

NEGOTIATIONS

March 5, 2019

Meeting Began: 4:07

Those negotiations team members present: Dr. Cox, Kim Kidd, Shelley Coats, Heather Hepworth, Laurie Copmann, Karl Sandmann, Wes DePew, Michele Widmier, Tina Williams, Dr. Cox, Kerri Tibbitts and TL Lowder.

Audience members: Mary Andersen, Rick Stimpson, Michelle DeLuna, Andrea Schaefer Abbie Vogt, Danelle Stutzman, Ashley Johnson, Sherry Bingham.

Check In

Members checked in and Boe Rushton, first time on the negotiating team, was introduced.

Dr. Cox read a letter from February 15, 2019, that verified the count (839) of certified employees who agreed to have MCEA represent them for negotiations.

TL asked for approval of the minutes for February 21, 2019. The minutes were approved by unanimous consent.

Shelley Coats made a motion to switch items #3 and #4 on the agenda. Tina Williams second the motion. Motion was approved.

Reports on Last Year's Issues

Dr. Cox reviewed the report that was prepared (attached) with the team.

He informed the team the counselor stipend was approved at the April 30, 2018 board meeting and is being paid to the counselors this year.

Changes to the language in Policy #200 Curriculum and Instruction reflects the process that is used with class size. As the school year began, the process was used at Heyburn Elementary. The Board authorized a teacher, but there was not a qualified teacher, so paras were hired to help those crowded classrooms.

Tina Williams asked if it was effective. Dr. Cox said it helped the teacher, but it was not as effective as having a qualified teacher. During the budget process, Dr. Cox is hopeful to address class size.

A District behavioral support plan is being created and will be presented to the Board in April.

The District recognizes the need of mental health counseling for our students. The District has increased the budget to help cover the costs of the counseling that is needed for our students.

Teaching Love and Logic is mandatory for our second year teachers to help them with their skills in classroom management.

TL stated there has been more staff training this year than before, which she facilitated in dealing with student behaviors.

Tina Williams thanked Dr. Cox for the information and stated it was great information to take back to the schools.

MCEA Staff Survey

MCEA informed the team that 125 certified staff members completed the survey and there were several areas they wanted to discuss. Tina Williams informed the team of the comments by teachers stated they were surveyed to death.

Technology

MCEA asked what the objectives were of our technology programs, did they increase test scores, where are we headed and the District's goals. Heather Hepworth informed the team the Technology Plan is on our District's website. They also asked if the time and money put into the programs is yielding results. Half of the staff stated there was too much technology for the teachers and half stated there was too much for the students.

Dr. Cox said there is a need to identify in the buildings why there is a difference. The executive tech committee meets with all tech facilitators to see what the building needs in regards to technology. Dr. Cox stated he will look into the effectiveness of technology professional development.

Karl Sandmann said it would be nice if the technology people visited departments to see what each department needs.

Teacher Burnout

Wes DePew shared that 25% of teachers, many at the elementary level, are feeling burnout because of class size and the pacing of things needing to be completed to meet academic requirements.

With the rigid pacing, it feels like teachers are leaving some kids behind. Michele Widmier stated that is why there are interventions for those students who fall behind. Wes DePew also stated that is a high percentage, and MCEA doesn't want to lose any teachers. Shelley Coats asked if we could talk to staff in the buildings and ask what can be done to help each other.

Heather Hepworth shared that elementary teachers have many pieces to learn with newly adopted curriculum. Trying to implement a school-wide system might be why they feel overwhelmed. This probably is the reason teachers feel more of a burn out because everything they have done for the last ten years in reading and writing has been thrown out the window. Data is showing, however, that the system is working and scores haven't been this high in years. She has a first grade that is at a 93% proficient level. She continued to say that if one of her teachers needed to reteach a lesson, she would support that teacher. She would however, expect the teacher to try to get back on the schedule. Acequia has many students who move, and it's nice to know that students coming in from the District are a couple of days within the instruction level at each school.

Shelley Coats stated we still need to have the conversations. Heather Hepworth agreed that as we talk the more we learn. With the pacing guides there is much required in a year, and we don't get through everything. Not every teacher follows the pacing calendars and some skills are not taught in first grade that is needed in second grade. Kim Kidd shared every time the District has adopted a new curriculum it takes several years. You feel burdened, but will see results.

Karl Sandmann suggested that there are open discussions instead of a survey. Heather Hepworth encouraged teachers to talk to their administrators. Shelley Coats stated administrators need to talk to teachers. Karl Sandmann shared that at the high school math teachers have a common prep and nobody gets lost. It has been extremely helpful.

Report Cards

Shelley Coats shared that the survey was half and half on changing the report cards. Some parents want the ABC type of report card.

