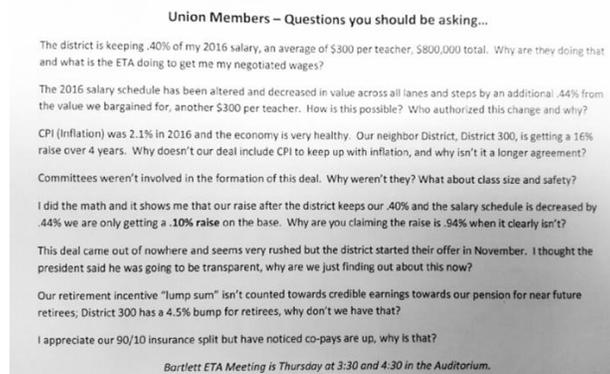


Responses to comments and answers to “Questions you should be asking...”

Some ETA members at some school sites found a flyer in their school mailboxes. [Image below]

We want to thank those who forwarded the questions to leadership for response. Please do not hesitate to ask any follow-up questions of your leadership team as we seek to help all members make an informed decision to support the TA this Tuesday.



- 1) The district is keeping .40% of our 2016 salary, an average of \$300 per teacher, \$800,000 total. Why are they doing that and what is the ETA doing to get me my negotiated wage?

After the sunset of the ERO in July of 2016, the required contribution to TRS changed from 9.4% to 9.0%. That money was never collected during this school year. When this school year began, the contribution was 9.0%.

Two members raised a concern regarding their paychecks to the ETA early this school year. The ETA began an investigation into the matter. While those two members never reached out to the ETA again for any clarification or assistance we did, on behalf of all membership, file a grievance with the district regarding their implementation of the Elgin Agreement. A complete summary of this topic can be found in the [memo](#) on the ETA website under the 2017-2018 Tentative Agreement [tab](#).

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- 2) The 2016 salary schedule has been altered and decreased in value across all lanes and steps by an additional .44% from the value we bargained for, another \$300 per teacher. How is this possible? Who authorized this change and why?

We assume that the statement is in reference to the salary schedule found in the Individual Increase calculator in which the BA-1 salary is \$42,407. This schedule is the salary schedule members are currently being paid from and aligns with current payroll from the start of this school year. In that sense, it has not been altered. The passage of this TA will not affect any paychecks, as an increase or as a decrease, for the duration of the final year of the current Agreement. The salary schedule in the calculator is different than the one we posted on our contract page of our website (BA-1 salary of \$42,594 for a difference of \$187). It should be noted that the district never signed off on this schedule which ultimately led to us filing the grievance. Again, please review the [memo](#) for a more detailed explanation.

The above is the reason why the ETA filed a grievance against the district in September of 2016. After several months of discussion and processing of the grievance, it is expected that the grievance would only be resolved through arbitration or as condition of any bargained tentative agreement. The outcome of that arbitration is not guaranteed and would be at least a year before a decision would be rendered. This Tentative Agreement, upon its ratification by membership, will resolve the grievance and capture those monies for all future years.

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- 3) CPI (inflation) was 2.1% in 2016 and the economy is very healthy. Our neighbor Dist 300, is getting a 16% raise over 4 years. Why doesn't our deal include CPI to keep up with inflation, and why isn't it a longer agreement?

It is true that CPI was 2.1% for 2016. It is also true that with the 0.94% increase in the base salary our tentative agreement provides at least a 3.1% year-over-year increase for 1,611 (66%) of our members. Additionally, of those 1611 members 713 will receive over 4.0% of which 144 will have an increase in excess of 5.1%. Lastly, when we look at the membership as a whole 2,284 of the members will be receiving an increase in salary of at least 2%.

What is also true is that the school board of U46 has persisted in taxing and abating. This strategy has kept the revenue growth at 0%. They have previously adopted a budget with 0% revenue growth for five (5) years.

The contract referenced in neighboring district, D300, does provide for 2% increase in the base salary for each year of the agreement and their steps appear to be uniform at 2%. So yes, next year members that get a step will receive a 4% increase and those that won't will receive 2%.

Upon analysis of the LEAD300 [Contract](#) (Appendix F – page 106), 106 of our members, if on the D300 schedule, would be capped at \$67,898 for next year. That would be cut in pay for our members from a few thousand dollars next year to 89 individuals would be making \$15,000 to \$20,000 less per year in D300.

