



Thompson School District Negotiations Session #1 Summary

April 11, 2024

8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Susan Sparks, Facilitator

WORK PRODUCT

Welcome:

Attendees:

Dr. Bill Siebers - Chief Human Resource Officer
Dr. Melissa Schneider - Chief Academic Officer
Mrs. Pattie Virden - Executive Director
Student Support Services
Mr. Thomas Texeira - Director of Human Resources
Dr. Jason Germain - High School Principal
Brandy Grieves - Middle School Principal
Valerie Lara-Black - Elementary School Principal
Mr. Lazlo Hunt - Director of Special Education

Mr. Andy Crisman - President
Ms. Kayla Steele - Vice President
Ms. Carol Thomas - Teacher Garfield ES
Ms. Kim McKee - Teacher Mountain View HS
Ms. Jill Date - Instructional Coach Sarah Milner ES
Ms. Chrissy Marshall - Teacher Loveland HS
Ms. Sue Teumer, Teacher - Lucile Erwin MS
Ms. Megan Courtright, Teacher - Berthoud ES

Purpose:

Problem solving and solutions for 2024-2025 school year negotiated items:

- Compensation
- Related Item #1 - PLCs: How has the addition of elementary PLC language help support student achievement and/or professional collaboration and/or plan time?
- Related Item #2 - Site-Based Shared Decision Making (SBSDM) plans: How do we support collaborative decision making?
- Memorandum of Understanding cleanup

Agenda:

- **Welcome and purpose**
- **Check-in and expectations**
- **Reviewed Protocols from MOU**
 - #16 - The first session will be held by March 1 of ~~the current~~ **any full** negotiating year
 - #33 - The contract writing committee(s) will consist of **designated** representatives from each participating body.
 - Agreement made by 2 + 2 Oversight Committee on November 7, 2023

Large group approved

- **Interest Based Overview – streamlined**

Meet and greet with small teams to create shared meaning: What does collaboration mean to you?

 - All voices being heard, shared vision
 - Input for common goal, how collaboration can breed creativity
 - Intersectionality, common goal

This team is a consensus and interest-based model

Story: Listening to understand all perspectives

Interests: Search for common ground, use voice, everyone contributes

Options: Suspending judgment, “the sky’s the limit”

Criteria: Listing values, “think abouts”. Is it legal, doable, affordable...

Straw design/evaluation: Apply criteria to options, try go represent as many interests as we can

Implementation/follow up: Write design into agreement

Large group reviewed and approved norms from 2022-2023, changed dates to 2024-2025.

Relationships matter.

Together, we collaborate and create solutions to 2024-2025 negotiation questions.

We will...

1. Keep a broad view.
2. Be good representatives and remember our audiences who are not in the room.
3. Be on time.
4. Provide notification and catch up if absent.
5. Understand and follow small group and visitor protocols.
6. Keep focused on purpose and Interest-based process.
7. Be present and participate in the work.
8. Take care of personal needs.
9. Communicate to the public through spokesperson.
10. Use consensus and conduct temperature checks along the way.
11. Honor small group and committee work.
12. Keep in mind that we don't agree on anything until we agree on everything.
13. Listen to understand first and respond second.
14. Honor talking time. All voices need to be heard.
15. Ok to voice strong opinions.
16. Take risks.
17. Use your voice; all voices have space to contribute.
18. Ask questions and seek clarification as needed.
19. Presume positive intent.
20. Treat others with respect and value all voices and perspectives.
21. Respect others' opinions and experience
22. Keep a sense of humor!
23. Celebrate successes!
24. Support the work of the group and agreements.

