

**Board of Education of Evanston/Skokie School District 65's  
Most Recent Offer to the District 65 Educators' Council (DEC)  
November 2, 2016**

**Executive Summary**

The Board, Administration, and the District 65 Educators' Council (DEC) have worked intently since February to reach a fair and financially sustainable contract that honors the hard work and dedication of our teachers. We are committed to reaching an agreement that will allow our schools to continue providing the best education possible for all children. All parties have agreed to continue to bargain in good faith to obtain this outcome. Teachers continue to receive compensation, benefits, and protections under the contract that expired in August.

We recognize that student success is largely a result of our educators' deep commitment to serving the diverse needs of our learners. To sustain excellence, District 65 must make sound financial decisions that will support our students and educators in the short- and long-term.

The Board has approached negotiations with the best interest of students in mind coupled with a commitment to maintaining a thriving workforce. The Board's goal is to provide teachers with fair and competitive compensation and excellent working conditions. With this in mind, the following sections detail the status of current negotiations on three key issues:

**1. Financial Context.** The District projects deficits starting next school year of at least \$4.5 million per year which will lead to unprecedented layoffs and reductions. This outlook could be significantly worse based on pending legislation to change state funding formulas.

**2. Salary and Compensation.** The Board's financial offer builds upon our existing salary schedule with bonuses and cost-of-living raises that fit within our financial reality. Under this proposal, the average teacher would receive a cumulative raise between 7.5 and 15.4 percent over the next four years.

**3. Working Conditions.** Excellent working conditions are essential for our teachers and staff. We have offered several compromises to requests made by DEC, including the addition of planning time for K-5 classroom teachers, special education teachers, and related services staff. Further, the Board is asking for no additional concessions or changes to the working conditions protections in the previous contract.

The Board's most recent formal offer and an estimate of the associated costs are included. These documents and our actions at the bargaining table demonstrate our desire to compromise with DEC in these negotiations. Further compromise is constrained by our finances, the desire to keep our teaching force intact by avoiding layoffs, and our need to preserve important learning, planning, and collaboration opportunities for teachers and administrators.

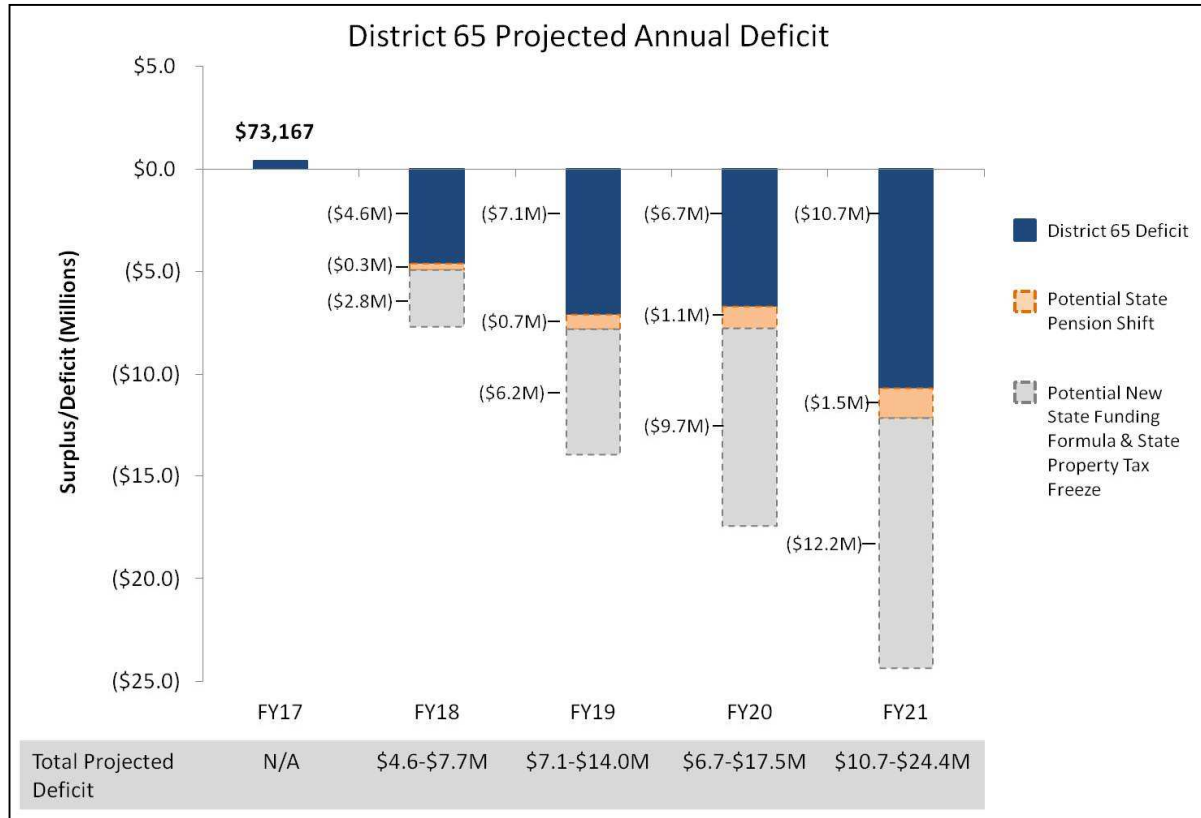
Our current offer is in no way meant to communicate disrespect toward our teachers and their work. We are committed to continuing to bargain in good faith in order to reach compromises that address the concerns of both parties and ultimately meet the needs of all our students.