Tina Williams said the parents don't understand the standards. If changed it could be less burdensome for teachers. Heather Hepworth shared that the elementary has met and is looking at training all staff on the standards. The current report card allows parents to know exactly what their student is missing. Heather has heard a lot of positives because the parents know what to help their student with. She encouraged the team to go to the website and see what the report card looks like. She also stated that teachers created the report card.

Shelley Coats asked how long it would take to fill out the report cards. Heather Hepworth stated it didn't take much time if the teacher has been assessing through the trimester. The gradebook that was created, if kept up to date, takes no time at all. The District's report card has been modeled by many districts in the state along with the gradebook.

More Recess Time

The MCEA stated that that on the survey some teachers feel by the time they get their students out to recess, it is not long enough.

Flow Chart

The MCEA asked about a flow chart for organization.

Dr. Cox stated it is online and it shows who is next in line. He will look into clarifying the chart. He noted that most concerns are about communication with the District. Michele Widmier is working on guidelines as to who you go to with issues for parents and that will be adapted. This will be helpful for staff as well. Karl Sandman stated if the MCEA knew that information, they could put it in their newsletter.

Shelley Coats asked when the chart will be distributed. It was stated it would be a great handout in a parent/teacher conference, student handbooks, and registration. Dr. Cox stated it may be available by next week where it can be reviewed by teachers but not part of negotiations.

Non-negotiable Concerns

It was stated by the MCEA that most non-negotiable concerns were mostly covered in the survey.

Curriculum Specialist:

Shelley Coats stated the team needed to be aware of the need for a curriculum specialist. MCEA felt the District needed a person in charge of curriculum for teachers to go to when having questions. They acknowledged that the District does not currently have the funds.

Policy #410.00 Complaints Concerning District Employees

Shelley Coats stated the process for complaints concerning district employees is not being followed. The parents are not following the chain of command. The policy could not be pulled up, which will be corrected. There is a need to train staff to call parents before the detention.

ISSUES

Parent Complaint Process/Flow Chart
Coaching/Counselor Stipends in Master Agreement
Staff Calendar in Master Agreement
Professional Development
Salary
Benefits
Staff Attendance at Professional Development Days
Clean up Terminology (Teacher Work Day vs. Teacher Prep Day)
Sick Leave Language Clarification

Break: 5:17 – 5:25

INTERESTS

Negotiable Concerns (items to talk about)

Coaching and Counselor Stipends

Boe Rushton stated the MCEA would like to have the coaching and counselor stipends put in the Master Agreement. He stated coaches and counselors are professional employees of the District. MCEA wants to be competitive with other schools and districts and not lose to the private sector.

He stated that Dr. Cox had met with coaches, and they came up with some options. However, it has gone to the Board and nothing has been resolved. He stated seven out of nine districts have these stipends in their Master Agreement. If it is there, it will be reviewed annually. Boe informed the team that approximately 570 students (more than 700 with some students in more than one sport) participate in sports at Minico and there are many teachers that are coaches.

Shelley Coats asked if the counselor stipend will continue. Dr. Cox replied it was Board approved and will continue in the future.

Karl Sandmann stated moving these in the Master Agreement makes us better at notifying prospective employees.

Calendar

Wes DePew stated MCEA would like the staff calendar in the Master Agreement.

Wes DePew stated after the calendar is approved by the Board the MCEA would like the opportunity to confirm there are enough teacher prep days. Tina Williams said staff felt they needed one more day in their classroom before school starts. 95% on the survey felt a teacher work day was more helpful and beneficial to student learning than a professional development day. Shelley Coats stated this was the largest percentage given on survey questions.

Professional Development Interests

Teacher Growth/Improvement

Student Growth/Improvement

Problem Solving

Teacher Input

Wise Use of Funds

Importance to District

Objectives Clearly Communicate to All (why this PD and the purpose of the PD)

Specific to Academic Discipline (secondary)

Sufficient Quantity to Affect Results

Impact of PD on teachers

Sufficient Time to Implement

Use District Experts

Professional Development

MCEA would like to make professional development more teacher driven. They would like open meetings within the staff of the schools to see what the schools/departments see as issues.

Shelley Coats asked if those who attend conferences are required to share information they received at the conference. Dr. Cox stated that is an expectation of those who go to conferences.

Karl Sandmann stated opening up communication on planning professional development days would give a voice to the staff to state what is important. Shelley Coats stated they want communication, but it doesn't feel they have a venue to do so. Some professional development days could be used for that.

Karl Sandman felt having access to data to make decisions for a professional development day would be helpful. Shelley Coats asked Heather Hepworth how data days are done at the elementary level. Heather stated that during collaboration time data is pulled and the staff reviews it. This occurs during grade level prep time. Those attending are the instructional coach, principal and a team of teachers. Data days may be a professional development day option to be considered.

