

RIVER RIDGE SCHOOL DISTRICT
STAFF-EMPLOYEE RELATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
Monday, January 11, 2016; Patch Grove Building, Room 15

The Staff and Employee Relations Committee met at 3:30 PM on Monday, January 11, 2016 in the Superintendent's Office/Board Room. Committee Chair Dave Breuer called the meeting to order at 3:30 PM. The following board members were present: Dave Breuer, Lea Breuer and Ken Nies. Other members present included: Dr. Athey, Carol Harris, Kim Breuer, Shawn Chatfield, Jill Faurote, Jeff Graewin, Deb Martin, Terry Mayne, Sandy Mergen, and Deb Trautsch. Eileen Brownlee, the school district's attorney, was also present.

Proof of public notice of this meeting was given by Dave Breuer. The agenda notice was posted January 6, 2016 at 2:00 pm. A motion to accept the posting as proper and timely was made by Lea Breuer and seconded by Dave Breuer. The motion carried by voice vote.

Under "Appearances," no one signed up to speak.

Under "Old Business" the following agenda topics were discussed:

Retirement Benefits

Carol Harris reported that Voya, the district's third party administrator, is able to administer the retirement benefits we are considering, provided Voya receives appropriate and timely notification of the plan parameters. C. Harris provided the Committee with a handout showing the estimated cost to the district if early retirement benefits were provided to a maximum of three employees. **The Committee recommended that the following retirement package be brought to the full board for approval at the Board's February meeting:**

1. The proposed package is a one-time offering.
2. The benefit will be made available to teachers only (no support staff) and will be capped at three teachers.
3. Eligibility will be determined by seniority based on age and experience (the Rule of 80); which will include teachers who are 55 years or older by June 30, 2016 and have 20 or more years of district experience (regardless of part-time or full-time).
4. The three eligible retirees would receive \$6,000 a year for three years plus their sick leave payout at an approximate cost of \$91,000 for all three staff members.
5. The benefits would be paid semi-annually: beginning September 15, 2016 and March 15, 2017 for a total of three years.
6. If the retiree dies during the three year window, the benefit is lost.

Proposed implementation process for retirement package:

1. If the plan is approved by a majority vote of the board on Feb. 10, materials will be made available the next day to those teachers who are interested in applying for early retirement benefits.
2. Application packets must be completed and returned within 21 days of being issued (our estimated return date is March 8, 2016).
3. Following the packet return deadline date, there is a 7-day “Buyer’s Remorse” period. Teachers who submitted an early retirement application have 7 days to re-consider their decision and withdraw their application.
4. The Board will hold its **regular March meeting** on the **third** week of March, March 16, 2016, to allow action on the applications of those who apply.

Proposed Changes to the Employee Handbook

The Committee examined a list of changes to the Staff-Employee Handbook that were identified at the December, 2015 meeting. Items b, c, e, g, and i will be deleted from the list because they do not represent a change to the existing handbook language. (The RRSB Board will be asked to approve the revised list of handbook changes at its regular meeting on February 10, 2016.)

Employee Layoff and Recall Policies and Procedures

The Committee reviewed a handout showing criteria that other area schools consider in the event of employee layoffs and recall.

The Committee recommends the RRSB Board adopt the following teacher lay-off criteria because of its simplicity and flexibility [source: Benton district]. The language reads as follows: **“When it becomes necessary to lay off teachers, in whole or in part, for reasons other than performance or conduct, the Board will make the reduction. Consideration of qualification, areas of certification, and needs of the school district will be used.”**

The Committee recommends that no language be adopted for teacher recall, allowing the District Administrator the flexibility to identify the best qualified teacher to perform the duties of an open position.

Under “job posting and hiring” in the employee handbook, Eileen Brownlee recommends that a statement be added that there is no requirement to post an open position. The rationale is that we don’t want to create a hiring process that will take weeks or months to complete when there may be acceptable candidates who are readily available to step into the position.

Employee Layoff and Recall Policies and Procedures (Cont.)

The Committee recommends the RRSB Board adopt the following support staff lay-off criteria: “When it becomes necessary to lay off support staff employees, in whole or in part, for reasons other than performance or conduct, the Board will make the reduction. Consideration of qualification and the needs of the school district will be used.”

The Committee recommends that no language be adopted for support staff recall, allowing the District Administrator the flexibility to identify the best qualified individual to perform the duties of an open position.

Eileen Brownlee will re-draft pages 12-16 of the Staff-Employee Handbook for consideration by the RRSB Board at its regular meeting on February 10, 2016.

Adjournment – Ken Nies moved to adjourn, Lea Breuer seconded the motion. The motion carried by voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 5:20 PM.