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BRITTON-MACON BOARD OF EDUCATION

AND

BRITTON-MACON EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Case No. L77G569

Edward Simpkins

5-31-78

RELATIONS LIBRARY
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The Employment Relations Commission named the undersigned as its Hearings Officer pursuant to Section 25 of Act 176 of P.A. 1939, as amended, upon concluding that the matters in disagreement between BRITTON-MACON BOARD OF EDUCATION and BRITTON-MACON EDUCATION ASSOCIATION might be more readily settled if the facts in the dispute could be determined and made public. Pursuant to this conclusion by the Commission the undersigned Hearing Officer did convene the parties on March 13, 1978 for the purpose of prompting a full disclosure of the facts bearing upon the issues in disagreement.

APPEARANCESBoard

Joe Mosier, Attorney
L. Donald Bush, Board President
Bill Saxton, Superintendent
Kenneth Bortil
Wesley Gilmore, Secretary

Association

Duane Winter
Anthony J. Bandorsky

BACKGROUND

Negotiations between the parties have been ongoing since July 13, 1977. The remaining issues in dispute are economic. They include:

1. Compensation for coaching in a given sport.
 - A. The Association asks that compensation be computed on the basis of the total years experience in the sport and as a percent of the B. A. track.

Br. Ho - Maco Board of Education.

- B. The Board agrees with the above proposal except that it would cap experience credit at five years.
- 2. Coaching levels and experience credit.
 - A. The Association would give experience credit for coaching a sport at any level.
 - B. The Board distinguishes between j.v. and v. sports as well as junior high and senior high, e.g.
- 3. Salary.
 - A. The Association proposes the minimum of 6% on each step of the salary schedule not including increments in 1978-79.
 - B. The Board proposes one year to cover 1977-78; no increase in economics in 1978-79.

DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

According to the Board the Association's proposed salary and economic benefits would increase the teacher unit's cost approximately 12.9% over last year. (See pp. 15 and 21 of Board Report.) Its own proposal would increase this year's costs of that unit by 5.18%. The parties were, upon presenting their last offers, \$38,622 apart, the Board argues. It further contends that since increments represent added costs which the employer must assume responsibility for, such incremental costs must be considered as a part of the negotiated increase.

It is clear to the Fact finder that the Board has the resources to grant the Association's demand. (See Board Exhibits VI; VII; IX.) The major disquieting fiscal factor has been the declining fund equity of the district. Increasingly over the past six years the Board has been compelled to borrow against incoming tax revenues.

While acknowledging this factor the Fact finder is still of the opinion that the Board has offered the Association too little in its efforts to reach agreement this year, when compared with teachers in

Lenawee County Districts the Britton-Macon teachers tend to be near the bottom at both the B.A. and M.A. minimum and maximum salaries. (See Association Exhibits 1-6.) Furthermore this has been the pattern since 1972. Association Exhibit 15 is particularly significant and shows a comparison between Britton-Macon and eight other districts with known settlements. The Board's current offer would keep Britton-Macon above Deerfield but permits it to fall below Hudson.

Association Exhibits 16-20 speak to the Board's claim that increments should be computed as new salary increases. The statements by IRS are found to be probative and the opinions by Locicero, Kelman and Grinstead reveal the weight of expert opinion to favor Association's claims over those of the Board.

Association Exhibits 25-30 are also found to be persuasive in that they show increase ranges without increments of 6% in Adrian; 6.5% in Blissfield; 5% in Clinton; 2% - 2.7% in Deerfield; 5.8%-6.3% and 5.7%-6.4% in Hudson; 2%-6.8% and .2%-7.2% in Madison; 6% in Sand Creek and 3.4% in Tecumseh. Comparables argue strongly for an increase of no less than 5.5% in the current year in addition to any increments to which teachers are entitled. For the 1978-79 year a second increase of 5.5% appears to this Fact finder to be within the Board's capacity and justified by the comparable fiscal status of Britton-Macon's teachers juxtaposed against other Lenawee County teachers as well as against the consumer price index.

Hence the recommendations from the Fact finder are:

1. Salary and fringe increases not including increments for 1977-78 shall be 5.5%.
2. An additional 5.5% adjustment, not including increments shall be effected in 1978-79.
3. Regarding compensation for coaching: The Board's proposal shall be put into effect.
4. Regarding coaching and experience credit: The Board's proposal shall be put into effect.

5. Regarding retroactivity: Only the salary.
6. Regarding Blue Cross-MESSA: The matter is remanded to the parties for negotiation in a successor agreement.

Edward Sniptus

Fact finder

May 31, 1978

Date