Environmental Scan:

- Gordon Jones, CFO, will be available to provide any necessary support
Handout: Thompson School District (TSD) Negotiations Update – 4/11/2024

Legislative Update:

- 2024 legislative session convened on January 10th and is scheduled to end no later than May 8th
- HB24-1207 – Adjustments to School Funding Fiscal Year 2023-24
 - This bill deals with mid-year adjustments to 2023-24 School Finance Act (SFA) funding
 - This bill was introduced in the House on February 2nd and has passed through both chambers; signed by the Governor on March 8th
 - Statewide Funded Pupil Count (FPC) and At-Risk pupil count for 2023-24 was higher than expected, which increases total program funding by \$61.2 million
 - Local share of property tax and Specific Ownership Tax (SOT) collections that support school finance are higher than expected by \$85.2 million
 - Budget Stabilization Factor was maintained at the dollar amount of the original appropriation from the 2023 legislative session for the 2023-24 budget

- These items result in a decrease in total program funding from the state for the 2023-24 budget year by \$24.0 million
 - Statewide average per pupil funding after application of the budget stabilization factor is \$10,670 in 2023-24 (TSD PPR = \$10,091, or \$579 less than state average)
- HB24-1430 – Long Bill (2024-25 State Budget)
 - Was introduced on March 25th
 - The bill has been approved by both the House and Senate with amendments passed by both chambers
 - It now moves to Conference Committee in the JBC in an attempt to reach concurrence on changes proposed by both the House and Senate
 - Last year the budget bill was not sent to the Governor for signature until April 21st
- No bill has yet been introduced to address the temporary property tax legislation that was approved in the special session in 2023 but is only in effect for one year
- 64 Education & School Finance bills have been introduced this session but only a couple are related to finance

October Student Count (Headcount) and Funded Pupil Count (FPC):

- 2023-24 October Count for TSD was 12,522 students (143 students less than budgeted)
- 2023-24 October Count for charters was 2,013 students (26 students more than budgeted)
- 2024-25 preliminary budget forecast assumes TSD student count will increase vs 2023-24
 - Estimated TSD 2024-25 student count is 12,592 students (70 more than prior year)
 - School Finance Averaging mechanism means that even though student count is forecasted to increase by approximately 70 students from 2023-24 to 2024-25, the TSD Funded Pupil Count (FPC) is expected to decline
 - SFA averaging allows the benefit of realizing the greater of the current year FPC or the averaging of the upcoming year with up to the 4 previous years
 - This helps for districts that are in a declining enrollment scenario
 - For TSD, this means the rolling off of the higher FPC figure from 5 years ago and replacing it with a much lower number for the upcoming year

Per Pupil Revenue (PPR) after Budget Stabilization Factor:

- 2023-24 = \$10,091 (\$1,017 increase)
- 2024-25 prelim estimate = \$10,791 (\$700 increase) (SB24-188 School Finance bill as introduced)

Budget Stabilization Factor (BSF):

- 2023-24 = \$141.2 million (TSD share = \$2.3 million) (1.63%)
- 2024-25 = \$0 (TSD share = \$0) (no BSF reduction for first time in 15 years)

Mill Levy Overrides (MLO):

- MLOs passed in 1999 and 2006 are at capacity (\$14,040,000) due to language in the original ballot measures and will not increase in the future
- Due to increasing expenditures over the years and new legislation that began in 2019-20 requiring revenue to be shared with charter schools, expenditures associated with the 1999 and 2006 MLOs outpace the revenue that is collected by approximately 4.2million annually
- MLO passed in 2018 is a fixed mill (7.6 mills)
 - However, state statute limits total MLO collections to not exceed 25% of total program funding (FPC x PPR) as determined by the School Finance Act
 - 2023-24 was the first year that TSD reached that limit, which resulted in the mill levy only being 7.242 mills rather than the 7.6 mills allowed for in the ballot question
 - This resulted in approximately \$1.2 million less MLO revenue than anticipated
 - It's expected that this situation will continue absent any statutory changes
- 2023-24 was an assessment year (every other year) for Assessed Valuation (AV)

- o Overall district net AV increased in 2023-24 by \$605.0 million (22.6%) but only resulted in a 9.9% revenue increase to TSD due to the statutory limitations
- o Change in AV for 2024-25 is unknown at this point for the upcoming non-assessment year largely due to an unknown outcome regarding property tax legislation

