

Rationale for MEA's 2019-20 Salary Proposal

On Wednesday, February 19th, MEA formally submitted its proposal to the Salary Schedules for the 2019-20 school-year. As you know this process is decidedly democratic. After I visited sites and met with various constituents, combined with the Governor's December budget numbers, the Executive Board discussed, shaped, and then unanimously approved this modest and reasonable proposal. MEA Rep Council also previewed the document prior to Lisa McCarter's submission of the proposal to the District on the 19th. Also, recall that the Bargaining Team represents all segments of MEA: high school, middle school, special ed., and elementary as well as athletics. Here is the proposal followed by a short explanation:

- **An increase to the base salary schedule of 3%, excluding stipend list, inclusive of Steps 15-30, retroactive December 31st 2019**

Explanation: this is not a robust year in terms of funding. In past president's messages we have explained that COLA is down almost a full percentage from last year, and much of the new money the Governor added to the budget is either one-time or programs for which MUSD will not qualify. In addition, the District's obligation to STRS and PERS has increased. Still, we think that 3% is a reasonable ask at this point. For a point of reference, in the Tri-Counties, no District has bargained for more than a 2% raise for 2019-20. MEA "always follows the money." Let's hope that the latest SPED legislation that proposes to increase funding passes and/or the Governor increases COLA in the May revise.

- **Beginning with 2020-21 school year, an additional one (1) paid day shall be added to the school calendar and salary schedule for all certificated employees. All staff shall use this additional paid day to prepare and plan for their classes and caseloads for the school year.**

Explanation: during my site visits, I asked all certificated staff whether or not they would be interested in adding a paid workday for all certificated members. The general response is that "we are already here working, so why not?" This money will go towards STRS and is a solid way to get more money in exchange for the work that we actually do.

- **The District will afford all certificated staff at least one-half day for classroom preparation and grading during a scheduled in-service.**

Explanation: we asked for this in 2017. The District approved it as part of the package that our membership eventually rejected (for different reasons entirely). Our members repeatedly state that time to work in our classrooms is a sign of respect. We would write contract language that would state without a doubt that neither the principal nor the District could assign work during this time. We also will try to schedule this day around or during reporting periods to make it most useful for our educators.

- **Increase "non-instructional" rate to \$30.00 effective July 1st, 2020**

Explanation: we increased the instructional, summer school, home hospital, and other instructional rates. It's time to update this rate as well.

- **An \$500 annual stipend to SLP instructors to cover personal expenses incurred to obtain annual licenses, certifications, and CEUs effective July 1st, 2020**

Explanation: SLPs have to renew licenses and credentials annually. They are very expensive. These credentials are required in order to get Medical billing money, which helps with our bottom line. This request asks the District to share the yearly costs.

- **The District shall pay for not more than ten (10) full days of release time for the expressed purpose of collective bargaining and participation in joint committees**

Explanation: most Districts pay for committee and negotiations out of "mandated cost reimbursements" from the state. MEA would like MUSD to share the expense of the collective bargaining process, as well as, when a sub is necessary due to joint committees, such as Health benefits meetings.

- **A teacher in a departmentalized grade level who volunteers to teach during his/her planning period shall be compensated one-fifth (1/5) of his/her daily rate as calculated on the regular certificated salary schedule for 182 days (two prep days and 180 days of instruction). In the event the assignment starts after the start of the school year, s/he will be compensated the additional 1/5 pay for remaining days of instruction of the school year.**

Explanation: A teacher that works on his/her prep gets ready for 6 classes not 5. They should get paid 1/5th of their salary on the two days prior to the beginning of school.

I hope this helps explain the thinking of the bargaining proposal. I will schedule site visits within the next few weeks. We can talk about the proposal then or feel free contact me by phone or email or Lisa McCarter by email.

Brian