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RE: DEARBORN HEIGHTS SCHOOL DISTRICT #7 AND WAYNE COUNTY
EDUCATION ASSOCIATION: MERC FACT FINDING CASE #D83H-2191

The parties have had four negotiation meetings between September 13, 1983 and January 1, 1984 and five (5) mediation sessions between March 22, 1984 and September 17, 1984. A prehearing conference was conducted on January 8, 1985 at 8750 Telegraph Road, Taylor, MI. The following people were present: The union representatives were: Edward Eglinton, District Director; Charles Davies, District Assistant Negotiator, Donald Jeffers, District Negotiator and George Trudell, UniSev Director. The board representatives were: Terry Strome, Assistant Superintendent of Schools, Erminia DeAngelis, board representative, Edmund Rutledge, Labor Relations Consultant.

At said meeting the following subjects were discussed.

- (1) witnesses: (a) identify same, (b) subject matter of testimony
- (2) charts; (3) stipulations; (4) documents; and (5) briefs.

Each party was instructed to send copies of all exhibits to the opposite party and the factfinder at least three working days before the hearing date, namely January 22, 1985. On January 22, 1985 at 8750 Telegraph Road, Taylor, MI, the aforesaid individuals were present. Testimony was taken and exhibits were submitted.

This bitter disagreement arises primarily out of the issue of teacher salaries. There has been no salary raises for teachers since the 1981-82 school year. The relative position of this school district's salary scale as compared to the thirty-six (36) school districts in Wayne County has deteriorated each successive year.

The cost of living has risen each year and the teachers cannot maintain their standard of living without some salary increase. The teachers' argument for "equity" is well-founded.

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DEARBORN HEIGHTS SCHOOL DISTRICT #7

There is no doubt that the teachers' demands for salary increases are made in good faith. however, are these demands realistic? The school district is a bedroom community with no industrial base for taxes and nominal commercial use. The board is faced with an impossible situation. The board has requested new millage and/or revenue for the years 1981, 1982, 1983, 1984 and 1985. Each time the community has defeated the board's proposal. As a point of information, the attempt by the board to secure an increase in mileage at the city election conducted on January 29, 1985, failed by a vote of 1,239 to 1,019. The very fact that the board requested a millage increase indicates the good faith of the board and more important, that the board recognizes the necessity for salary increases. This tax revolt on the part of the community is not unique to the Dearborn Heights #7 School District. However, the net result is that the teachers are forced to accept a disproportionate share of supporting the total tax burden of the community and as a result thereof the quality of education is bound to suffer.

The board proposes no salary improvements for 1983-84 school year and further indicates that in the event the board has retired all of its accumulated debt and in fact has a surplus in 1984-85, then 62% of said surplus shall be disbursed to members of the bargaining unit. The 62% figure was derived from the fact that teachers' salaries make up sixty-two (62%) percent of the total school budget.

The union seeks a ten (10%) percent increase for the 1983-1984 school year and five (5%) percent for 1984-85 school year plus a percentage equal to the increase in the June 1983 to June 1984 consumer price index. The union has indicated that Dearborn Heights School District #7 has among others, two specific comparables, Trenton and Allen Park. The SEV of

Dearborn Heights indicates District 7 is approximately one-third of the SEV of Trenton and less than one-half of Allen Park. Further, the millage rate of Dearborn Heights #7 is 35.65%; Trenton is 37.4% and Allen Park is 41.15%. Although SEV and the percent of millage are not conclusive of comparative abilities to increase teacher salaries, SEV and millage viewed together with the information contained in the board's exhibits become important factors for a factfinder's recommendation, for example, significant drops in enrollment.

The union has not disputed the validity of the board's exhibits and did not object to their admission into evidence. However, the union has differed in the interpretation and significance of the board's exhibits. The exhibits submitted by the board were examined by all parties and discussed at the hearing. Exhibit 5 indicates that since the 1980 school year, the average teacher's salary of the Dearborn School District #7 dropped from #5 position to a #9 position in a group of thirty-six (36) school districts in Wayne County.

From the period 1980-1981, the ranking for teacher's salaries for the Dearborn Heights School District moved from 12th place in BA minimums to 5th place in 1983-84. (However, the BA minimum category includes few teachers). BA maximum; 8th place in 1980-81 to 19th place in 1983-1984; MA minimum; 3rd position in 1980-81 to 7th in 1983-1984 and MA maximum; second position in 1980-1981 to 17th in 1983-1984. The MA maximum include the majority of teachers. The basic problem is that although the union's demand for salary increases is justified, the board has no funds with which to meet the union demands. The ultimate responsibility rests with the total community. Both parties must educate the community that the quality of the

education of the children will progressively deteriorate and therefore the future of their children will be adversely affected as well as the community itself.

It is the recommendation of this factfinder that the teachers' salaries be increased by 3% for the school year 1983-84 and that no salary increase be made for the school year 1984-85. A percentage equal to the increase in the June 1983 to June 1984 consumer price index shall be paid for the 1984-85 period (the parties having tentatively agreed that it is a 4.2% increase).

RECESS SUPERVISION

Recess supervision applies only to the elementary schools. The board seeks to retain the practice which sets no limit on recess supervision and retain the formula of one teacher per class. The union proposed that one teacher shall supervise three classes. There are approximately 28 students in the average class. There are two recess periods per day--one in the morning and one in the afternoon. The basic purpose of recess supervision is to maintain the welfare and safety of the students and to afford the teachers brief periods for professional use and/or personal needs. This factfinder believes that supervision of two classes by one teacher is adequate and best serves the needs of all parties concerned.

EXTRA DUTIES

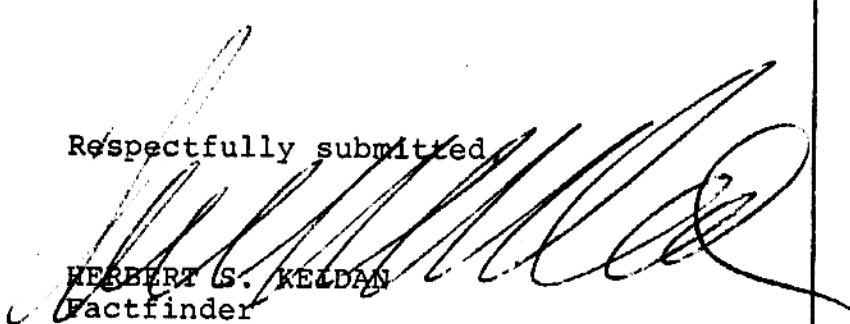
The factfinder recommends that the extra duty compensation be adjusted pursuant to the terms of the salary recommendation.

INSURANCE

Although the teacher's demands for increased insurance coverage can be justified by rising medical, dental, vision and

life insurance costs, it is not realistic that the board at this time can assume an increase of the financial burden of the aforesaid insurance costs.

Respectfully submitted


HERBERT S. KELDAN
Factfinder

February 19, 1985