

FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT  
BOARD OF EDUCATION  
FAIRBANKS, ALASKA

Special Meeting

MINUTES

October 17, 2008

President Hajdukovich called the special meeting to order at 11:37 a.m. in the Board Room of the FNSBSD Administrative Center at 520 Fifth Avenue.

Present:

Leslie Hajdukovich, President  
Sharon McConnell, Vice President  
Jennifer Schmidt, Treasurer  
Wendy Dominique, Clerk  
Kristina Brophy, Member  
Sue Hull, Member  
Howard Thies, Member

Absent:

Michael Fitzgerald, Base Representative  
Timothy A. Jones, Post Representative  
Ken Sample, Student Representative

Staff Present:

Nancy Wagner, Superintendent  
Roxa Hawkins, Assistant Superintendent – Elementary  
Dave Ferree, Assistant Superintendent – Facilities Management  
Mike Fisher, Chief Financial Officer  
Gayle Pierce, Labor Relations Director  
Sharon Tuttle, Executive Assistant to the School Board

**FEA Agreement Ratification**

A special meeting was called to ratify the Tentative Agreement between the Fairbanks Education Association (FEA) and the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District Board of Education.

The negotiated agreement between the Board of Education and the Fairbanks Education Association (FEA) expired on June 30, 2008. The Tentative Agreement between the Board and FEA was reached on October 11, 2008, and was ratified by a vote of FEA members on October 16, 2008. The agreement will be effective July 1, 2008 – June 30, 2011.

HULL MOVED, MCCONNELL SECONDED, TO RATIFY THE TENTATIVE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE FAIRBANKS EDUCATION ASSOCIATION AND THE FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF EDUCATION FOR THE PERIOD JULY 1, 2008 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2011.

Ms. Pierce reviewed the major changes in the proposed agreement in the following areas:

- ☑ **Teachers' Salary Schedule** - \$1,200 per cell and 2% on the salary schedule for year 1; \$600 per cell and 3% on the salary schedule for year 2; and 4% on the salary schedule for year 3. Steps in each year of the agreement for those eligible for steps.
- ☑ **Student Activity Sponsorship** – increased compensation, new range 8, and reclassification of some activities.
- ☑ **Health Insurance** – reduced health care employee contributions and option to opt out if covered under other health care.

- ☑ **Sick Leave Bank** – require three days of personal leave or LWOP to access the sick leave bank.
- ☑ **Transfer and Reassignment** – last posting moved to the last Monday of the teachers' contract year.
- ☑ **Preparation Period** – principals would make every effort to accommodate prep time missed due to scheduled early-release districtwide professional development.
- ☑ **Partial Student Attendance Days** – provide three partial student attendance days at the end of each semester.
- ☑ **Grade Determination** – with training and effective computer support, teacher using grading technology and exercising professional judgment would update grades in a reasonable and timely manner, normally every two to three weeks.

### BOARD QUESTIONS

Mrs. Dominique asked if ESSA would be able to participate in the reduced health care premiums. Ms. Pierce stated ESSA would receive the benefit of the reduced health care premiums. She noted ESSA's negotiated agreement contained language that allowed their health care costs to mirror FEA's health care costs, if it would be a benefit to them.

Mrs. Schmidt asked Ms. Pierce to clarify the prep period change. Ms. Pierce explained a principal would make every effort to accommodate a teacher's prep time that had been missed due to scheduled early-release districtwide professional development. Mrs. Schmidt noted that if a student had missed a day of instruction with the teacher due to an early-release and the teacher was offered the opportunity to make up that missed prep time, the student potentially could miss additional time with the instructor. Ms. Pierce said it would depend on the accommodations made.

Mrs. Hajdukovich asked about the changes to the health care costs for employees. The health care costs for employees would decrease from approximately 24% to 14% and she wanted to know what the changes would cost the district. Mr. Fisher said there would be no way to determine how many staff members would opt out of the district's health care plans, but it was estimated the reduction in staff health care premiums could cost the district up to approximately \$1.8 million dollars.

Mrs. Dominique asked Mr. Fisher if the actual costs would be available after the first year. Mr. Fisher said yes, the district would know the exact costs after the end of the fiscal year.

### PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

### BOARD COMMENTS

Mrs. Dominique was truly happy the negotiations had been completed successfully. She thought this round of negotiations had been particularly rough. This was the second FEA negotiated agreement Mrs. Dominique had participated in since she joined the Board. She hoped in future negotiations there could be some preliminary conversations to help avoid some of the problems encountered during these negotiations. Mrs. Dominique reiterated her pleasure of reaching an agreement and hoped it would work out for everyone.

Mrs. Schmidt supported the contract because she felt it would have been very hard on the community and students to have had a prolonged dispute, especially at this time of deployment for many families, as well as a lot of economic uncertainty. Mrs. Schmidt thought the contract was fair for teachers and hoped it would be good for students. She thought both FEA and the district would have to work hard to make sure the contract would not impact future class sizes and other programs that benefited students. Mrs. Schmidt hoped the district had the support of all the people who had packed the board room for the past six weeks in trying to get resources to maintain the district's current programs for students.

Mrs. Hull supported the contract and was pleased negotiations had been completed successfully. She thought reaching an agreement was best for everyone concerned and believed the contract was a generous offer. Mrs. Hull was troubled by some of the continued comments about the district's original offer of 0%-0%-0%. She wanted to reiterate to teachers that the 0%-0%-0% offer was a traditional starting position and there was never any intent from the Board to not offer fair increases. The beginning offer had been more about dealing with language issues first and salary issues later. Mrs. Hull had heard good comments from teachers since they had the opportunity to review the offer and she was pleased with the agreement.

Mrs. Hull agreed with Mrs. Schmidt that the Board would have to be aware the agreement could put pressure on other areas of the budget in the future. The Board may need to give consideration to the district's priorities in order to maintain the programs and services students needed. Mrs. Hull supported the agreement.

Mrs. Hajdukovich appreciated the work of both the FEA and the district bargaining teams coming together to reach the agreement resolution; she knew it had been challenging work for all involved. Mrs. Hajdukovich agreed that reaching an agreement was best for the community. She and all Board members appreciated the teachers in the district and recognized they had a tough job, as did many other district employees. Mrs. Hajdukovich hoped everyone would be able to move forward and the Board looked forward to the rest of the year. She thanked everyone involved in the process.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE. 7 AYES

The meeting adjourned at 11:56 a.m.

Submitted by Sharon Tuttle, executive assistant to the school board.