaller classes need more. You never know. But at least that puts it in. The other piece is we were looking at, it doesn't matter at this time, but we were looking at out-of-district numbers as well. Getting those to be consistent with it.

Matt Bruns stated at the secondary level that could look like if you had a class that was above that, the newly established minimum perhaps they would have to be split up in two sections. Is that kinda what you were thinking?

Klaire Vogt stated those are ideas that we would come up with depending on how it works out.

Matt Bruns stated within that meeting.

Pam Hilliard stated depending on the need of the class.

Matt Burns stated sure.

Pam Hilliard stated if it's a good idea or not a good idea.

Klaire Vogt stated then there are schedules for the four years. I know when you move one or put one in, that's a snowball. So then at lease you would know. I don't know.

Matt Bruns stated just a background on that. The reason why we have that as an item just we thought as a staff a concern we always wanted to maintain the highest quality learning environment for students. I think we're kinda feeling that as a staff but sometimes when the classes get too large, it's really hard to give each student that individual attention that they deserve. That was kinda our feeling on that. That is why it was there as an item.

(Chatter)

Crystal Tibbals stated I think we are comfortable agreeing to this. Just to make it formal, we are agreeing and that we are willing to add the 26 per classroom, to extend it to grades 12. So, it's 4-12. And then we will reword that paragraph to eliminate a portion that says "*Employment of a part-time instructional assistant will be considered if rebalancing class load are/or redistribution of staff is possible.*"

Alison Bohman stated that was always a weird sentence in there anyway.

Pam Hilliard stated well, it's almost like it's restrictive. So why even have it?

Crystal Tibbals stated right. And that's what we were hoping to eliminate was any restrictive wording because every class is individual and with different needs.

Klaire Vogt stated but with this you still bring it to the Board and that decision can be made.

Crystal Tibbals stated right.

Pam Hilliard stated so might we want to initial this.

Crystal Tibbals stated I think we sure can.

Both parties initialed the paper.

(Chatter)

Pam Hilliard stated need to set our next meeting and we would like to suggest April 27th. That Legislative Tour is supposed to start theirs in late April and ours will be April 19th.

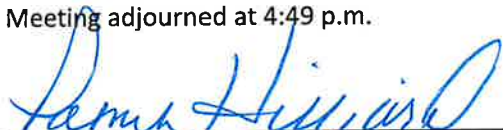
(Chatter)

Crystal Tibbals stated that she is available that night.

Pam Hilliard stated April 27th at the same place.

Next meeting is scheduled April 27, 2023 at 4:00 p.m. at the Troy Elementary School Library.

Meeting adjourned at 4:49 p.m.



Pam Hilliard, District Negotiator



Crystal Tibbals, TEA Negotiator