Shelley Coats asked administration questions before a recent PD day, and she felt those questions were not answered, and it didn't make her a better teacher. When someone comes out of a PD, they want to be a better teacher. Dr. Cox stated they would be a better teacher in relationships with staff and

conversations developed about PD. He also stated our approach going into PD should be I'm going into this to find something that helps me be a better teacher instead of what am I going to get out of this to make me a better teacher.

Dr. Cox stated someone can go to a conference, but changes don't happen immediately. There has been, however, information from a conference that acts as a catalyst for changes. A challenge we have is to have faith in administration that there is a purpose to the PD.

Shelley Coats stated there is a responsibility to the goer but also the maker. Sometimes it is truly not beneficial. Dr. Cox stated that administrators have to submit a PD plan for the next year before they leave for summer. Heather Hepworth stated the needs assessment that administrators review helps to determine the greatest need and develop a plan for professional development.

Laurie Copmann stated as an admin team, communication is the key. The admin team could come up with things to encourage the staff and ask for ideas for professional development. Admin can have conversations with the staff. She felt the admin need to step up and see what the needs are of the staff and the expectations.

A caucus was called at 6:02 p.m. for ten minutes. MCEA asked for an additional five minutes. Returned at 6:19 p.m.

Wes DePew stated at one of their professional developments that were informed that special education is going to make it harder to integrate special education students into general education classrooms.

Karl Sandmann stated that the math department went to Kim Kidd and expressed what was needed in regards to technology. She got training for the math teachers (after school technology). Kim Kidd felt teachers have to trust administrators that they will bring teachers something effective. Karl Sandmann reiterated it again that it goes back to communication.

Wes DePew mentioned it would be better to give him one thing, not seven. You get these tools, but when do you have time to put it in place?

Tina Williams stated when this came up on the survey, no one could remember what the first PD this year was about.

Boe Rushton: When we talk, we need to address quality and make sure our students are benefiting from it.

Dr. Cox asked where the MCEA was headed with the PD options. Shelley Coats stated they looked at the calendar and would like to make some adjustments. Dr. Cox asked what the MCEA wants to change with PD and if it is days that could be discussed in the calendar. We have already discussed communication, the administrators realize this and it is something that can be addressed. Is MCEA looking to put something in regards to professional development in the Master Agreement?

A caucus was called at 6:45 p.m. and returned at 6:48 p.m.

MCEA indicated that they do not want professional development in the Master Agreement. They just want open communication as to why we are having this PD and how it affects students and is best for the District. It can't be a survey; it needs to be a conversation. Wes DePew stated teachers just want to be the best for kids. The team agreed to not add professional development to the agreement.

Staff Attendance at Professional Development

Dr. Cox stated that some staff members take a personal or sick day on professional development days. When the District has invested to have someone come in, those who do not attend are not part of the team. Tina Williams asked if administrators talk directly to those people. Dr. Cox stated he believed it has been done.

The MCEA will address professional development attendance on a building to building basis. Laurie Copmann stated if staff wanted to be gone on a PD, set the expectation teachers are to be there. Kim Kidd asked if the administrator says no to a personal day, will the teacher go the MCEA? Dr. Cox shared the language in the Master Agreement. The administration will be informed that administrators can deny personal leave on a professional development day. This will be handled by following the current Master Agreement more closely. Shelley Coats stated if the professional development days are well done, people will come.

Salary and Benefits will be discussed at a later date

Tina Williams pointed out the terminology in the Master Agreement does not match what is on the staff calendar. On the agreement it says teacher prep day. Laurie Copmann commented that teacher work day is more positive with parents.

Terminology Interests

Patron Misconception

Staff Confusion

Clear Language for All

Calendar and Master Agreement Alignment

OPTIONS

A. Clean Up Terminology on Calendar

The MCEA agreement says teacher prep day, if it's called a teacher prep day the Board gets more calls from parents. Dr. Cox stated that PD and terminology could be merged. Tina Williams stated the end of the trimester/semester needs to be a teacher work day. Karl Sandmann stated we wouldn't have to change the terminology on the calendar, still call it a teacher work day, but clarify that this is the teacher prep day as listed in the Master Agreement. Shelley Coats stated that was why it was originally changed.

Dr. Cox suggested teacher prep day (identified as teacher work day on the calendar) in master agreement. (It was noted we did not address interests on this topic.) The team approved the terminology interest wording.

Dr. Cox asked that under issues, sick leave language be added for clarification. The team agreed to add sick leave to issues.

Agenda for March 12th (4:30)

Check In

Approval of Minutes

Sick Leave Language Clarification

Calendar/PD

Budget Presentation

CHECK OUT

Adjournment: 7:15

Superintendent Date

MCEA Representative Date