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## REPORT OF FACT-FINDER

In the Matter of

JACKSON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

and

JACKSON EDUCATIONAL SECRETARIES ASSOCIATION

*Jack Stuber*Background

The undersigned was appointed to serve as Fact-Finder in the dispute between the Jackson Public Schools and Jackson Educational Secretaries Association on February 21, 1974. A hearing was held on March 25 at which the parties presented evidence and arguments in support of their respective positions. At the request of the Fact-Finder, additional evidence was prepared and transmitted to him. After careful consideration of all the evidence, I make the following recommendations on each of the issues in dispute.

Reduction of Work-Week From 40 to 37.5 Hours

The Association supports this request with information that at least eight other school districts currently work a 37.5 hour week. Three of these districts (East Detroit, Bay City and Benton Harbor) are the same as those submitted for comparison of wage data.

There appears to be a trend toward a 37.5 hour work-week for office employees which should be taken into account by the Jackson School District. While the total reduction in hours would not be appropriate this year, I recommend that the parties set a target date by which a 37.5 hour week should be attained and negotiate towards this objective.

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### Holidays

The Association requests four holidays in addition to the 10 days and 6 hours already granted in the current contract. The School District has offered one additional holiday.

Evidence submitted by the parties shows that 11 days and 6 hours of paid holidays will place the Jackson secretaries in the forefront of all but one of the seven comparative districts on this issue. I recommend that the Association accept the Board's offer and drop its demand for additional holidays.

### Vacations

The Association has requested a modest adjustment in vacation allowance as shown below:

<u>Current</u>		<u>Proposed</u>
6 months service	- 5 days	6 months service - 5 days
1 - 8 years service	- 10 days	1 - 7 years service - 10 days
9 - 15 years service	- 15 days	8 - 14 years service - 15 days
16 years service	- 20 days	15 years service - 20 days

Several other school districts provide vacation allowances more liberal than those in Jackson. It is recommended that the Association request be granted.

### Clothing Reimbursement

The Association request that the clothing reimbursement for damages sustained while on duty be increased from \$50 to \$100 per occurrence is entirely reasonable. Teachers already have a \$100 reimbursement provision and secretaries are entitled to the same level of reimbursement for damages sustained in the line of duty. I so recommend.

### New and Changed Job Classifications

The parties have indicated that they can settle this issue over how to resolve disputes over new or changed job classifications. This issue is therefore returned to the parties for negotiation without a recommendation.

### Contract Termination Date

The Association originally asked that the contract terminate on August 31, 1975, while the School District indicated a preference for extending the current contract (with the additional paid holiday offered) to June 30, 1974. These preferences were, of course, tied to the original positions of the parties. At the hearing, both indicated that they were flexible on this issue.

It would be unwise to enter into a new agreement which would run less than one year and preferably longer. Given the continued protection against increases in the cost of living which should be incorporated into the new agreement and the improvements recommended in this report, it is recommended that the contract continue until August 31, 1975.

### Salaries

The Association is asking for a new salary schedule which would have the following effects:

1. Add two additional steps to the current schedule of 5 percent each effective 1/1/74 and 1/1/75;
2. Increase the rate of pay for each classification after five years of service as compared with the current rate;

3. Permit employees to attain the maximum rate in a classification after nine years of service instead of after 15 years of service; the new maximum would be about 10 percent higher than the current maximum.
4. Add a longevity increase of 2 percent a year for each year after nine years of service; longevity pay under the current schedule stops after fifteen years of service.

The parties have calculated that the proposed schedule would add 6.2 percent to secretarial salary costs over a two-year period.

The current salary schedule may be faulted for providing no longevity increases for the sixth and seventh year of service, for the ninth through the fourteenth year of service, and for service after fifteen years. The parties may wish to examine the schedule to see whether some adjustment should be made to provide continuing incentive and motivation during these periods as do some other school districts.

However the Jackson secretaries have something that no other school district among the seven submitted for comparison purposes has--a cost of living provision which provides for biannual increases whenever the BLS Consumers Price Index for the City of Detroit rises 3.0 percent. In January 1974, they received a 4.7 percent cost of living increase and will receive another approximating 6.0 percent on July 1, 1974. Expectations of continuing inflation during the second half of 1974 and possibly in 1975 indicate that additional increases will be forthcoming under this provision.

Comparative wage data supplied by the parties show that Jackson wage rates for four secretarial classifications already exceed those in Battle Creek, Bay City, Benton Harbor and Kalamazoo and, after the July 1, 1974 adjustment, will be higher than rates in Ann Arbor. Only East Detroit and Grosse Pointe school secretaries earn more than Jackson secretaries. (In making these comparisons, I have taken account of differences in number of years required to reach maximum rates and longevity increases.)

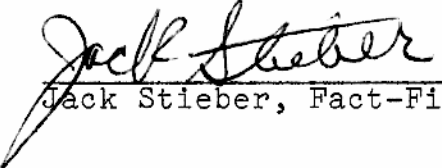
Finally, data supplied by the parties show that for the period January 1, 1970 to July 1, 1974 (excluding the cost of living adjustment increase due secretaries on that date), Jackson secretaries' wages have increased more than those of teachers and administrators and only 1.9 percent less than those of custodians in the Jackson School District.

Given the circumstances outlined above, I can not recommend the adjustment in salary schedules requested by the Association.

#### Conclusion

The parties have demonstrated a keen awareness of the issues involved and a reasonable approach to their resolution. I believe that the recommendations in this report can serve as a fair and equitable basis for accommodation of the differences between the parties and urge them to use these recommendations as a basis for settlement of this dispute.

April 30, 1974

  
Jack Stieber, Fact-Finder