

**DOUGLAS UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT #27
DOUGLAS, ARIZONA**

Board Room
Central Administration Building

5:00 PM
February 15, 2023

**Special Board Meeting
Minutes of the Board**

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS:

CALL TO ORDER: Mr. Ray Borane, President

PRESENT: Mr. Kevin Smith, Member
Mrs. Jana Selchow, Member (Telephonically)
Mr. Mitch Lindemann, Member
Mr. Mario Ramos, Member

Others Present: Ana C. Samaniego, Superintendent
Denise Cox, Assistant Superintendent
Cesar Soto, Chief Financial & Operations Officer
Alma Valenzuela, Executive Secretary

Approval of Minutes:

Mr. Lindemann motioned to approve the following minutes. Mr. Ramos seconded the motion.
Motion carried 5/0. ¹

1. January 10, 2023 - Regular
2. January 10, 2023 - Public Hearing

II. PRESENTATION:

A. Discussion/review of decompression salary presentation.

Mrs. Samaniego advised that Mr. Soto will be doing a presentation and at the end Ms. Martha Alonso and Mrs. Cori Moen will provide information on behalf of the committee. A certified salary committee was created and through the conversations and recommendations from the certified salary committee, they felt very strongly over the compression issue. When the base teacher salary is raised to make it an attractive salary, you tend to bring in people from the outside that have never worked for the District and probably at a higher salary close to what a 3rd, 4th, or 5th year teacher makes, because of the jump in the base teacher salary. That is an ongoing problem that has been discussed and there is never a one-way to fix it because eventually you do want to increase your teacher salary to make it attractive. So, what the administration has committed to do is not raise the teacher base salary at a higher rate than what you would bring existing teachers so that the new teachers wouldn't be making more money or very close to it. There have been many discussions through the certified salary committee and this is their proposal, which was

¹A unanimous (5/0) vote will show the members voting in this manner throughout the minutes:

Name	Aye	Nay	Abstain
Mr. Kevin Smith	√		
Mrs. Jana Selchow	√		
Mr. Mitch Lindemann	√		
Mr. Mario Ramos	√		
Mr. Ray Borane	√		

officially presented to Mrs. Samaniego. The certified salary committee has been working alongside the administration.

Mr. Soto provided and discussed the proposal at length. This affects quite a few current certified employees. This problem was caused a few years back when the District was trying to be competitive in recruiting teachers by raising the teacher base salary. In order to fix this issue, the committee has decided to make this recommendation to the Board and be very careful on what is done moving forward to avoid getting into this situation again. Many scenarios were done and the one being recommended to the Board is fair and sustainable and will be added to the employees' salaries and contracts this current school year. The decision of the committee was to have the following criteria:

- It will only affect employees hired before the school year 2019. The main reason for this is because the salary scheduled changed.
- It will decompress up to nine (9) consecutive years of employment at a rate of \$500.00 per year.
- The maximum that an employee can get is \$4,500.00 (equals 9 years) and the minimum is \$2,500.00 (for 5 years).

There is a total of 115 employees (98 teachers, 6 counselors, and 11 administrators) on this proposal. The amount for the proposal is \$480,500.00 plus \$96,100 (employee related expenses such as FICA, social security, etc.) for a total of \$576,600.00. This will be sustainable moving forward.

Mr. Ramos asked what will be done to try to prevent this from happening again? Mr. Soto replied that in the past the teacher base salary along with the current teacher salary were raised in very close amounts which did not leave a difference for first year teachers and current teachers. This year, they are putting a minimum of a \$500.00 difference on the teacher base salary and a first teacher salary. This is to try to avoid the compression to happen again in the near future. Mrs. Samaniego commented that it is a problem that forever will exist. Teacher salaries are something they've always strived to increase. It is a strategy and the administration is committed to wanting to get attractive salaries for incoming teachers but not forgetting about our own and making at least a sustainable difference.

Mr. Lindemann asked if the 67 teachers that will be getting the maximum amount, does that mean that they are at 9 years of service? Mr. Soto replied that they have nine (9) years or more. The committee decided that nine (9) would be the maximum number of years that would be honored. We have teachers that have been here more than 25 years and it would be a lot of money to pay all of those years. Mr. Lindemann asked what is the salary going to be the following years? Mr. Soto replied that they don't have that information as they are working on increases for next year. Mrs. Samaniego commented that for the employees that will be affected with this proposal, the decompression amount will be added to their current salary. For example, a teacher's current salary is \$35,000 and they qualify for the \$4,500, their new contract salary will be \$39,500 (sustainable). Our payroll department will then add the \$4,500 to the existing contract which means they will pay out the amount in the remaining current school year pay periods. If the Board gives teachers a pay increase, then the teacher will also get that increase added to their \$39,500 contract for the following school year.

