

## **Employee Council Minutes -10/25/21 Virtual Meeting**

- Amanda Thompson welcomed the Employee Council to the meeting.
- IceBreaker - Favorite fall break memory or favorite thing about fall.
- District Updates
  - We have three Board resolutions guiding the work we are doing (Employee Compensation Values and Resolution, Resolution Transitioning to a New Employee Compensation System, and Benefits Value Resolution)
  - The Board resolutions are tied to Strategic Plan Theme 3 (Positive and Supportive Culture)
  - Kate talked about historical pay adjustments to date to include:
    - In 2019-2020 we had a 3.5 % pay increase to base pay, no increase to employee benefit premiums, a District paid PERA increase, an increase to STD coverage at no cost to employees.
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    - In 2020-2021 we had a pay freeze, furlough days, an increase in employee benefit cost, and a 3% salary reduction for some staff. furlough days and pay reductions, then furlough days were repaid, 21-22SY pay is fully restored. Also in a position to give all of our staff a minimum of a 4% increase. Took first steps in the comp project at a basic level to evaluate pay and make salary range adjustments. Then a one time merit stipend will be paid to all regular employees.
    - In 2021-2022 the full calendar has been restored, no increase to employee benefit premiums, minimum 4% increase to staff, salary range adjustments, and one time merit stipend
  - A question came up about the 12% adjustment to starting licensed pay and the concern that new employees could make more than current employees. Talking points included: adding a salary schedule and having employees complete the Workday tasks to verify education and experience will allow employees to be set appropriately to address compression, taking a step toward adjusting minimum and maximum salary ranges, also capped employees who were over the adjusted ranges. This took effect on 7/2/21 and shared with the BOE, EC and all employees last spring. This was an important step in the interim to take.
- Work Session

Employees were provided with the following prompt and asked to add notes answering this question.

- What should be considered when preparing our system of employees around these concepts?
  - Consideration of classified employees
  - Clear & consistent communication via a variety of channels
  - Compensation history for those that are unfamiliar and why we are where we are
  - Allow more input from all employees
  - Be transparent - list pros and cons that drive decisions.
  - Pay increase over lump sums
  - Need to ensure every employee understands each item in the total compensation package
  - Assurances that teachers won't lose pay or years. There seems to be a general fear that this will happen anytime something changes.
  - Correct compression before making any more changes to starting salaries.
  - Benefits look similar to other districts, how is ours better?
  - Public conversation regarding trade offs. Ask people about their value system. It might not be base pay.

There was discussion about compensation considerations and what is considered total compensation (ie PERA, Benefits, pay increases, etc.) as well as what we may be willing to trade off (ie COLA vs. years of experience or early separation vs. retirement shortage) for other incentives.

- Non-Licensed EE Project Update
  - Discussion around adjusting the minimum and maximum salaries and capping salaries over the max and reviewed all of the job descriptions pertaining to these employees and took this information and compared it against a metro area market analysis as well as salary ranges to determine where adjustments need to be made. Our implementation goal will be next year per the BOE resolution.
  - Mary and LuAnn completed a market analysis for every job type. Mary said we looked at non-licensed positions to compare against six comparable districts. There were 600 jobs that were looked at. Positions with the same job title such as an EA were looked at in detail in order to differentiate between different types of EAs.
  - There are some pay ranges that are paid above the market (Principal, Bus Driver, Custodian, Kitchen Assistant, EA IV and Master Mechanic). We still cannot fill these positions.

- Licensed EE Update
- Mary asked employees to remind staff to get education and experience information submitted in Workday. Josh and Colleen are working on salary schedules. We will overlay the information we receive from employees on education and experience into this schedule and input numbers to see what is affordable. This will get us an overall cost and we can then make a recommendation to the Board. We will then do engagement sessions to get feedback from staff.
- Kate showed a sample salary schedule and what it might look like to include starting salary, cell increments, longevity recognition, District professional development recognition, and movement between schedules.
- The initial recommendation for licensed staff is to create three schedules. One for general, hard to hire and specialists. We want to make it the most advantageous for as many individuals as possible while keeping it affordable. More information will come at the next meeting.
- Amanda asked for feedback on the initial recommendation.
  - One employee said she liked that we are looking at three distinct schedules
  - One employee said people who are highly experienced and Masters + will be discouraged by the lack of ability to move on the schedule. Amanda said people will still be able to move on the schedule based on education and years of experience.
  - One employee asked if someone is at the low end of the pay scale, will they really get a \$10,000 or \$15,000 increase. Amanda said this won't happen all at one time.
- Early Separation Incentives
  - Kate said we are in the midst of a nationwide staffing shortage and said the question is if this is a good time to think about early separation incentives when we are currently having trouble hiring. There are often rules about when and if you can come back to work for the district when you retire. There would be long term savings, but is now the right time?
  - Is one consideration only offering to some groups (that aren't experiencing such a drastic hiring pool deficit)? Amanda said "perhaps."
- Benefits Update

- Scott said in alignment with the Board's resolution on benefits, we are going to do a survey. It is about 95% done; and we are looking to launch it next week. The survey will ask employees to provide feedback on our benefits, what we offer, things that are important to our employees, such as having a narrower network in exchange for premiums. There will also be questions around mental health and the resources the district provides. We will use that feedback to design our open enrollment, our benefit structures and the options we provide, as well as to help with the annual review of our benefits. The survey will come from Lockton; and there will be approximately 20 questions.

Amanda said input sessions will start soon. We are thinking about doing a voice over slideshow showing the work we are doing. School leaders or Employee Council members can share this information out so everyone will have the information communicated in the same manner. There will also be a link with structured questions to answer for anything we need to be thinking about.

- Timeline for the Remainder of the School Year
  - Amanda reviewed the timeline between October 2021 and April 2022 in relation to the compensation and benefits projects.
- Licensed Update and Next Steps Feedback:
  - What feedback do you have regarding this information? What is missing that we should consider?
    - Being crystal clear that the purpose of the feedback session in this next round is to tie up loose ends and not rehash what has already been discussed
    - Being clear about what sphere people are in when giving feedback (i.e. control, influence, concern)
    - Considering current SEL needs
- Non- Licensed Update and Next Steps Feedback:
  - What feedback do you have regarding this information? What is missing that we should consider?
    -
- Closing
  - The next Employee Council meeting will be held on 11/29/21. Items to discuss:
    - Draft of licensed salary schedules
    - Non-Licensed update
    - Review of benefits survey information

- Membership application review and selection of new members