**Financial Context**

District 65 is facing unprecedented deficits starting at \$4.5 million in the 2017-2018 school year. Projected deficits do not include potential threats to state funding such as property tax freezes, a pension cost shift from the state to the district, reductions to state funding formulas, or any funding towards maintaining technology. Moreover, the District's cash balance of approximately 19% is in the lowest quartile in the state, which has placed the District on the state's Financial Warning list. The figure

**Board of Education of Evanston/Skokie School District 65's  
Most Recent Offer to the District 65 Educators' Council (DEC)  
November 2, 2016**

below shows the District's five-year financial projections, the details of which are posted on the District 65 website.



The District's largest revenue source comes from local property taxes. Growth in this revenue stream is constrained by law to the Consumer Price Index (CPI), which is currently lower than in previous years. The CPI-based revenue increase for FY17 is 0.8%. Over the course of the most recent DEC contract, increases to salaries, benefits, and other expenses have far exceeded increases in District revenues. The increasing deficits above show that the gap between revenues and expenditures is projected to increase over time.

Since the 2009-2010 school year, the District has increased spending on instruction and student supports. During this same period, the District focused cost reductions in administration and other non-instructional areas, including central office and support functions. In the last three years, there has been reorganization in the central office, including retitling of positions and hiring of new employees into positions that have been budgeted at lower salaries than the positions they replaced. District 65 administrative spending currently makes up 4% of the total operating budget and is already in the lowest quartile among school districts in Illinois. This represents a reduction from 5% under the previous administration.

The District's budget projections have been thoroughly reviewed and verified by outside financial experts who have concluded that similar reductions will no longer be enough to prevent the significant impact that future deficits will have on District 65 schools. Any additional financial concessions as part of this contract will impact classrooms and support for students and teachers.

**Board of Education of Evanston/Skokie School District 65's  
Most Recent Offer to the District 65 Educators' Council (DEC)  
November 2, 2016**

**Offers**

The following sections contain details of the most recent offer by the Board in the areas of finance/compensation and working conditions.

**Salary and Compensation**

Acknowledging the dedication and excellent work of teachers, the Board's financial offer seeks to provide fair and competitive compensation within the District's very real financial constraints. The Board made this offer with recognition that further compromise on salary would require additional DEC member layoffs and, consequently, deteriorate working conditions for all teachers. Our best estimate given our financial projections is that the current offer would still leave the District facing deficits. These would require reductions and layoffs of teachers and other district staff unprecedented in the last decade.

