

## GWRSD Human Resources Committee Meeting Notes

SAU Office Conference Room

December 12, 2023 3:00pm

**Meeting:** The meeting was called to order at 3:02 pm.

**Present:** **Human Resources Committee:** Jack Widmer, Tom Bickford

**Administration:** Caroline Arakelian, Kathy O'Blenes

**Other:** Mary Schillereff, Peter Miller, Pam Buswell, Dawn Dore, Kelly Pollini, Susan Rogers

### **Discussion:**

- Mr. Widmer opened by stating that the purpose of the meeting is for discussion, not necessarily to reopen negotiations and asked how the committee can help the process. He stated that the hiring difficulty is not unique to the Governor Wentworth District and that pay isn't necessarily the only problem or solution, noting the NH unemployment rate is reported at a very low 1.9%.
- Mr. Miller stated that the purpose of the CBA is to attract and retain employees and that the structure of the wages is the problem. He stated that there have been several GWSSA requests to address wages that have been denied. He described the example of Sunbelt contracted services as a source of frustration for employees, who don't appreciate how much more Sunbelt contractors earn per hour compared to themselves. Mr. Miller presented four requests on behalf of the GWSSA members:
  - \$3,000 Retention Bonus – paid at EOY using ESSER funds.
  - Restoration of premium sub pay for paras who fill in for (certified/classroom) teachers.
  - Grant benefits to 29 hour employees, or raise to 30 hour schedules so they become eligible for benefits
  - Create a cash incentive program for employee referrals.
- Discussion included unfilled positions in the District, working in understaffed conditions, ESSER funds, grant-funded positions, bus driver bonuses, the nation-wide labor shortage, an explanation of the requirement for and the quality of contracted Sunbelt employees, GWSSA requests for wage increases, Associate vs Assistant positions, immediate versus long term concerns, taxpayer support of the GWSSA collective bargaining contract and the budget last year, staff morale, increased insurance expenses, and why people are leaving their positions.
- The history of GWSSA requests was reviewed; the first request to reopen negotiations 6 months after the contract was agreed upon and signed, the second request to eliminate the bus driver bonus, and the third request for a \$5/hour wage increase for all support staff.
- The Superintendent and Mr. Widmer explained that the committee cannot make any decisions, that this must be a complete discussion with the whole School Board, and will likely happen at the next Board meeting. Mr. Widmer offered that it is possible that the Board could consider action to improve the situation before negotiations and encouraged the members plan to present these concerns at the upcoming negotiations.

**Adjournment:** 4:10 pm

Recorded by,



Kathy Lagace

School Board Secretary

Approved by GWRSD School Board: **01/08/2024**