



MTI Teacher Compensation Update

October 8, 2018

Teacher Compensation Discussions

2017-18 Discussions. An MTI-MMSD Teacher Compensation Committee met during the 2017-18 school year to consider potential changes to the structure of the teacher salary schedule under the premise that the District was looking into making **additional investments** into the schedule. The discussions included considerations such as reducing the number of lanes, eliminating the need for PAC credits for vertical salary advancement, and considerations of a stipend for teachers working in Bi-lingual or Cross-Categorical positions. These discussions were suspended when MTI and the MMSD switched focus to bargaining base-wage pay increases with the District offering 0.5% and MTI insisting on cost-of-living (2.13%). During base-wage bargaining, District negotiators expressed concerns over the sustainability of the salary schedule with rising cost-of-living pay increases. Upon the resolution of the base-wage bargain, the District again indicated that they wanted to return to discussions about salary schedule changes.

2018-19 Discussions. This past summer, in a meeting between MTI staff and MMSD HR staff, HR staff shared that they had been directed by the Board to make recommended teacher salary schedule changes to create a more **“sustainable”** salary schedule in light of current revenue restrictions. They also shared that they were expected to report back in early November so that the BOE could consider any salary schedule changes as part of the 2019-20 budget considerations. MTI agreed to schedule multiple meetings of the MTI-MMSD teacher Compensation Committee to discuss these challenges and attempt to identify any recommended teacher salary schedule changes which would be **valued and supported by teachers**. Given the complex task and the short time-line, the parties agreed to schedule frequent meetings of the MTI-MMSD teacher compensation committee. Meetings of this group were held on September 6, September 13 and October 4. Additional meetings have been scheduled for October 11, 25; November 1 and 8.

Issues being discussed to date:

- The proposed **elimination of ½ steps** on the teacher salary schedule. Currently, part-time teachers working 30% to 70% receive a ½ step movement on the salary schedule, in addition to receiving a pro-rated salary. Both the MTI and District representatives would like to see this changed to allow all teachers to receive a full step movement on the salary schedule.
- The proposed **elimination of the two-year incentive levels** beyond level 15. Currently, once teachers reach step 15 they are required to earn three credits every two years to advance to the next level. Both the MTI and District representatives would like to eliminate these incentive levels and allow teachers at level 15 and beyond to advance on the schedule without the requirement to earn credits. The parties are also discussing whether teachers at level 15 and beyond should receive step movement annually rather than every two years.

- The possible **reduction in the number of salary tracks/lanes**. The teacher salary schedule currently includes eight (8) salary tracks associated with educational attainment: BA, BA+12, BA+24, BA+48, MA, MA+12, MA+24, MA+48, and PhD/MFA. District representatives have been exploring the possibility of condensing the number of tracks/lanes to four, two for BA and two for MA. MTI representatives are skeptical that such a change would be valued by teachers but expressed willingness to continue the discussions.
- The possible **capping of the teacher salary schedule**. The current teacher salary schedule has no “maximum”. Teachers beyond step fifteen (15) receive salary step increases every other year thereafter. The District representative are exploring the idea of capping the steps after a defined number of years and **replacing continued step movement with schedule lump-sum longevity payments**. MTI representatives are skeptical that such a change would be valued by teachers but expressed willingness to continue the discussions.
- The possible **modification of the salary curve**. The current salary schedule is indexed to the base rate and provides greater salary increases to teachers moving through the first 7-10 years of the schedule. The current schedule also includes some “super cells” in which teachers receive more significant salary increases (e.g. track 5 movement from level 12 to 13). The District representatives are exploring possible modifications to the index to provide more uniform percentage increases or dollar increases between steps. MTI representatives are willing to explore the redistribution of increases across the schedule which would address some of the current perceived inequities and be valued by teachers.
- The MTI representatives have expressed interest in identifying and recommending any additional salary schedule changes which have the support of educators and would allow the District to attract and retain the highly qualified teachers our students deserve.
- **The state-wide political elections this fall will go a long way in determining the resources available to the MMSD to compensate staff and fund programs**. With the five-year school revenue referendum passed in 2013 expiring this year, and with no change in the current state revenue limits, the District indicates that they expect annual school revenue to increase by only 1% annually. Such would be insufficient to fund the costs of the current salary schedule let alone cost-of-living base-wage, absent continued referendum to provide the needed resources. Therefore, political change is necessary to provide the funding necessary to support our public schools.

Issues planned to be discussed:

- At the next meeting, we plan to hear the District representatives’ ideas **about incorporating professional development** activities into the salary schedule. Currently, the salary schedule encourages continuing education via academic credits and/or professional advancement credits.

Schedule of meetings:

The committee is scheduled to meet **October 11, 25; November 1 and 8**. District representatives are charged with bringing recommendations to the BOE in mid-November. MTI will continue to provide all members with updates of this work, and opportunities to share your perspective, in the weeks ahead.