Mr. Lindemann asked what happens to the teachers hired in the 2020 and 2021 school years? Mrs. Samaniego replied that they will continue getting the raises approved by the Board. The decompression proposal is taking care of the many years that teachers were not given raises during nine (9) years or more (before 2019). The new teachers hired from 2019 will continue getting the annual teacher raise that the Board approves. As long as the Board is able to provide raises, then everybody is going to be getting a raise.

Mr. Ramos will the amount have any effect on the recruitment of new teachers? Mrs. Samaniego that this proposal is not really affecting recruitment or the teacher base salary. When next year's salary schedule is brought to the Board and the teacher base salary is able to be increased, then that will be the new recruitment amount but will have to consider making that raise for the existing teachers.

Mr. Borane commented that this is a good thing to do now and it is time to be able to do something like this since the District is able to do it. Over the years, this District has been devoid of any raises or any considerations to the teachers at all. It's just been within the last few years that the Board has made it a priority and well understood by the administration. The timing is good right now as well because the Board has always said that if the District had any money, they would give the staff as much as they could. Also, the Board will be looking at a one-time payment, as the Aggregate Expenditure Limit (AEL) passed and the money is available. We are looking at a very gloomy, future in the state of Arizona as far as revenues for public schools. We will also be looking at a salary proposal in March for the following year and be able to do as much as we can. This has nothing to do with next year's contracts. The sustainability is what is important here and the administration is assuring the Board that it is sustainable. The Board is going to do the best they can and they want to do the best they can.

Mrs. Selchow asked if the teachers and administration agreed to the proposal? Mrs. Cox replied that the certified salary committee is made up of teachers and administrators from different sites and it is something they have been working on for about two (2) years. The information has not been shared out to the teachers at the sites.

Mrs. Selchow asked about the percentages over the last couple of years, if the administration percentages have mirrored what the teachers have gotten or vice versa? Mrs. Samaniego asked on decompression or salaries? Mrs. Selchow replied on salaries. Mrs. Samaniego replied no, when looking at X number of years, this Board with the exception of last year, gave the administration one more percent than the teachers but in years prior, since the RedforEd movement there was a 20% compared to 10%. The current issue is not about salary raises, it is about being able to approve the amount, which will allow for the compression of the certified staff. It is about honoring the years that they've been here and being able to decompress and add this money to their contract, for sustainability. This was well represented by teachers and administrators and they met with Mrs. Samaniego.

Mrs. Corinna Moen commented that the committee worked on this for two (2) years and would like to thank everyone on the committee, teachers and the administrators. They took input from everyone. Thank you to Mr. Soto for providing the numbers and information. The decompression

is about honoring the people that have been with our District for so long and they kind of got stuck. Thank you to the Board for considering the proposal.

Ms. Martha Alonso commented that as the Douglas Education Association (DEA) representative she sits on the committee only as a support, doesn't represent a school, and only as DEA representation to support the committee. Thank you to the Board for allowing them to be there and to represent. Back in 2012, salaries were looked at by the administration and moved people back to where they were supposed to be after being frozen. This was addressed back then by a different salary committee. The administration has made efforts in the past and those efforts didn't continue for a gap of time, so now they have taken those steps to make sure that it doesn't happen again. We are very comfortable and happy with the proposal.

III. EXECUTIVE SESSION:

The Governing Board may vote into executive session, pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-431.03 (A) (1) for the following personnel matters:

A. Discussion on the administrative staff and District employee salaries.

Mr. Borane advised that for clarification, just in case there was any apprehension or question about how the Board was going into executive session. The Board under the open meeting law state statute is allowed to go into executive session for a lot of things. One is personnel matters and one is salaries. This item, if voted on and approved, when going into executive session to discuss salaries and administrative staff. When talking about administrative staff, you talk about the whole District. If the Board discusses anyone specifically by name, that individual has to be notified and the people that are going to be discussed in this executive session about their salaries, regarding this item, have been notified. This is just for clarification. Always remember that the Board is limited to what is posted and what is legitimately accepted by the law and what can be talked about.

B. Consideration of a 2022-2023 certified teacher to be released from his contract.

Mr. Borane advised that this individual asked that the discussion take place in Open Session.

No Board action is taken during executive session. Should either employee wish to have the executive session dealing with the matter pertaining to that employee held in open session, it shall be conducted in open session following the executive session at this point in the agenda.

Mr. Lindemann motioned to enter into executive session. Mr. Ramos seconded the motion. Motion carried 5/0. *Meeting moved into executive session at 5:27 p.m.*

Return from executive session at 6:03 p.m.

IV. OPEN SESSION:

A. *Discussion/action on the approval of administrative staff and District employee salaries as recommended and determined by the administration.*

Mr. Borane advised that when referring to administrative staff, that includes all administrative staff and all District employees with whatever the qualifications are, that whoever makes the motion, includes.

Mr. Lindemann motioned to approve the administrative staff and District employee salaries as presented. Mr. Ramos seconded the motion.