*Contract Length*

The Board has proposed a four-year contract term (2016-2017 through 2019-2020) to allow for longer-term financial planning to address significant projected deficits and uncertainty over state funding. In addition, a longer-term contract gives the District the necessary time to manage the budget to meet DEC's priority request for an additional day of planning time for K-5 elementary teachers.

*Salary*

In District 65, the average teacher salary is \$78,906 for 10 months. Under the expired contract, DEC salaries, on average, increased 3.5 percent annually, a total of 14 percent over the four years. DEC members who advanced "track" were eligible for additional cumulative raises totaling between 5 and 18 percent over the four years.

Despite the District's limited resources, the Board's current salary offer includes:

- Bonuses in lieu of raises for the first two years (2016-2017, 2017-2018);
- Both "step increase" raises, ranging from 0.9% to 4.8%, based on each additional year of service, plus additional cost of living raises of 1-2.5% tied to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the following two years (2018-2019, 2019-2020); and
- Eligibility for additional raises ("track movement") based on a combination of criteria including continuing education, participation on school or district committees, and/or leadership projects throughout the contract term.

*Healthcare Contribution*

- The Board accepted DEC's proposal to decrease employee contributions by 1% for HMO coverage during the 2016-2017 school year.
- For the remaining three contract years, the Board has proposed that the Board and DEC share any additional health insurance increases equally (50%/50% basis).

**Working Conditions**

The Board recognizes that teachers work in a profession that has undergone a number of changes and increased demands over the last decade. Maintaining excellent working conditions, while responding to the needs of students and families and meeting state and federal requirements, is a shared goal of the

**Board of Education of Evanston/Skokie School District 65's  
Most Recent Offer to the District 65 Educators' Council (DEC)  
November 2, 2016**

Board, teachers, and District staff. As a result, the District is asking for no additional concessions or changes to the working conditions protections in the previous contract. DEC has a number of outstanding requests for further concessions or revisions.

A summary regarding outstanding issues related to working conditions is listed below; specific contract language is included within this document.

*Planning Time (Article VIII)*

- DEC has stressed the importance of increased planning time to better meet the learning needs of students and the increasing demands on teachers. In response, the Board has offered a fifth day of planning time per week for K-5 classroom teachers beginning with the third year of the contract. The Board agrees that this additional planning time will benefit teachers and students, but also recognizes that it will increase the District's projected deficit by a cost of \$640,000 per year. Ultimately, this will likely result in additional staff layoffs throughout the District, including DEC members.

The Board has also offered to increase the planning time of non-classroom special education teachers who provide direct service to students with IEPs in an effort to better serve these children.

*Team Meetings (Article VIII)*

- DEC has requested that team meetings be planned and led solely at teachers' discretion. The Board has offered the collaborative planning of meeting agendas by teaching staff and school administrators. It is important for principals to collaboratively take part in planning this time with their staff in order to effectively coordinate the implementation of school goals and to ensure consistency for children and families across classrooms.

*Staff Meetings (Article VIII)*

- DEC has made the request to reduce after-school meeting time by 26% and to shift the focus of an additional 19% of the remaining meeting time. In response, the Board offered a decrease of 5% in after-school meeting time. In these meetings, principals have reported that the vast majority of the time is used on collaborative professional development opportunities for teachers with only a handful of minutes spent on routine school business. Given the importance of continuous professional learning, this time is valuable to teachers and administrators. Further reductions would impede the ability of teachers and the principal to work together to best meet the needs of all students.

*Teacher Workday (Article VIII)*

- DEC proposed contract language that a teacher is not required to stay in the building more than 15 minutes after student dismissal and would only be required to attend one evening event per year. In response, the Board has offered to treat all evening events as voluntary with the exception of curriculum night and kindergarten information night.

