

Thompson School District

Negotiations Session #4 & #5- Summary

April 8-9, 2021

Virtual Meeting

8:00 a.m.

Susan Sparks, Facilitator

WORK PRODUCT

Welcome:

Attendees:

Dr. Bill Siebers - Chief Human Resource Officer

Ms. Dawne Huckaby - Chief Academic Officer

Ms. Charlie Carter - Executive Director

Student Support Services

Mr. Thomas Texeira - Director, Human Resources

Dr. Melissa Schneider - Director Professional Development

Mr. Todd Ball - High School Principal

Ms. Brandy Grieves - Middle School Principal

Ms. Valerie Lara-Black - Elementary School Principal

Mr. Andy Crisman - President

Ms. Kayla Steele - Vice President

Ms. Janet Kincaid - Teacher Berthoud ES

Ms. Kim McKee - Teacher Mountain View HS

Ms. Jill Date - Instructional Coach Sarah Milner ES

Ms. Chrissy Marshal - Teacher Loveland HS

Ms. Sue Teumer, Teacher - Lucile Erwin MS

Mr. Jonathan Talan - Teacher Lincoln/Ponderosa

Purpose:

Create solutions and recommendations for 2021-22 school year negotiated items

1. How can we provide opportunities for effective professional development within the district?
2. How do we create a system that maximizes teachers' ability to shape their own professional activities?
3. How do we provide a continuum of services that ensure a safe learning and teaching environment to meet the needs of a diverse student population?
4. What are the quality learning and working conditions for specialized programs and schools, including K-8 schools?
5. How do we structure time within the contract day to maximize student learning and teacher effectiveness?
6. How can we recruit and retain highly qualified and effective professionals?
7. How do we address Memorandum of Understanding cleanup?

Agenda:

- **Welcome and purpose**
- **Check in and expectations**
- **Continuation of Story from Question #3**
 - How do we provide a continuum of services that ensure a safe learning and teaching environment to meet the needs of a diverse student population?
 - **Jennifer Guthals - Director of Student Success added to story for Question #3**
 - SEL is used as shorthand ~ it is a layered continuum of support: supporting students social-emotional and behavioral needs
 - Layered support ~ universal (all students), targeted (Tier II) and intensive (Tier III)
 - Prior years there were 20 SEL positions ~ number was reduced to 6, but CARES Act funds used to increase positions to 12
 - Must have fundamental universal layer in place in order for Tier II and Tier III to work
 - Need for positive student engagement and attendance
 - A robust program it will take 3 years of sustained work ~ not just 1 person "championing it"
 - Elementary mobile support team - goes to schools for targeted/intensive support
 - Atlas program for middle school for targeted/intensive support
 - Professional learning needs to be available : Instructional Coach, Train the Trainer, Restorative Justice, Love and Logic
 - Universal support for students will require staff to be trained
- **Financial Update - Gordon Jones, CFO**
 - Preliminary overview of State and District budget
 - Legislative update
 - SB21-053 ~ Adjustments to School Funding FY 2020-21