Our school Board would not agree to a longer tentative agreement than the one-year agreement that gained the support of the Board of Directors and the Representative Assembly.

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- 4) Committees weren't involved in the formation of this deal. Why weren't they? What about class size and safety?

Committees have always informed the work that we do as ETA leadership. The issues and information given by membership is what drives our work. In this TA, we received an offer from district and it is our duty to bring that offer to membership. It is not the intention to bring a TA without specific committees involved. We were given an offer and it received the support of both your elected Board and your elected representatives.

Also, the TA has workgroups to work on the important issues that all of our members face every day. The workgroups have the commitment of the district administration and now we will have our members as part of those conversations, plans and policies that govern our work. This is where we need the commitment of our membership to join and do the work to institute these needed changes. Teacher workload, Safety, Student placement and Compensation are the identified workgroups to guide that work. We believe that the most effective, efficient and expedient way to address these issues is through the work of our members on these workgroups. These workgroups will create, inform and implement to best affect our membership in the coming year.

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- 5) I did the math and it show me that our raise after the district keeps our .40% and the salary schedule is decreased by .44% we are only getting a .10% raise on the base. Why are you claiming the raise is .94% when it clearly isn't?

The stated increase of 0.94% on the base is a comparison of the agreed upon BA-1 salary for the 2017-18 year when compared to the current salary schedule, as implemented. The [memo](#) addresses this question as well.

Responses to comments and answers to “Questions you should be asking...”

- 6) This deal came out of nowhere and seems very rushed but the districted started their offer in November. I thought the president said he was going to be transparent, why are we just finding out about this now?

The offer was not on the table in November. During a monthly contract meeting with district administration, the district asked if we would consider a one-year contract extension. There were no numbers expressed, no discussion of insurance, retirement, etc. At that time, we told them that anything reduced to writing would be given proper consideration. A reference to this possibility was previously mentioned at the November RA.

An offer of this type must be in writing and there was nothing that was reduced to writing until January 25, 2017. The supposal of January 25 was brought to the Officers and Board of Directors of the ETA the following week. Further discussions were held with district administration, they listened and considered our concerns. After some clarifications and modifications, we reached a tentative agreement with the district. That TA was brought back to the Board of Directors to determine their support. They voted unanimously in support of the TA. The next week (2/15) the TA was brought to the RA to determine their support. The RA voted 115 -31 in favor of support of the TA. Now it is brought to the membership to vote.

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- 7) Our retirement incentive "lump sum" isn't counted towards credible earnings towards our pension for near future retirees: District 300 has a 4.5% bump for retirees, why don't we have this?

D300 no longer has any salary ramp-up for those in the retirement pipeline. The pertinent language can be found in their [contract](#) on page 61 in which it clearly states that the provision expired at the end of the 2015-16 school year, “2. After the 2015-2016 school year, the retirement benefits contained in paragraph 1c above expire...”

In addition, our benefits for retirees are greater than those provided in D300. The Elgin Agreement continues to provide between \$3,000 and \$10,000 for qualified retirees as a deposit into their personal 403b to be access at their own discretion as well as provide a financial subsidy to help defray the cost of insurance premiums once retired from the district. This benefit has a value of up to \$26,100 per retiree.

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- 8) I appreciate our 90/10 insurance split but have noticed co-pays are up, why is that?

Thank you for recognizing the value of this benefit that we have fought to maintain for our membership. Over 90% of ETA members are participants in our insurance plan. To help others put this benefit in context we can look to D300 again for a comparison. LEAD300 members pay 20% of their insurance premiums for individual and 30% of their insurance premiums for family. ([page 62](#)) That would double or triple the amount of money paid for premiums for our members if we had the same premium sharing on insurance.

The philosophy of the joint labor-management Healthcare Committee has been to provide quality plans that distribute the costs to participants in an equitable manner. This Committee has been faced with the choice between recommending unilateral changes to everybody in the plans by shifting the premium burden towards participants or by helping to manage overall plan costs by sharing the costs with users of particular features of the plans. The Committee has been very effective in managing the overall rate of increase in the cost of insurance. For more information, please refer to reputable sources such as the [Kaiser Family Foundation](#) for guidance on national and regional costs and trends.

The Committee meets quarterly to monitor and review the plan options. On an annual basis your representatives, as well as those representing all of the other IEA locals, SEIU, and the administration consider and make plan design change recommendations based upon usage data and federal and state insurance requirements.