



**A-C Central Community Unit School District No.262**

501 W. Buchanan St. / P.O. Box 260, Ashland, IL 62612

Mr. Timothy M. Page, Superintendent

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November 20, 2017

Illinois Educational Labor Relations Board

Attn: Ellen Strizak

160 North LaSalle St

Chicago, IL 60601

RE: A-C Central CUSD #262 Submission Pursuant to 115 ILCS 5/12(a-5)(2)

Dear Ms. Strizak:

In accordance with the procedures established by 115 ILCS 5/12(a-5)(2) of the Illinois Educational Labor Relations Act, the Board of Education of A-C Central CUSD #262 submits this most recent offer and summary to the Illinois Educational Labor Relations Board, with a copy provided to the Federal Mediator, Mr. John Weathers, and to the ACCEA. The parties current Collective Bargaining Agreements expired June 30, 2017. The current school year began August 17, 2017. The parties have been in negotiations since March, 2017. The parties began mediation October 2, 2017, with the assistance of Mr. John Weathers. The parties met in mediation on three separate occasions, with the most recent of those being on November 6, 2017.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or if any additional information is needed.

Respectfully,

Timothy M. Page  
Superintendent of Schools  
A-C Central CUSD #262

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### **OVERVIEW & HISTORY**

Bargaining began with the Certified Association on March 9, 2017. These sessions were exclusive to the teachers because, at that time, there were two separate Associations – one for the certified staff and one for the non-certified support staff. These two unions merged this past summer during the bargaining process, but tentative agreements were reached on all issues with the teachers before non-certified negotiations began. Bargaining with the non-certified members began on August 15, 2017. The issues to be resolved exist solely with the non-certified employees and include the following:

1. An Association proposal to require two custodians be on duty in each building rather than one.
2. The manner and method in which the two previously separate Association contracts be merged into one.
3. The non-certified financial package.

The Board's positions on the various issues are as follows:

1. The Board would agree to either reducing the existing nighttime custodians' hours by 50% in order to allow the addition of two new night custodians to work as partners with the current night custodians. There is not enough work to justify adding two new positions to the staff without such a reduction in hours. A second option suggested was rather than to have the two custodians each work exclusively in their own buildings, they could split their time each night between both buildings. This would allow them to work in tandem, always having two people in the building at all times. The Association never formally responded to these options.
2. The Board is not opposed to the Association's proposal for the merging of the two contracts. It simply is a matter choosing the most appropriate time to merge the two documents. The Board feels that it would be a more practical use of everyone's time to address this task during the next contract's bargaining period given the fact that the teacher's side was settled before the two had merged into one.
3. The Board's non-certified financial proposal is as follows:

**Year 1** – A 3% raise to all non-certified staff plus an \$8,800 stipend to be divided equally among all full-time non-certified staff. When combined, this becomes a 4.1% raise over the previous year's total money.

**Year 2** – A 3% raise to all non-certified staff.

**Year 3** – A 3% raise to all non-certified staff.

Cost of new money:

Year 1 – \$32,105.38

Year 2 – \$47,309.92

Year 3 – \$72,034.60

**Total New Money - \$151,449.90**

These numbers are based on FY17 actual non-certified payroll expenditures of \$776,845.99.

The Association's Financial Proposal breaks down as follows:

**Year 1** – An average 14.7% raise to non-certified employees.

**Year 2** – An average 3.4% raise to non-certified employees.

**Year 3** – An average 3.4% raise to non-certified employees.

Cost of new money:

Year 1 - \$134,356.81

Year 2 – \$165,337.70

Year 3 - \$197,372.95

**Total new money - \$497,066.46**

These numbers are based on FY17 actual non-certified payroll expenditures of \$776,845.99.

The Association has pointed out the reserve in the school's education funds. The roughly 2.1 million dollars that are there represent 186 days of cash on hand as recommended by the Illinois State Board of Education. These funds are our only safety net against unexpected expenses and the state's all-too-well-known unreliability in paying their debts to our schools. In FY17 the education fund underwent a swing of over \$750,000 to cover bills while A-C Central waited for state funds. A-C Central's current budget shows planned deficit spending of almost \$80,000 in our operating funds. This number assumes that the state will pay everything that they have promised this year as well as the money that they still owe from the previous year's missed mandated categorical payments. Anyone remotely familiar with the state of Illinois's financial condition and history must acknowledge that missing, delayed, and/or defaulting on future payments from the state is a very real possibility.

The Association also points out that A-C Central is receiving an additional \$80,000 in General State Aid this school year. However, this additional money is actually a result of the elimination of various special education reimbursements that have been rolled into the GSA formula leaving a zero sum gain. All said and done, there is no expected increase in state funding for A-C Central.

The Association's proposal is being billed as an issue of trying to attain "livable wages" and bring our school's wages in line with other area school's wages. They also claim it is "hard to keep support personnel employed at A-C Central." On the contrary, the vast majority of

non-certified employees that have left A-C Central have done so due to retirement, family relocations, or at the administration's request for job performance reasons.

The Association says that the Board offer is "only a 3% raise". They have left out the fact that the board added an \$8,800 bonus in year one to be split amongst the full-time non-certified employees. This, when added to the 3% raise the Board has offered makes the cost of new money come to 4.1% in year one. The Consumer Price Index for this region in this most recent year is 2.1%, making any raise above that amount an actual increase in income.

The Association claims a difference of "only \$73,000" between the two proposals in year one. In fact, the difference in year one is actually \$102,251.43. This is only in year one. When compounded by their proposals for year two and year three, the differences only grow. In addition, the Association refers to an "arbitrary" wage scale. There is nothing arbitrary about the pay range that is used as it was established by our existing contract. Rather, the Association's last proposal gives some non-certified employees an increase of 3% in the first year (less than the Board's current offer) and gives other non-certified employees increases in **excess of 25-30%** in the first year.

The Board of Education feels that the Board's offer is a fair and reasonable proposal. It is strikingly similar to the same financial package that was agreed to by the certified staff just three months previous. The Board realizes the value of the non-certified employees in our schools. They do amazing work and impact hundreds of lives in a profoundly positive way. The Board recognizes and appreciates that they perform their jobs extremely well, and these salaries are not indicative of what they are worth, but they are indicative of what the school district can afford to pay while being good stewards of the taxpayer's hard-earned dollars.