

LM Board of Education Response to Mr. McDade's "Lying" Accusations

Mark McDade, PSEA UniServe Representative for the Line Mountain Education Association (LMEA) made the statement that the School Board for the Line Mountain Area School District was "lying" in their statements concerning the last proposal offered by the LMEA during contract negotiations. Once again, Mr. McDade has failed to provide any information which supports his accusations. As in other school district negotiations, Mr. McDade, and his local association, have failed to provide any information that outlines the financial impact their proposal would have on the school district and its taxpayers. Since the Board has the financial responsibility to know the impact a proposal would have on the District, it has to run the numbers.

Based on District analysis, the following is Proof that LMEA increased its demands from their 6/18/15 to 8/26/15 offers to the Board:

The District's latest offer increases wages by \$1,149,672 (25.4%) by the 2019-2020 school year, which is 6.4% more than the arbitrator proposed. The Association's 6/18/15 offer would have increased wages by \$1,303,272 (28.8%). Contrary to the District's efforts to find middle ground, the Association increased their wage demands in the 8/26/15 offer by wanting an increase in wages of \$1,537,488 (34.0%). Furthermore, this proposal also attempts to mandate the number of teachers hired, as well as the mandatory class size, and places the District in the position of needing to hire 13 more teachers. As a result, wages would increase \$2,097,698 (46.4%) by the 2019-2020 school year, not to mention the \$325,000 in additional benefits.

Both offers from LMEA have conceded that no back pay shall be given for the last 3 school years.

The Association's 6/18/15 offer transitioned teacher contributions toward health insurance premiums from a fixed amount to a percentage of salary. A person with single coverage would pay 1.25% of their salary. This percentage would escalate up to 2.25% for someone with family coverage. However, in the Association's 8/26/15 offer, the range was reduced from the 1.25-2.25% down to 1-1.5% of salary. This transition and reduction in premium share would effectively decrease the total dollars reimbursed to the District for Health Insurance.

It is apparent, by the Association's last proposal, that the Association has no desire to settle these negotiations. Positions as outlined above can only indicate their desire to go on strike. Based on McDade's leadership of 5 other local Teachers' Unions toward strikes, regardless of how much they are being offered, it is obvious they just want more!

The District is also perplexed by Mr. McDade's claim that the Association will "fight for and protect the quality of programs and productive learning environments to the students of Line Mountain." As it was the Association who announced a "Work to Rule" (WtR) proclamation on September 26, 2013. Under the WtR, the Association discouraged and/or did

not provide additional services, such as paid after school tutoring, attendance at after school special education meetings, bus duty, and at times letters of recommendation for students applying to college. Now they profess their actions are protecting student education. For nearly a year, the Association only performed the basic requirements associated with educating students. The Association only elected to discontinue the WtR proclamation after their September 3, 2014 announcement to strike on November 5, 2014. Furthermore, the Association claims to be so concerned with the students' learning environment, yet the Association intends to go on strike. Going on strike will more than interrupt the learning environment for the students.

The Line Mountain School Board respects the teaching profession and its value to the community. For this reason, the Board has offered fair and reasonable wage increases and has increased many other fringe benefits for teachers. Unfortunately, due to the Association's latest destructive and counterproductive proposal, the Board doesn't see negotiations getting any closer to a settlement to avoid a strike.