

1754

White Cloud  
Michigan

2/23/78

FF

FACT-FINDING OPINION AND AWARD

RECEIVED  
MICH. ASSOC. OF SCHOOL BOARDS

White Cloud Education Association

and

White Cloud Public Schools

Case No. G77-G905

MAR 2 1978

LANSING, MICH. 48933

Keith Groty 2-23-78

Fact-finder - Keith Groty

Appearances

Employer

Dave Hepinstall, Observer  
Constance Dukes, Observer  
LeRoy Strallon, Negotiator  
Marvin Deur, Negotiator  
Jack Jones, Superintendent, White Cloud Public Schools  
Harry Bishop, Associate Executive Director,  
Michigan Association of School Boards  
James McKibben, Elementary School Principal

Union

Larry Fischer, UniServ Director  
Wanda Davison, Chief Negotiator  
Tom Jolocki, Observer  
Mike Kraus, Negotiator  
Larry R. Hoffman, Observer  
H. N. Musto, UniServ Director

Hearing held: January 13, 1978  
Time: 10:00 a.m.  
Place: Community Room, First State Bank  
White Cloud, Michigan

Michigan State University  
LABOR AND IN-  
RELATIONS LIBRARY

White Cloud Public Schools

Statement of the issues

The parties asked for fact-finding on the following issues so that they might resolve the issues still pending before them, and, thereby, enter a contractual agreement covering the 1977-78 school year.

1. Agency shop. The Association proposed an agency shop clause for first time inclusion in the agreement.
2. Class size. The Association proposed a change in the class size, lowering the number to 27, for initiation of the class aide program in the elementary schools, as well as the secondary schools.
3. Conference leave. The Association proposed that a stipulated two (2) days plus \$200.00 per teacher, per year be made available at the teacher's request for attending conferences or making visitations.
4. Early retirement. The Board proposed an early retirement bonus system, beginning with 15 years of experience and 55 years-of-age.
5. Elementary preparation relief time. The Association proposed an additional 15 minutes to the present morning schedule.
6. Fringe benefits. The Association proposed to continue health and dental insurance at the full family rate with no cap on rising premium costs. In addition, they proposed the addition of long term disability insurance.
7. Wages. The Association sought a seven percent (7%) salary increase, and an additional scale at the Masters-plus-18-credits-level.
8. Workload for librarians. The Association proposed that the librarian(s) have no responsibility for study halls supervision of students.
9. Schedule B (extra duty pay). The Association proposed the maintenance of the present extra duty schedule, but raising the factor to .11, for girls' varsity basketball, girls' varsity volleyball, girls' varsity track, boys' varsity track, girls' varsity softball, and boys' varsity baseball.

Findings and recommendations

Agency shop

The Association proposed an agency shop clause with an indemnity provision for actions taken by the Board. They also proposed that the clause take effect retroactively to the effective date of the contract.

The Board has indicated its willingness to discuss the matter of an agency shop for inclusion in the present contract, contingent upon the Association's agreement to change the grievance procedure or class size limitations.

The fact-finder recommends that the parties include an agency shop clause with an indemnity provision. The clause should become effective with the date of ratification of the new contract, and not retroactively.

Class size

The Association proposed to reduce class size, at all grade levels, from 30 students to 27 students. Specific exceptions would be made for physical education, and vocal and instrumental music.

The Board proposed to increase the class size from 30 students to 33 students per class, in exchange for the above-mentioned agency shop clause. In the alternative, they would propose no change in class size from the present level of 30 students per class.

The fact-finder recommends that the parties agree to continue existing contract language concerning class size.

Conference leave

The Association proposed that each teacher, upon their own request, be approved, annually, for two (2) days of conference attendance with all expenses made up to a level of \$200.00 per year.

The Board proposed no change in the existing contract language requiring administrative approval for visitations, conferences, or conventions.

