



For Immediate Release

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NESHAMINY TEACHERS OFFER NEW CONTRACT PROPOSAL IN EFFORT TO JUMP-START TALKS WITH SCHOOL DISTRICT

PROPOSAL INCLUDES HEALTHCARE CONTRIBUTIONS AND OTHER SIGNIFICANT SAVINGS TO THE DISTRICT

LANGHORNE, PA (MAY 31, 2011) — Neshaminy Federation of Teachers (NFT) President Louise Boyd announced this evening that the NFT has presented a new contract proposal to the Neshaminy School District that includes member healthcare contributions and significant savings to the school district.

The new offer is the Federation's third counter proposal to the district over the course of more than three years of unsettled negotiations. During the prolonged talks, the school district has failed to agree to a single contract issue proposed by the NFT. Instead, district officials have stated publicly and privately that the only acceptable contract is one that strictly adheres to whatever terms the district itself offers the NFT.

"Today's counter proposal is the third time that we have made concessions and significant changes to our contract offer," Boyd said. "Each new offer has moved us closer to the middle while each counter proposal by the district has, in fact, moved away from center as they continue to pile on new demands and declarations.

"As further evidence of the district's unwillingness to negotiate a contract that is good for students and fair to teachers and taxpayers, they announced recently that they were rescinding their last offer and will issue another offer in June. Based on the district's actions over the past three years, we have no reason whatsoever to believe that the new offer will be better. In fact, based on public comments by board members, we have every reason to believe the new offer will put us farther apart than ever before."

The NFT's latest offer includes a fixed annual contribution by members to healthcare premiums, a 1 percent salary increase in each of the first three years of the six-year proposal, a 3 percent increase in the fourth and fifth years, and a 3.5 percent salary increase in the final year.

“While much has been said publicly about healthcare contributions, our official stance at the bargaining table has always been that we are willing to work with the district to find achievable solutions to all aspects of the contract dispute,” Boyd said. “To date, the district has not been willing to stay engaged in the hard work of negotiating a settlement, but it is our hope that its attitude toward the talks will change by the June 13 bargaining session. If it does not, it will be the community that suffers.

“We are now approaching nearly four years without a contract,” Boyd continued. “Quite frankly, our membership is fed up with the district’s anti-teacher, anti-union, anti-education actions. We have made every effort to negotiate with this district and they flatly refuse to bargain. They’ve been entrenched in a ‘take-it-or-leave-it’ approach from day one regarding their offers. They have flatly refused to consider even one of our numerous proposals, including healthcare policy changes that would result in the district saving millions of dollars a year in healthcare costs alone.

“While the district blindly looks at the short-term savings it reaps by not settling a new contract, it fails to see the severe damage being done to the long-term educational process and the impact it has on students and the certified staff of Neshaminy. Our commitment to settle a fair contract is unlimited— our patience with this district is not.”

ABOUT THE NFT

The Neshaminy Federation of Teachers was chartered in 1966 and has been the exclusive bargaining agent for the District's certified staff since 1975. Today it proudly represents 675 members and has an active retiree chapter. The NFT is a member of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), an affiliate of the AFL-CIO, founded in 1916 that today represents 1.5 million members in 3,000 local affiliates nationwide.

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