

General Membership Meeting
November 30, 2021
4:30 PM Webinar

I. Call to Order - 4:30

- A. Webinar format - 149 people

II. Items on Agenda

A. Board Approved Bonus of \$1000

- a. Approved a one time bonus paid out in two portions (\$500 on or around 12/17; \$500 end of school year)
 - i. Rebecca was just as surprised as everyone else
 - ii. This bonus is for every member in the School District
 - iii. Jessie Leisewicz reached out to every bargaining unit with an MOU
 1. Separate check or separate line item
 2. How this would be addressed with new hires

B. Survey in last Monday's message

- a. Rebecca had a link to a survey with what members would like to see for retention.
- b. She is encouraging members to fill out the survey

C. Meeting on December 15 with district

- a. Discussed a special education grievance
- b. Discussed teacher retention

D. Week of December 15th meeting with Senator Schwank

- a. 3 teachers (Kevin High, Dana Schaffer, Eric Knorr), along with Rebecca, Tiffany Dollar and John McKiernan met with Senator Schwank
- b. Discussed certification process from state to state
 - i. Bill was passed by Senate and currently in House to make this process easier (Senate Bill 204)
- c. PDE approving some type of hybrid schedule when school is unsafe due to staffing shortage
- d. Work on retention bonuses to help support staff retention
- e. Within Senator Schwank's group of constituents, there is equitable finances for education.

E. Open Chair Positions

- a. PACE - donations go to help fund education friendly legislative candidates
- b. Labor Relations - attend AFL-CIO meetings and report back to REA
- c. Email Rebecca at president email if interested

III. Questions

A. Special Education Grievance

- a. What is the update on the grievance for Special Ed
 - i. No clear resolution

- ii. the district was notified that the grievance was being pulled out of abeyance
- iii. they have until this Friday to respond
- b. Did the district offer anything regarding the Spec Ed grievance? Why was it put into abeyance to "talk things over" if nothing was really talked over?
 - i. There was a Special Education grievance filed and Special Education membership voted they wanted to hold the grievance in abeyance
 - ii. At the meeting on the 15th, the district could not offer a resolution which is why it was moved to a grievance

B. Health and Safety

- a. Today an unknown car pulled up during a fire drill and was in our parking lot and the car took kids from our school. This is a huge safety security issue for staff and students.
 - i. This will be addressed at SAC on the 8th
- b. Is there a plan in place to get locks fixed on doors throughout the district?
 - i. The district is providing a universal lock so one key opens every door
 - ii. If there are specific rooms needing locks, contact building administration. If there is no response within 5 days, let Judy Treichler and Rebecca know. This will then be brought up at the Health and Safety Meeting as well as told to Steve Franco.
- c. Is there anything being done about the disrespect and defiance of these kids?
 - i. Take a picture of the discipline referral when writing up a student.
 - ii. the administrator should have the referral back to the teacher within 48 hours.
 - iii. There should be a disposition and we can appeal the disposition
- d. On Oct 25, 21 at RHS you spoke about a "State Created Danger Letter" from REA and PSEA to go to the RSD Central Admin. Has this letter been completed? Where is it now?
 - i. This is specifically to the HS
 - ii. A letter would be drawn up and sent to the district from PSEA.
 - iii. The information needed to help support the letter was not received (we only received 63 or 83 responses).
 - iv. With the little amount of membership responding, we didn't get everything we needed.
 - v. The survey is still open; it is imperative for HS staff to fill it out.
- e. What is the district doing with the water situation? It was thought that bottle filling stations would be put in each building and buildings are running out of water very quickly.
 - i. Rebecca will follow up at Health and Safety Plan

C. Retention Bonus

- a. Is the district considering another 'retention' pay?
 - i. The district has asked to sit down and continue the discussion, as they are hearing what we are asking for but they have not discussed another retention pay.
- b. Is anyone going to keep track of the fact that the current superintendent got an extremely gracious bonus for her new