Mr. Borane advised that the motion entails the decompression for the principal salaries, the assistant superintendent salary schedule and the principal salary schedule. As recommended and determined by the administration. This is to include all administrative staff from the top to the bottom.

There being no further discussion, motion carried 5/0.

B. Discussion/action on the approval of a one-time payment to qualifying District employees as recommended and determined by the administration.

Mr. Lindemann motioned to approve the one-time payment to qualifying District employees as presented which is for the certified employees at \$2,000.00, classified full-time employees at \$500.00, and classified part-time employees at \$300.00; excluding first-year classified staff hired this school year. This is to include Denise Cox, Ana Samaniego, and Cesar Soto. Mr. Ramos seconded the motion.

There being no further discussion, motion carried 5/0.

C. Discussion/action on the request of the release of the Fiscal Year 2022-2023 contract submitted by Mr. Francisco Lamadrid, certified teacher (RBMS).

Mr. Borane advised that this individual asked that the discussion take place in Open Session.

Mrs. Samaniego advised that Mr. Lamadrid is a RBMS 6th grade, 1st year teacher. He has requested and submitted his letter of resignation. His resignation effective February 8, 2023, to relief him of his contract. He has stated that he is going through some anxiety or social/emotional problems, causing a lot of stress and so he requested to be relieved of his contract. He also submitted documentation, a letter from a doctor he sees in Agua Prieta, Sonora, Mexico, for the issues he mentioned.

Mrs. Cox advised that there had been some disciplinary matters that they had been discussing. The administration met with him and he opted to resign from his position. They have spoken to him about his anxiety and learning curve with teaching, which wasn't what he was initially intending to do with his degree. He has struggled a little bit in terms of managing all that comes with teaching. He decided that it was best to resign at this time. There is a long-term, certified substituted covering the classroom, which is science.

Mr. Borane asked if there will be liquidated damages and if he will be rehireable? Mrs. Samaniego replied that the administration is recommending charging liquidated damages and non-rehireable as a teacher.

Mr. Lindemann asked what is the amount for the liquidated damages? Mrs. Samaniego replied that it would be the full amount of \$1,500.00.

Mr. Borane requested to read and review the letter from the doctor. Mr. Borane stated that the Board does not recognize any medical recommendations from Mexico or any foreign country. They have to be certified with the Arizona State Medical Board. The letter was also shared with the Board members. It has no official standing but gives information regarding Mr. Lamadrid.

Mrs. Samaniego advised that she met with Mr. Lamadrid once and he had indicated for several months that the job was hard and he was struggling with just even direction from his administration and the support coming from the administration. As a new teacher, this is an example of someone that is hired that doesn't come from the educational background and struggles with the whole concept of teaching and responsibility that it comes with. Teaching is not something you come in and do from 8am to 3pm. As a new teacher, you have to go above and beyond to learn, especially when you don't come from the field. It is something that they have been addressing and discussing with Mr. Lamadrid and recognizing that teaching is a stressful job. Also, if you are not willing to put in the time to learn the profession, because you are the educator that is before students. Mrs. Cox had also recommended to him the District Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for counseling sessions. Mr. Lamadrid had also requested a transfer out of the school because of the issues, he felt he wasn't getting the support. As a new teacher hire transferring is not an option. He had also requested transferring to a classified position and he was advised of the money difference. Administration wanted him to be successful and he made the decision that it was in his best interest and the interest of kids, as he wasn't able to give 100% of himself due to the issues that he's dealt with (stress, anxiety, being a first-year teacher that doesn't have the traditional training background). Mr. Borane commented regarding the transfer and if he was having difficulties and it was recognized by the administration and regardless of what was causing the difficulties, and the performance wasn't up to par because of that, the District has a policy that no one is transferred if they are having problems.

Open Executive session adjourned at 6:17 p.m.

Mr. Lindemann motioned to approve the release of the Fiscal Year 2022-2023 contract, waive the liquidated damages, and non-rehireable as a teacher. Mr. Ramos seconded the motion.

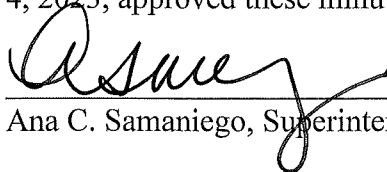
Mr. Borane advised Mr. Lamadrid that it is an open session item and he can address the Board. He cannot say anything critical about the school, do not talk about personalities, and if he wants to make a general statement about what the Board deliberated on the motion he will be allowed to. Mr. Lamadrid declined.

There being no further discussion, motion carried 5/0.

V. ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, Mr. Lindemann motioned to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Ramos seconded the motion. Motion carried 5/0. The meeting was adjourned at 6:19 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Alma Valenzuela, Executive Secretary. The Board at their meeting on April 4, 2023, approved these minutes.



Ana C. Samaniego, Superintendent