*Professional Learning Absences for DEC Representatives (Article IV)*

- DEC has proposed an increase in number of days that union representatives can be absent for learning events sponsored by the Illinois Educators' Association (IEA) and other union business. The current offer by the Board allows for a pool of 28 days (increased from 20) to be distributed

**Board of Education of Evanston/Skokie School District 65's  
Most Recent Offer to the District 65 Educators' Council (DEC)  
November 2, 2016**

among members who wish to attend such events. This increase responds to DEC's request while also balancing the important need for teachers to be present in their classrooms as many days as possible.

*School Interview Committees (Article IV)*

- DEC has requested that the DEC president or her/his designee participate on the building interview committee for all building administrator hires going forward. In response, the Board has offered to include the DEC president or his/her designee on the interview committees for all principal hires.

*Reductions in Personnel (Article X)*

- Both parties recognize the need to revise the contract provisions addressing reductions in force affecting DEC members. The Board has proposed contract language that aligns with the requirements of the Illinois School Code. The Board further compromised by agreeing to DEC's proposed increase in the recall rights available to teachers who are laid off in the District.

*Teacher Evaluations (Article XII)*

- The Board has proposed changes to the teacher evaluation provisions that align with the requirements of Illinois state law through the Performance Evaluation Reform Act. The Board further compromised by agreeing to language providing that the Joint Evaluation Committee develop informal observation tools for principals as well as providing for a substantial increase in the rate paid to consulting teachers.

*DEC Leadership (Article XV)*

- DEC proposed language revising the contract provision addressing the paid leave for the DEC president. Currently, the contract states that the DEC president can elect to serve in a half- or full-time capacity and the District will pay their salary (currently \$106,583) and full benefits. In exchange, DEC reimburses the District the cost of a teacher on track 2 at step 1 (current salary \$51,405) to cover the replacement staff member. The current provision limits this arrangement to four years, after which time, if DEC members elect the same president, s/he would have to resume teaching half-time or obtain compensation directly from DEC. DEC has proposed that the four year-limit on full-time paid leave be eliminated. The Board has proposed the language remain the same as stated in previous contracts.

**Estimated Costs of Board's Offer**

A cost summary of the Board's most recent offer is included at the end of this document. This cost summary shows that DEC salary costs (including "step," "track," cost-of-living raises, and bonuses) are estimated to increase 8 percent over the contract term. In addition, the Board's cost for healthcare coverage for DEC members will increase 11 percent over the contract term. Further, the cost of additional planning time for K-5 classroom teachers will require an expenditure of \$640,000 beginning in FY19. Taken together, the total costs of the DEC contract are projected to increase 9 percent over the four year contract term. In comparison, District revenues are also projected to increase 9 percent over the same four years.

**Board of Education of Evanston/Skokie School District 65's  
Most Recent Offer to the District 65 Educators' Council (DEC)  
November 2, 2016**

**Summary**

There is tremendous respect for District 65 teachers and their commitment to doing whatever it takes to provide the best service and support for students in Evanston and Skokie. The School Board and Administration have a responsibility to consider the financial implications of any bargaining agreement on the District's short- and long-term financial stability in order to maintain excellence and to avoid layoffs. The District must "live within its means" while reaching an agreement where teachers feel valued and happy to come to work.

The Board believes that the offer it has tendered DEC is fair in light of the District's financial challenges. The Board's goal is to provide teachers with fair and competitive compensation and excellent working conditions. The Board's vision for fair and competitive compensation is to build upon our existing salary schedule with bonuses and cost-of-living raises that fit within our financial constraints. The Board's vision for excellent working conditions reflects teacher concerns and includes adequate staffing levels, professional learning opportunities, and time for each teacher to move forward with top priority work for students. This includes a focus on literacy, equity, and improvements in learning outcomes for all children.

As a result of continued collaboration by both bargaining teams, a number of tentative agreements have already been reached and signed by DEC and the Board. In order to reach further compromise, and ultimately, reach agreement, both parties have expressed their commitment to continue bargaining in good faith. The Board seeks to address the concerns of both parties and ultimately the needs of all learners.