Expenditure Increases and Other Factors to Consider (not intended to be all-inclusive):

- Employee PERA contribution rate will not increase in 2024-25 and will remain at 11.0%
- Employer PERA contribution rate will not increase in 2023-24 and will remain at 21.4%
- 7% increase in renewal rate on District health insurance provided for employees (~\$1.2 million)
- Anticipated property and liability insurance increase in 2024-25 due to additional property under coverage associated with ongoing completion of bond projects, increases caused by natural disasters in Colorado (fires, flooding, hail, wind), and more risk associated with cyber insurance
- Increased fuel prices for transportation of students
- Higher costs for other transportation related costs (tires, repair parts, etc.)
- Anticipated significant increase in utility costs for all district buildings, especially for natural gas
- Staffing strategies to address increased student needs
- Staffing strategies for hard to fill positions across all employee categories
- Continued escalation of costs associated with out-of-district placements of significant needs Special Ed students (tuition and transportation)
- General inflationary increases on other Non-FTE expenditures
- Unknown potential funding adjustments in the second year of the Universal Pre-K (UPK) program including allocation of slots, hold harmless provision, acceptance of qualifying 3-year old's in the program, blended funding with other Pre-K offerings, enrollment, staffing)
- Unknown impact related to possible changes to Healthy School Meals for All (HSMA) program, potential reduced funding for Title and other At-Risk programs, effect of potential changes to the school finance funding formula via legislation, etc.

Inflation in School Finance Act:

- Inflation factor used in the SFA for 2023-24 was 8.0%
- Inflation factor used in the SFA for 2024-25 is 5.2%
- SFA calculation is based on the 12-month average for the preceding year
- National inflation measurement typically is referring to the current month vs the same month in the prior year

Federal Stimulus Funds:

- ESSER 3 expenditures of the awarded funds are nearing completion and need to be encumbered by June 30, 2024 and fully expended by September 30, 2024
- Primary focus on use of funds was for staffing to help address learning loss – can/should those costs be absorbed in the General Fund without any new, ongoing funding source?
- Funds must be considered as one-time source of revenue since they won't be recurring – looming financial cliff
- Some positions originally funded through Federal stimulus grant funds have been built into General Fund ongoing budget (counselors at elementary schools, some interventionists, for example)

● **2 + 2 Oversight Committee Report out**

- Created related items
- Elementary PLCs: Looked at wording from 16-1-5a, which was added during last year's negotiations to see how it is working

- SBSDM plans Article 6-1: Collaborative decision making

Related Item 2: - Site-Based Decision Making (SBSDM) plans: How do we support collaborative decision making?

- **Story**
 - Small groups discussed story
 - SBSD in district for years – every school has a plan, varied in length
 - Conflict reported between SBSD plans and BOE policy
 - Variability in how often plans are revisited and redesigned (if at all)
 - Columns that delineate (admin., input, shared) in some
 - Approval of some redesigned plans is incorrect (cabinet approval). May only happen at school level
 - Collaborative Decision-Making Article 6/Attachment 1
 - Changes in leadership/ILT – no plan for redesign
 - Admin/Input/Shared
 - PCC reviewed plans until pandemic
 - Collaboristas/Blue Book
 - 2018-ish PCC reviewed SBSDM against Attachment 1
 - Some buildings revisit during TENS week, but there’s less building time in TENS week so the revision isn’t as thorough
 - Do plans get submitted to elem/sec executive directors? No, because they are designed to be building specific
 - Some building do review of plan at end of year due to busy-ness of fall
 - Some plans state review dates; others do not
 - Variability of what can be decided may impact best practices being implemented
 - Clarity on plan (teachers vs new admin for example) may result in a sense of combativeness
 - Percentage for shared decision ranges from 50-85%
 - Limited district oversight of SBSDM can lead to conflict between district and site
 - Significant number of decisions to be made. Hard to create a plan that anticipates them all
 - The “how” is more important than the “what”
 - SBSDM can preserve programs/traditions that aren’t necessarily district mandates
 - District-level programs (e.g. GT) don’t engage in shared decision making in the same way
 - Site based plans share a history of what has happened in a building. Creates opportunity for conversation
 - Numbers (teachers on team, etc.) aren’t equal – how can voting be representative – some wanting full-school vote adjusted to leadership only vote
 - HR lens: contract, MOU, Handbook, SBSDM plan feel like extension of contract; level of trust in building seems to be reflected in length of plan
 - SBSDM plans often reflective of a building’s culture
 - Plans don’t reflect student vs. staff interest (eclipse)
 - Many schools developed similar templates (elem, sec) for SBSDM plans
 - Many district staff work in multiple buildings. This may be a strength in terms of perspectives
 - SB plans slow decision down to allow collaboration to create decision in the best interest of students and staff; and may create challenges by slowing things down
- **Interests**
 - All stakeholders having voice in major decisions
 - SB plans universal commonality
 - Decisions reflect interests of all stakeholders

