

Questions & Answers from the Board of Education

Q: Why did Dr. Stepp agree to voluntarily forgo his longevity incentive and merit raises?

A: We heard the community's concerns about Superintendent Stepp's contract and after serious discussion in executive session, Dr. Stepp volunteered to forgo the \$83,000 longevity incentive and also to forgo merit raises, which could total as much as \$36,000 annually during the term of her contract.

Q: Did the School Board force Dr. Stepp to forgo his longevity incentive and merit raises?

A: No, this was a voluntary action on Dr. Stepp's part.

Q: How did the Board's actions in January follow the Sunshine Law regarding the transparency?

A: The Sunshine Law allows districts to conduct personnel contract discussions in executive session.

Q: What is the justification to spend this kind of money on a superintendent when the money could have been spent on security in our schools?

A: Student safety is paramount in our district and a large concentration of our safety expenditures come from sales tax funds; the district has an ongoing plan to address safety and security for students and staff.

Q: Tell me about the district covering the costs of the superintendent's education reimbursement.

A: We place great importance on advanced learning for all of our educational professionals. We believe it is important to invest in professional development for all of our educational leaders so that we can provide high quality education for our students.

Dr. Stepp has an outstanding educational background. His education costs average out to \$34,862 per year for the past seven years.

Q: How many other staff were able to have their educational costs covered?

A: 81.3% of the teachers in the Medina City Schools have a Masters degrees. Teachers are able to increase their salary as they obtain additional education. A teacher who obtains a masters degree and then works for 30 years will realize additional income of over \$284,000 during their career.

Administrators are able to receive tuition reimbursement up to \$8,000 while employed with the district. These practices are in line with what other districts in the State are doing.

Q: Your article in the Gazette stated that the school day will be shortened to 5 ½ hours at the middle schools and high school and 5 hours at the elementary schools, does this mean you are eliminating art, music, and PE at elementary levels and middle school and high school?

A: The state minimum school day at elementary school is 5 hours and 5 ½ hours at middle and high school. The Gazette article referred to the Board's March work session where they did discuss moving to a state minimum school day should the levy fail.

Q: Why do you feel it necessary to renew a \$1.8 million dollar contract when you are trying to pass a levy?

A: We want strong consistent leadership as we face the prospect of a levy. Dr. Stepp's current base salary is \$134,700.

Q: Please explain why Dr. Stepp's contract was revised and agreed upon before the teacher contracts?

A: It is a typical practice of superintendents to begin negotiating their contract well prior to its expiration. The timing has nothing to do with the teacher's contract.

Q: How many months of busing would \$83,000 cover?

A: 4.1 days

Q: There was a comment that the Board thought they were voting on Stepp's next contract, how did they not know what they were voting on?

A: Dr. Stepp and the Board went into executive session at the January 7, 2013 meeting to discuss his contract terms and approved his contract after leaving executive session. The Board knew what they were voting on.

Q: How can the superintendent ask his students, staff, and teachers to make sacrifices while he accepts a raise and a bonus?

A: The Board felt the compensation offered to Dr. Stepp was appropriate given the competitive market in school leadership. Dr. Stepp has volunteered to forgo his longevity incentive and merit pay incentive.

Q: Are you cutting the show choir and other co-curriculars and extra-curriculars?

A: At this time, there is not plan to further reduce any of the co-curricular or extra-curricular opportunities for our students.