

Employee Council Minutes -1/10/22

Virtual Meeting

- Hosts -Welcomed everyone.
- EC reviewed the Benefits Survey-good response rate. 2,932 employees responded. The largest group that responded were between the ages of 45 and 54. Half of the respondents had been with the District for 11+ years. 61% of respondents were licensed employees. There was an overall (87%) positive response to the District's current benefits. Choice of carriers and providers is a value to keep.
- We plan to use the Benefits data for planning purposes when looking at Benefits in upcoming years. We want to use employee feedback to help drive the decisions that we make.
- Opened it up for questions. One employee said that back in the day there was a Benefits committee. Could this be reinstated? This is something that is possible and has been discussed this year. With all the demands on employees currently, we didn't want to implement a committee at this time.
- Another employee asked if Benefits would be changed for this next cycle. We don't know at this time; however, we will review all options. Our goal is to provide the best benefits at the lowest possible cost. If there were to be any changes, we would communicate it well in advance.
- We then moved to the next topic of the Compensation project and there wasn't an update on the compensation project at this time as nothing has changed since the last BOE meeting on December 14th. We wanted to use this time to allow you to provide us feedback before the Board votes on the presentation. What feedback people have been getting related to compensation from their colleagues? One employee said the big push was to get pay that is appropriate. This employee said they have lost hope. When new employees were given pay increases over existing employees, it made them feel that they are not appreciated, and the years they put into the District don't mean anything. It was asked whether they had looked at the proposed schedule. The employee said one person said they will believe it when I see it.
- Another employee said the feedback he is receiving is that the proposal looks great, but there is not a lot of faith it will come to pass. If the BOE doesn't pass this, it could have some very negative repercussions. They said they had a meeting with a staff member today who is looking at moving to Cherry Creek due to salary.
- Another employee commented that ending pay columns for experienced teachers is low compared to other Districts which may encourage retirement. This practice is not in the best interest for kids. The employee asked if next steps would expand the ending pay on the right side of the salary structure. As time goes on, we will need to make adjustments to salary ranges going forward.
- Cherry Creek funding is very different from DCSD. Their mill levy dollars and funding is much more than what we have. That brings to light whether or not the District goes for a Bond/Mill in the future.

- The question came up as to the timeline. We only meet with our staff once a month. In terms of rolling this out to staff, what does the timeline look like? When will the Principals discuss this plan with employees at individual schools? We are working right now on putting a voice over to the presentation that was given to the Board. It will be recorded next week. We anticipate Principals will be able to share this information within the next several weeks. The employee asked if a staff meeting in February would make the most sense to present this information to staff.
- An employee said she appreciates the work we have done and understands the complexity with the money we have to work with. I know there is only so much to go around; but I do feel that a person in my position who would be over the cell that has been created, would not be over the max in other Districts. Overall it doesn't feel good to have no hope of a raise ever. It really encourages retirement. When it was said the \$70 million would be required to put together a good pay structure, it would be nice for the Board to talk about what the next steps are. It does sometimes feel hopeless.
- An employee asked if we might have longevity pay. This was discussed when we put this proposal together and this is not in the first initial proposal.
- Provided this proposal is implemented, that after year one, all cells on the salary schedule will be increased by the COLA amount. This will increase the salaries year over year.
- An employee said it looks like 69% of employees will get raises immediately if this is implemented. It looks like we are trying to be competitive in hiring new employees as well as help the existing employees. Yes, it hurts the employees who will not get a raise, but we need to go beyond ourselves and see that we are making progress in getting where we need to be.
- As we presented this to the Board, it wasn't a shock to them. There was a lot of support in moving in this direction. The question the Board had was about the affordability long term. We aren't concerned about the first couple of years. We are looking at the long term. We don't want to implement something that is a stop/start. We recognize this is not all things for all people this first year. We are trying to take a big leap forward in moving us to a sustainable and predictable salary structure. We can make tweaks recognizing longevity and bringing lanes down more as we move forward.
- We then moved to the topic of Employee Council vacancies. We had a great pool of applicants who wanted to join the group. New Council members have been selected. They will be communicated and invited to the next meeting.
- It was asked if there are any other topics that they would like to discuss in the remaining meetings of the 21-22 school year. No one brought forward any additional topics.
- Meeting was then adjourned. The next meeting is February 28th.