- Consistent values across plans and aligned
- Smooth transitions from one admin in a building to another
- Authentic conversations in building/reviewing the plans
- Buildings having autonomy
- Principals not getting stuck between SB plans and district/state/legislative expectations
- **Options**
 - Develop training mod for AR/Principals deliver every x years/every year
 - LBSDM (level based)
 - PCC review SBSDM/audit SBSDM on rubric every (5) years
 - Guidelines for review/redesign every X
 - Create a “decision word bank” by level
 - Universal criteria for what goes in what bucket
 - Student Council/SAC bucket
 - 24-25 reset of SBSDM plans
 - Develop plans for district programs
 - Dedicate TENS week time for SBSDM work
 - Do a deeper revision every (5) years
 - Level-based template/guidelines
 - Study group – system wide consistency
 - Process for better communication
 - Suspend SBSDM if school is on turnaround or P.I.
 - Task force: timely
 - Research other districts decision making processes
 - Timeline for review of plans
 - Define terms like “input”
 - Scrap and start over
 - Universal plan – level templates
 - Universal rating system
 - Create a global approval process
 - Designate timeline to review/revise
 - Allow time for this work
 - Research best practices and common protocols with SBSDM
- **Criteria**
 - Timely
 - Fluid
 - Flexible
 - Responsive
 - Compliant with Board policy, district mission/vision and Strive 2025 strategic plan
 - Reflects stakeholder input
 - Inclusive
 - Transparent
 - Doable
 - Equitable
 - Affordable

Compensation

- **Story**
 - General fund has increased 51%: 2016-2023
 - Since 2016, we’ve had 38-40% increase in spending on instructional salaries

- Sounds like we will get \$9-10M increase in funding (\$8.8M?)
- School Finance Act: inflation = 5.2%
- Budget Study Team (BST) looked at salary adjustments for certain ESS staff – hard to fill positions. Positive impact to filling positions due to salary schedule (also nurses)
- Starting salary \$50,000
- Gordon shared that TSD is a “floor funded district”
- General fund hits – insurance, utilities
- CDE says “cost of living for a family of 3 is \$62,000. Average salary \$60,578
- BST – long term salary schedule and goals (there’s a spreadsheet)
- 4th charge – alternate placement columns for Masters degrees. Wide range of requirements for programs
- Extra Duty salary schedule
- Historically based on 2013-14 base salary, has not kept up with growth of salary schedule
- Investigated/costed out adding elementary leadership positions
- Investigated cost to tie ED salary schedule to current salary schedule: \$50K, 1 step = \$1.3M
- Currently 1,113.45 FTE for ED contracts
- Spending \$2.8M in ED contracts
- ED salary schedule has not gotten steps every year
- Compared ED salary schedule to those of other districts
- ED Committee has a recommendation for negotiations. Re: primary & secondary priorities. Committee takes recommendation that come in prior to February 1 and prioritize those: 4 -1st priority, 4-2nd priority
- Title 9 compliance requires adding certain CHSSA positions
- 70% of Extra Duty contracts are licensed staff, 30% are classified staff
- Extra Duty \$34,958
 - 40K = 573K
 - 46K = 1million
- Raising base to 50K improved vacancies
- Regionally competitive
- **Interests**
 - Highly competitive
 - Attracting high-quality applicants
 - Decrease personnel turnover
 - Balancing FTE w/adequate compensation
 - Retaining employees
 - Less vacancies
 - Eliminate contracted services
 - Living (afford) where they work
 - All plus extra duty
- **Options**
 - Incrementally increase salary to \$60K
 - Incrementally increase ED salary schedule to a current base
 - Task force extra duty salary schedule
 - + positions on it
 - % factor/job area
 - Update/potentially generalize positions