- Bill approved by House and Senate and signed 3/15/21
- Actual Funded Pupil Count (FPC) and at-risk count for 20-21 is lower than anticipated
- Property tax revenue and ownership tax revenue less than anticipated
- BSF (Budget Stabilization Factor) for 2020-21 is \$1.052B vs originally appropriated amount of \$1.174B
- TSD Per Pupil Revenue (PPR) before rescission, \$7,718 vs originally appropriated PPR of \$7,665 (+ \$53/funded student)
- Long Appropriations Bill
 - Introduced April 5 (2 weeks later than planned)
 - \$479.7M buy down of the BSF in 2021-22 from \$572.4M
 - TSD portion would decrease from \$17.2M in 2020-21 to \$9.3M in 2021-22
 - 2021-22 TSD portion of BSF would be 1.63% of state total and 6.8% less in funding than School Finance Act funding formula calls for at full funding
 - Gallagher Amendment repeal - eliminates need for \$300M budget placeholder
- October Student Count
 - 2020-21 October student count for TSD was 12,751 ~ 1,026 students less than budgeted
 - Preliminary 2021-22 anticipates net increase of 517 students in TSD K-12 (from 12,751 to 13,268) ~even with the increase TSD will be 509 students below budgeted amount
 - No staff reductions even though student counts were 1,026 lower than budgeted
 - Mill Levy Overrides ~ revenue to be shared with charter schools
 - Overall district AV (Assessed Evaluation) decreased by \$92.3M in 2020-21 ~ \$701K less revenue
 - A 2% improvement in net AV would yield \$366K of additional revenue in 2021-22
- Expenditure Increases
 - Insurance premium increase of 4.5% for health, dental, life ~ District to absorb this cost (\$750K)
 - Employer contribution \$8,914/year for 1 FTE (\$14.9M annual employer expense)
 - Increase in property and liability insurance for 2020-21 of 5% ~ additional property under coverage associated with completed bond projects
 - Staffing for Riverview PK-8
 - Cover 2 furlough days in 2020-21 (covered prior year with stimulus funds \$1.1M)
 - Steps and Columns approximately 2.45% increase (\$2.5M)
- Federal Stimulus Funds
 - ESSER 2 approximately \$4.6M available to TSD
 - ESSER 3 approximately \$10M available for TSD ~ 20% has to go to learning loss and return to in-person ~ funds to be shared with charter schools
 - More restrictive than previous CRF and CARES Act funds
 - Funds are available for use through September 2024
 - Funds must be considered as a one-time source of revenue ~not recurring

Discussion:

• Continuation of Question #1

- How can we provide opportunities for effective professional development within the district?

Interests:

- Provide high quality professional development for staff that will support student achievement ~ to support students academically and social-emotional issues as well as an understanding of equity and equity based practices
- Time provided during the work day or school year for PD so people not overwhelmed and spending a lot of non-contract time on it
- PD that provides access to staff on baseline PD any time of day ~ access asynchronously (ex: podcasts)
- Avoid one-size fits all PD
- PD that supports a building's needs and their current work
- Tying PD to Educator Effectiveness ~ provide opportunities for staff to choose areas where they would like to (or recommended) to improve their effectiveness
- The best prepared teachers in front of students at all times

Options:

- Build in asynchronous learning days for staff to complete training while students learn from home
- Restructure TENS week
- Increase teacher contract days to include more PD days
- Self selection PD - themes offered at certain times ~ teachers pick their PD
- Early Literacy PD ~ suspend Article 13-6 (option for both in/out of contract day) for one year only
- Reduce elementary contact days for have Early Literacy PD ~ one/month
- Reduce student contact days to include full PD days
- Revisit EdCamp model
- Identify district priorities at each level to include required PD at each level~ i.e. ES-Early Literacy
- Separating staff development time from PD/District Time
- Like work group trainings ~ ex. grade level from similar schools
- Prioritize immediate and/or ongoing trainings that support district/state initiatives, create a responsive system for the preventative work
- Find a way to put furlough days back as PD days
- More differentiated option, self directed, etc.

Criteria:

- Affordable
- Doable within available hours
- PD makes sense for allotted time (ex: not broken up into too-short sections)
- Doesn't decrease student contact time
- Doesn't extend staff contracts
- Solutions match level and content-specific needs and time-frame of the problem

Straw Design:

- More consistent PD spread throughout the school year
- Look at instructional time/minutes per day and per year
- Student asynchronous learning day(s) to support time for teacher PD
- Restore 2 furlough days
- Look at the 12 non-contact days that could be available for PD, TENS Week, EdCamp, Personalized days, PT Conferences
- Combo late start and district time (monthly, quarterly)

April 9 - Session #5: Welcome, check - in and expectations

- **Continuation of discussion from April 8, 2020**
 - Met as large group - discussed similarities for Straw Designs Q#1
 - 12 non-contact days and restoring furlough days
 - Late start Wednesdays~ increase to 1 1/2 to 2 hours every Wednesday
 - What's needed throughout the year
 - We need something different than what we have now ~ we need more than what we have now
 - Take Wednesday time and make them full days/half days ~ doesn't effect instructional minutes, contact time
 - Small design groups for Q#1 and Q#3

Question #3 - Review of Interests and Criteria

- How do we provide a continuum of services that ensure a safe learning and teaching environment to meet the needs of a diverse student population?