position?? Can we use this to our advantage in the next negotiation

- i. We can absolutely use this to our advantage
- c. Where is this bonus money coming from?
 - i. Assumption is ESER money
- d. What would be the advantage of rejecting the bonus?
 - i. If we reject the bonus, the community may look at the REA in a negative way because every other bargaining unit accepted the bonus.
 - ii. It cannot be guaranteed that the district would consider discussion at a later time
- e. Can we counter offer this bonus? We need over \$1500 to actually take home this \$1k
 - i. We can continue the conversation with the district about what dollar number would help,
- f. How did other districts similar to us "do" Retention Bonuses?
 - i. Allentown, Easton, Bethlehem did not receive a retention bonus
- g. Is there any way for retention bonuses to be based on years of service? For example, 10+ years in the district, your bonus would increase?
 - i. This is something we can bring to the district for further conversations
 - ii. This could divide the membership, as some members might see it as an unfair proposal.
- h. Will this bonus be included as part of our retirement salary (for our 5 year average salary calculation?)
 - i. Hasn't been discussed
- i. We get paid with a separate check when our Section 30s are over \$100; will this be any different?
 - i. This discussion has not occurred
- j. We were told that things would be put in place after this holiday in regard to discipline, structure, processes for the High! We came back and heard nothing. People are tired and no amount of money is becoming worth staying with the district. Taxes, etc are going to be taken out so we will end up with less money, correct?
 - i. Taxes will be taken out
 - ii. This is why we want to continue the discussion with the district so they understand what we are asking for.
 - iii. If money is going to be discussed we need to discuss equity
- k. Possible retention suggestion
 - i. If the district refuses to increase the bonus or grant more bonuses, perhaps you could ask the district to freeze the increases in Healthcare, such as co-pays and the maximum out-of-pocket which is increasing \$1000. Also, waive the monthly premiums during the summer.

D. Retention bonus MOU questions

- a. So if we are "negotiating" this MOU they are offering, that likely means no \$500 check in December?
 - i. The Association can say we do not want the retention bonus
 - ii. The MOU strictly states how the district is going to pay the bonus .
 - iii. There was no notification prior to the board meeting about discussion of a retention bonus.

- iv. Negotiating is not the proper word to use (it's either YES or NO)
- b. When will the MOU be determined? Once it's determined how will we be notified of the details? Will we be voting on accepting this retention bonus?
 - i. Jesse Leisewicz draws up the MOU and presents it to Rebecca.
 - ii. MOU will be sent on a Monday message to the entire membership with a link for voting to accept or reject the bonus.
 - iii. If we reject the MOU, it is not guaranteed that the district will want to continue conversations of what membership is asking for what it needs or wants.

E. Early Dismissals

- a. Could the next survey please ask our members if the Early Dismissals are helpful, or more trouble than they are worth?
 - i. This can be included again
- b. There are teachers that feel they have more work and stress on them due to still having to post assignments during these early dismissal days. General ed teachers are feeling there doing more work than other teachers in the building.
 - i. Rebecca has heard mixed reviews about Early Dismissal Friday
 - ii. Specialists having their specials cancelled and regular ed teachers have to provide something for them to do.
 - iii. From the responses received so far (330) most people feel they are beneficial
 - iv. we have Early Dismissal days on the SAC agenda for December 8th (extra work; cancelling classes)

F. Miscellaneous

- a. Why didn't we take part in the parade this year?
 - i. We haven't for years
- b. Has there been consideration toward requesting that RSD reimburse school social workers for the additional certification we are now required to hold as a result of the new PDE cert?
 - i. This is very specific question; email Rebecca
- c. We all know that our students have learning gaps, why can't we slow things down, instead of maintaining the same pace in the pacing guides?
 - i. This is a fair request we can bring to administration and can be added as a suggestion for what we need to help ourselves and our students.
- d. Will this format be used for the next General Membership meeting?
 - i. We have used this in the Fall, (400-500 people); Spring (34)
 - ii. This is the best platform to handle the amount of participants.
 - iii. Everyone who gave their cell phone number to REA got the information about the General Membership meeting at least 4 times.
- e. Speaking of Covid Funds, is the district going to discuss how the money will be sent?

- i. The district does list this information on the financials on the school board meeting minutes. Rebecca will try to share this information with membership.
- f. Why is RACC requesting \$3 million dollars from RSD for an Early Childhood Academy?
 - i. Rebecca will look into this.
- g. Are you aware that the mode of supervision is going to change for some teachers?
 - i. This can be changed based on principal discretion
- h. Counselors and social workers have been asking for master keys for weeks since we are on the crisis team. We get the runaround and excuses. Is there something the union can do to help? We have also not been told of our roles as part of this team
 - i. Crisis Team - Rebecca will contact Dennis Campbell tomorrow
 - ii. Role of Crisis Team - that comes from Ann Fisher

G. Staffing questions

- a. Do we know how many members we have lost this year, including early retirement - or a percentage?
 - i. Do not know a specific number; for every 1 new employee we get 3 resignations.
 - ii. Resignations are being received almost every day.
 - iii. receiving resignations from people hired in August as well as long-term employees
- b. Do you have specific numbers per building as to how many staff members we are short?
 - i. HS (40); Special Ed (70)
- c. Is the district asking why people are leaving?
 - i. No and Rebecca doesn't believe the district ever asked.
- d. Can you do an information request to find out how short staffed we are in each building?
 - i. Absolutely

H. High School Principal

- a. Any word on a principal for the high school?
 - i. There was a finalist and that person declined so they are back to square one.
- b. Did the district contract out and pay for a Superintendent search?
 - i. BCIU led the Superintendent search

VII. Adjournment - Adjourned at 5:30