The fact-finder recommends the establishment of an in-service support fund, to be funded annually, at the rate of \$150.00 times the number of teachers in the unit. This fund is to be used in support of in-service educational activities, such as visitations, conferences, workshops, etc. The remainder of this issue should be settled by continuation of the existing contract language.

#### Early retirement

The Board proposed the establishment of an early retirement program. beginning with 15 years of service and 55-years-of-age, with a bonus schedule dependent upon age.

The Association submitted a counter proposal which would continue insurance protection and bonuses, for a five (5) year period following early retirement.

The fact-finder is not persuaded that the inclusion of this provision, at the present time, will facilitate agreement between the parties. Therefore, it is recommended that this issue be dropped.

#### Elementary preparation relief time

The Association requested that elementary teachers be given one continuous 30 minute and one 15 minute preparation period each day. Testimony indicated that this would require an additional 15 minutes of preparation relief time, preferably to be added in the morning.

The Board was unwilling to increase the preparation relief time without a return to the 3:35 p.m., rather than 3:00 p.m., end of school. Since this is a one year agreement, and the school year will be more than three quarters completed by the time the parties reach agreement, the fact-finder suggests

no changes for this school year. However, it is suggested that the subsequent contract contain the additional 15 minutes both to the preparation relief time and the end of the school day.

#### Fringe benefits

The Association proposed continuation of the health and dental insurance programs as provided in the 1975-77 agreement. In addition, they proposed a long term disability program be instituted.

The Board, while agreeing to a continuation of the health and dental insurance programs, proposed to "cap" the premiums. In addition, the Board rejected the establishment of a long term disability program.

The fact-finder recommends the continuation of the health and dental insurance programs, as contained under the 1975-77 agreement, for the balance of the contract presently under dispute. While he is sympathetic with the Board's position to "cap" the premium rates in order to provide stability in the budgeting process, and sees the desirability of a long term disability program as the Association proposes, such departures from the present status, at this point in the negotiations and the school year, provide an unnecessary impediment to resolution and should be dropped.

#### Wages

The Association sought a wage increase of seven percent (7%) over the 1976-77 schedule. In addition, they proposed a new schedule of Masters-plus-18-credits.

The Board proposed a wage increase between 2.4 and 2.7 percent when added to the existing schedule. The Board's exhibits reflect a higher percentage, since the automatic experience step increase is added to the schedule increase for purposes of calculation.

Extensive review of the documents, presented by both the Association and the Board, leads to the following recommendation:

1. No addition of a Masters-plus-18-credit schedule.
2. A six percent (6%) addition to all steps of the 1976-77 salary schedule.

Workload for librarians

The Association proposed assignment restrictions of the librarian(s) for study halls supervision.

The Board presented evidence showing that individual students, from time to time, were assigned to the library for specific class periods but that such occurrences were minimal.

The fact-finder is not persuaded of the need for such language in the present agreement. Therefore, it is recommended that this proposal be dropped.

Schedule B (extra duty pay)

The Association proposed an increase in the compensation factor for six (6) varsity sports.

The Board proposed continuation of the present extra duty schedule.

The fact-finder is mindful of the necessity to evaluate extra duty schedules for compensation rates, vis-a-vis girls and boys athletics. Based on the information provided, the fact-finder is unable to make specific increase recommendations. It is suggested that the parties make some effort to increase the levels by which girls varsity sports' coaches are compensated.

The fact-finder thanks the parties for the thoroughness of their preparation. It is hoped that the recommendations, above, will facilitate an earlier resolution. Unfortunately, because of the lateness of the school year, the parties will find it necessary to begin negotiations on a successor agreement almost immediately.

Therefore, the fact-finder recommends to the Commission, and to the parties that negotiations on a successor agreement be instituted as soon as possible, following resolution of the current year agreement. Further, if necessary, fact-finding should be instituted on a multi-year agreement, after no more than two (2) months of bargaining.

February 23, 1978

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Keith Groty", is written over a horizontal line.

Keith Groty, Fact-finder