Straw Design:

- Add 1.0 FTE counselors in all elementary schools (use ESSER funds)
- Add extra days to counselors contracts ~ what do they do now with extra days, what are they missing?
- SEL - behavior and mental health specialist support feeder system 12 positions
- 3 SEL, restorative practices coaches work directly with teachers

Next Steps for Question #3

- Reach out to ES and MS counselors
- Cost out additional positions, what they look like
- Needs assessment

Question 1 - Review Straw Design

- How can we provide opportunities for effective professional development within the district?

Straw Design:

- Unknowns need feedback from Board ~ late start Wednesdays
- Restrictions on calendar
- Restore furlough days ~ gain 2 additional contract days (185 to 187, 258 to 260)
- Develop PD calendar for year
- Keep PT conferences same as 2020-21

Discussion:

Question 5

- How do we structure time within the contract day to maximize student learning and teacher effectiveness?

Story:

- Elementary soft starts have expanded and make it difficult to complete all needed work
- Use of classrooms for after-school activities make it difficult to prepare for next day
- ES and some MS teachers report that lunch is in classrooms this year and some specials as well ~ non-contact time has been inefficient
- Moving to an 8-hour day distinction (instead of X minutes before/after school) has made start time gray about what needs to be done during that time
- ES has 300 minutes plan time, MS has 390 and HS has 440 plan/week ~ ES went from 240 - 300 in 2001
- Soft starts vary by ES due to SBSDM
- PLC's, IEPs and 504 meetings happen during plan time (depending on site)
- HS teachers had 5 sections/semester and 5 sections plus a duty other semester ~ it changed to 6 sections/semester ~ next year bell schedule is 6 sections plus duty in advisory/ELO
- IEP and SST meetings extend after contract time
- Not unusual for some K-8 teachers (as well as other schools) to have meeting during every plan period and no individual time
- 3.5 days of teacher-directed time are placed purposefully in calendar where teachers need that time (before fall conferences, beginning of second semester, around spring conferences and near the end of year)
- Principals have limited access to teachers during the contract day because of plan time
- TSD online next year: HS is scheduled to have online and hybrid sections next year ~ new challenges need more time
- Well-meaning mandates constrain teacher time (iReady in MS)
- Expectations for PLC's have changed: vary by school and level ~ staff turnover has added variation from the original plan years ago

Interests:

- Teachers having the time to be prepared to give the best instruction for students
- Work with teachers in small groups, 1 on 1, or in grade level groups to best support students
- Clarity of expectations
- ESS licensed staff being supported to acquire the skills necessary to run IEP meeting in a time-efficient way
- Continuing to be able to use site-based decision making to meet the needs of buildings
- Having time to provide social-emotional learning to students that is uniform across the district
- Help students catch up with their learning loss
- Giving teachers the ability to shape their own activities
- Teachers having the time and support to use informal and summative assessment data to make instructional decisions for students
- Having time with teachers using data to drive instruction and student growth
- Having flexibility to deal with the unknown of students coming back and what we will need to do to provide for them
- Allow teachers to have access to job-embedded opportunities to maximize their effectiveness
- Fostering and facilitating collaboration across the school site
- Equitable planning time across all levels
- Keeping student needs at the forefront of every decisions we make about schedule
- Decrease teacher plan time and increase student contact time to catch up with learning
- Making every moment of student contact time as valuable as it can be
- Staff feels confident they can accomplish everything they need to accomplish in the time they're given

Options:

- Define PLC and dedicate time to it ~ PLC time separate from plan time
- Eliminate soft start
- Ensure teacher prep time at beginning of school day
- Extend the 8 hour day to 8 hours 30 minutes ~ would not include a 30 minute duty-free lunch
- Increase ES plan time
- Define one Wednesday/month as a collaboration Wednesday
- Decrease all plan time to 300 minutes
- Increase all plan time to 440 minutes
- ES only ~ 30 minutes before kids come is individual time unless on duty
- Define ELO, full-time duty
- Increase number of specials teachers section to provide more plan time for elementary teachers
- Training for ESS, GT, ELD, etc. staff to run effective and efficient meetings
- Compensate teachers for time outside contract hours
- Bring back 5 sections and a duty at HS
- Continue offering remote meetings to parents ~ make it easier for parents to attend
- Full time substitutes designated to cover classes for teachers who are in EIP, ALP, etc. and prepared to deliver a specific lesson by level ~ teachers don't have to separately plan for that time away
- Schedule IEPs, ALPs, 504s etc. for full/half days so subs could be hired for the day at a school to cover for teachers

