

NEA Chariho Certified Staff Negotiation Subcommittee Meeting
Executive Session – May 24, 2022
Minutes unsealed May 9, 2023

In Attendance: Chair Linda Lyall, Ryan Callahan, endawnis Spears, Superintendent Gina Picard, Assistant Superintendent Michael Comella, Director of Administration and Finance Ned Draper, Human Resources Administrator Kristen Merritt, Attorney for the School Committee Jon Anderson (virtual) and District Clerk Donna Sieczkiewicz.

III-1. Approval of Executive Session Minutes of May 18, 2022

endawnis Spears made a motion, seconded by Ryan Callahan and it was

VOTED: To approve the executive session minutes of May 24, 2022. In favor: Unanimous.

III-2. Negotiations

Chair Lyall noted they have had two productive meetings; the first with just Vin, Leslie, herself and Jon. The discussion began on the length of the contract. NEA wants a longer one. Vin knows what we can give for salary and stated that is not enough. They want changes to language as well. They want to discuss elementary start time and Early Release Days. They stated they want more consistency amongst schools. They also mentioned the 3.5 hrs time (Article 8D) that is in the contract. One teacher has requested that Ned do an audit because she believes in 2017 that teachers overpaid their percentage that year. Ned explained that the base was established on January 1, 2018. Gina has asked the teacher to sit down with Ned to review this. Chair Lyall noted that NEA had an elementary teacher join them at the last meeting to discuss length of the school day. The contract states they must be ready to start at 8:35 AM and one or more teachers have stated to their secretaries/clerks to not let students in until 8:35 AM. Teachers are not ready to begin teaching at 8:35 AM if students aren't in the classroom, seated and ready to go if they aren't allowed in until 8:35 AM. This teacher mentioned a concern about passing time which cuts into their planning time. They are required to bring their class to a special. Gina stated that all schools, with the exception of Ashaway, have passing time built in to the day. Ashaway has never had an issue with passing time. Gina then noted that the teacher they met with is on the PD Committee and has seen the feedback from staff regarding PD. The comments have been positive so Gina questioned why there is a desire to change Early Release Days. The teacher responded that she was talking pre-COVID and issues that occurred then but they have not had issues since then. Nothing they brought up was relevant to now. Chair Lyall added that the modules teachers do for trainings were shared and NEA did say that some administrators have cut into this time. It was agreed they should have this time for PD. Gina added that they always work with the Union for all committees. Chair Lyall did not feel the sides were that far off to which Jon agreed. Gina questioned the Union's concern about the 3.5 hrs. Jon explained that during the 2017 contract negotiations, a concern was brought forth by CTC teachers that they were required to attend recruitment nights so they could recruit students for their programs (to ensure their program wasn't cut for lack of enrollment). They wanted credit for this – it was an equity issue. The solution was that everyone would be required to do 3.5 hrs (some teachers go to graduation, others attend PTO meetings). Vin felt this was offensive and stated that staff would show up but they didn't. Jon noted this was just put in the Little Compton contract for the same reasons; staff do not show. Gina noted that teachers have to get prior approval from their principal for use of this time to which Kristen added that it can be anything that benefits students. Chair Lyall stated that Vin's comment was that this is not being done the way he negotiated it with Barry. Gina noted this was the first time she heard anything about it. Jon stated that the Union has always wanted to shorten the work day to which Linda added that Vin knows what the money is and he can't tell his members that they didn't get anything. Ryan commented that he would love to change the structure of our healthcare as it was noted that Westerly's contract included an HSA with a large contribution and Westerly also had an increase to their school/work day. The next concern noted by the Superintendent was attendance. It is horrible on Fridays (although many will be in work this Friday because they will not get paid for the Monday holiday if they do not

show). There is definitely a lack of work ethic. Kristen added that Mondays and Fridays historically have had attendance issues. Gina commented that she cannot go to parents and tell them she has to close a building because she cannot staff it. Chair Lyall wondered if they could make this an end-of-the-year comment and tell staff how many days they have taken. Jon noted that people are really burned out and this is not unique to Chariho. Chair Lyall informed the subcommittee that the Union has scheduled another meeting date and time – June 2nd at 4:00 PM. Vin wants to bring his crew to which Jon noted that he discourages this. It seems they get to the point quicker when there are fewer people. Discussion then centered on salary with 2% being the number that could be offered the first year. Ryan asked if this was doable to which Ned explained that he received feedback from WB and we will be in the 4.5% range for an increase and not 5% as predicted. This will give us a buffer. Chair Lyall asked what the subcommittee felt could be offered for the additional year(s). Ryan noted that the 2% is all they have to give so, in essence, we are giving everything we have and they do not want to give anything. Gina stated that they have made it known that they deserve the 2%. Jon suggested we give 2% and get the start of the elementary school day changed so it is consistent with campus schools. Put it together as a package. Gina noted that she is not willing to give up Early Release Days as the District will need to pay staff to stay after work. Chair Lyall felt the subcommittee will need to meet again prior to the meeting with NEA Certified Staff on June 2, 2022. It was decided that a Zoom meeting will be set up for June 1st at 8:00 AM. All were ok with both dates.

Linda Lyall made a motion, seconded by Ryan Callahan and it was
VOTED: To close executive session and return to open session at 6:04 PM. In favor: Unanimous.

Donna J. Sieczkiewicz, Clerk