- Etc. (building flexibility)
- **Primary Priority**
- Inst. Leadership team (elem + K-8). 4 ED contracts/school = \$90K
- Middle School Athletic Director (MS + K-8), 7 total = \$26K
- Girls flag football head coach – 1 school to start \$2,717
- Unified programming coordinator – 1 position = \$3735
- Secondary Priority
- Student support team (elem + K-8) – 19 total = \$45K
- HS game manager – 12 contracts = \$20K
- Strength & conditioning coach – 12 contracts = \$36K
- CTSOs – expand # (5 contracts = \$11K) required for reimbursement
- These “proposed” ed contracts do not include benefits of 22.85%
- Incrementally increase exit salary to \$110K
- One-time window for staff to request review of step placement
- Incentivizing for outliers
- Stipend for National Board-Certified nurses
- Study specific graduate level credits
- Fix Extra Duty:
 - Add 4 for elementary leadership team
 - Adjust base rate to catch up
 - Honor Step
 - Look at equity among (rubric w/placement) placements
- Increase to base salary
- Prioritize COLA - % or \$ increase for COLA
- Prioritize extra duties
- Steps/Columns
- Raising base of ED to 50K improved vacancies
- Regionally competitive: Weld District increase 10.9%, St. Vrain \$60,000 base
- **Criteria**
 - Legal
 - Affordable
 - Understandable
 - Equitable
 - Sustainable
 - Attainable

Related Item #2 - PLCs How has the addition of elementary PLC language help support student achievement and/or professional collaboration and/or plan time?

- Large group reviewed summary notes on PLCs from 2023 negotiations and added to story. It was at this point the discussion ended, conversation was off topic and “interests” did not answer the question. Teams then went into caucus.
- Teacher report out: clarified what we are checking/adjusting
- Admin report out: conversation about wording and intent of wording

Small groups resumed work on Options for related item #1 – PLCs

- **Options**
 - Change PLC Language to 2x/month
 - Change to different Wednesdays
 - Flexibility to swap Wednesdays late start with 60-minute plan time
 - Change language to 120 min/month PLC focus
 - No change with current language
 - Continue work on exploration on how buildings are implementing PLCs and plan time
 - Gather information on how elementaries are doing PLC work and the impacts
 - Buildings look at master plan/schedule to (add FTE) find the time

- Increase contract day from 8 to 8.5 hours/day
- 4 day week student contact, 1 day non-contact 1x/month
- At least 330/wk plan 120/month PLC mandated. Site based plan must be 60 at a time either during Wednesday or during day
- If site decides to hold PLC during 300 minutes, then late start can become plan time
- Master schedule review for “extra” minutes – what schools accomplished how and cost
- Language in MOU 16-1-5a and 16-4-1-A6 create more flexibility
- Accomplish the above while still honoring 300 min elem plan time (teacher-directed” added language) 16-4-1a
- **Criteria**
 - Attainable
 - Affordable
 - Clear
 - Equitable
 - Flexible

Next Steps:

- Reconvene on April 25, 2024
- Large group to review work done on April 7, 2024
- Work on straw designs/solutions in both large and small groups
- Look over Site Based Shared Decision Making plans

Future tasks and timelines

- April 25, 2024 at Administration building - 8:00 a.m.
- May 11, 2024 at Administration building - 8:00 a.m.

- **Closure and check out**