Criteria:

- Legal
- Affordable
- Doable

Question 6

- How can we recruit and retain highly qualified and effective professionals?

Story:

- Hard for classified staff to get support to move into licensed positions
- Staff compensation doesn't match with rising costs of living
- Last several years ES hiring has had well over 200 candidates apply ~ recent hiring has included performance tasks to better identify highly qualified candidates
- Worked towards being regionally competitive over last several years ~ increased steps and columns, 10% raise, almost 25% increase over last 3 years
- More intentional about hiring staff who better represent our student demographics
- Recruitment efforts have purposefully put TSD's name and information regionally in and out of state to continue to be competitive with local larger districts
- We're somewhere between 12-22% behind in pay compared to surrounding districts (Can we get the CompTracker data)?
- There are 20 retirements and 38 resignations in board packet this spring
- CEA's statewide survey showed approximately 40% of teachers are considering leaving the profession
- Insurance increase have been less than surrounding districts, district is still committed to paying them
- Collaborating with higher education to address teacher shortage and lack of diversity among applicant pools
- Career Wise paraprofessional internship opportunity for 2 students who will work as paras while working towards teacher career track
- Extra duty contracts that have been requested
- National Board Certification for nurses ~ this certification specializes skills more into school nursing, would be nice to have that staff in TSD
- Staff had a rough year and feel like they haven't had a voice in decisions (ex: MS curriculum, COVID related return to learn) hard in feeling supported which impacts recruiting and retaining
- Turnover has decreased ~ licensed staff from 18.1% down to 13.6% over last 2 years ~ retaining more staff than we have in the past
- Exit surveys revealed trends about COVID concerns, family moves, working conditions, retire staff very positive ~ no single clear trend
- In 1994 PMI was \$165K allotted in 1995: PMI increased to \$197K, PMI is currently \$150K

Interests:

- Teachers feeling heard and respected
- Closing salary gaps between us and neighboring districts
- Developing our existing staff (to move between classifications and also to cross train within classifications)
- Identifying the best possible candidate during our hiring season
- All professions treated respectfully
- A diverse workforce
- Retaining quality staff
- Improving the positive trend in staff retention
- Developing and offering PD free of charge to all employee groups so staff can grow in their roles and become leaders
- Having the best possible educator in front of our students in every position
- Educators being able to further their own education
- Equity in working conditions for all employee classifica
- Expanding our ability to work with higher education to “grow our own” professionals and retain them
- Finding the right balance between paying people well and making it manageable and possible to do the work
- Increasing beginning teacher pay salary to be competitive with regional districts

Options:

- Increase beginning teacher salary
- Bump PMI by \$50K
- Honor steps and columns on salary schedule and extra duty contract
- Career Pathways Advisor - a position or team that can help staff navigate career development between positions
- Increase pool of candidates for tuition reimbursement for hard-to-fill positions
- Add requested extra duty positions
- Add National Board certification for school nurse to Article 13
- Increase step percentage to fix the slope
- Create upward mobility options within the licensed classification ~ Master teacher position
- Continue tuition reimbursement ~ increase tuition reimbursement
- Keep full-time permanent sub positions

Criteria:

- Affordable
- Legal
- Connected to quality and student outcomes
- Connected to educator effectiveness standards

2+ 2 Oversight Committee

- To meet on April 14 ~ agenda for April 29 & 30 negotiations

Future Timelines

- Future Negotiations Meeting Dates
 - April 29, 2021 – 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., TBD
 - April 30, 2021 – 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., TBD
 - May 5, 2021 - 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. TENTATIVE
 - May 10, 2021 - 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. TENTATIVE

Next Steps...