

THE YOUNGSTOWN CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Brenda Kimble, President
Michael Murphy, Vice-President
Jacqueline Adair
Dario Hunter
Corrine Sanderson
Ronald Shadd
Jerome Williams

Krish Mohip, CEO
Tyrone Olverson, CAO
Stephen Stohla, Interim Superintendent
Sherry Tyson, Treasurer

VIA EMAIL AND HAND DELIVERY
May 4, 2017

Dear Larry,

As you know, all of us have been working hard to transform the school district. I acknowledge the outstanding effort our teachers have been putting in. Also, I understand our teachers are the backbone of any transformation plan. Teachers are the individuals who have the most profound impact on student achievement.

I have listened to and considered the YEA's concerns that the school district cannot recruit and retain talent because teacher's salaries are too low. Looking into this issue, it is my understanding that in recent years the school district has lost about 20% of its teachers year after year. This teacher attrition rate is unhealthy and needs to turnaround in order for our students to achieve. I want to address these concerns.

In recognition of the dedication of our teachers, and to acknowledge the flexibility and commitment our teachers have shown to the success of the strategic plan, I am proposing a mid-term wage increase. This is especially important as our teachers consider their options for next year.

I propose we re-open and modify our collective bargaining agreement to increase the Section 8.022 salary schedule effective July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018 base salary at year zero of the Bachelor's Degree column by an additional five percent (5%) on the Index described in Section 8.025; this is in addition to the already agreed upon increase of two percent (2%).

I ask for nothing in return for this increase except continued hard work and dedication.

If acceptable, we will enter into a MOU modifying the collective bargaining agreement along these lines.

Please let me know by tomorrow, May 5, 2017 if you agree to this modification.

Krish Mohip, Chief Executive Officer



May 10, 2017

For Immediate Release

Larry Ellis, YEA President 330-307-6700

YEA Awaits Response From CEO

What follows is a letter to the editor of the Youngstown Vindicator that was dispatched on May 8, 2017:

In a letter to The Vindicator on April 23rd, Youngstown City School District CEO Krish Mohip shared a piece of his vision for improving teacher recruitment and retention in the school district. As the child of educators and the product of a “pro-union house”, CEO Mohip related a commitment to keeping teachers in Youngstown for the sake of creating stability and excellence for district students. Significant salary increases, he suggested, are necessary to reflect the esteem in which educators should be held and to demonstrate that YCSD is ready to be competitive with other districts in order to keep the best teachers here in Youngstown. All that the Youngstown Education Association needed to do, he offered, was accept his plan for giving teacher raises.

We celebrate CEO Mohip’s recognition of the importance of teacher recruitment and retention and his awareness of the value of collaboration between administration and the teachers who work hard for students every day and know best how to provide for their education. We agree that high staff turnover is not in the best interests of students and that any school district that undervalues teachers is likely to find itself desperately looking to replace them year after year.

On May 4th, CEO Mohip sent me a letter formally offering the teachers of YCSD a raise IF we would agree to put up on his chopping block all of the other contractual provisions that ALSO contribute to teacher recruitment and retention. In compliance with his request for a response within 24 hours, I replied to Mr. Mohip on May 5th that YEA’s holistic approach to supporting the students and teachers of Youngstown would not allow us to make this dangerous sacrifice. I pledged to him that, if indeed he was committed to a salary increase for Youngstown teachers as a retention incentive and as part of what we can only hope would be a larger multifaceted strategy, YEA would not oppose nor contest his effort to immediately implement such an increase. Indeed, we welcome it.

As of the end of the day on May 8th, three days after our last correspondence, I have yet to hear back from CEO Mohip regarding YEA’s position. YEA, as always, remains committed to uplifting excellence in education for the sake of Youngstown’s children. Teacher recruitment and retention is a key piece of this equation, and any discussion about more clearly demonstrating that YCSD values teachers must include more than salaries. We must also be talking about school safety and discipline and working conditions and instructional resources and decision-making processes and many other issues, all of which contribute to a more stable work force for YCSD. Thankfully, Mr. Mohip’s “pro-union” roots leave him uniquely positioned to understand that YEA’s obligation to students and to teachers is to take just this kind of multidimensional approach to the collaboration that will move Youngstown’s schools forward.

Youngstown’s teachers and I remain ready and eager to partner in conversations with CEO Mohip about all of the different factors, including salary, around which we can collaborate to improve YCSD’s ability to attract and retain teachers and to create the stability that Youngstown students deserve.

Sincerely
Larry Ellis, YEA President

The Youngstown Education Association (YEA) represents 518 professional educators employed by the Youngstown Board of Education.

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May 10, 2017

VIA EMAIL AND HAND DELIVERY

To: Larry Ellis
President
Youngstown Education Association (YEA)

Re: Reopening of Successor Collective Bargaining Agreement effective
July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2018 pursuant to ORC §3302.10(H)(2)

Dear Larry,

On May 4, 2017, I wrote you a letter suggesting that we give our hardworking teachers a raise. I could have exercised my authority as CEO under the Ohio Revised Code, but first I tried to reach out to the YEA in the spirit of collaboration to quickly increase the pay of our teachers through a MOU.

I proposed that we accomplish that by modifying the salary schedule in the Successor Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) between YCSD and YEA effective July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018. I suggested that we give teachers a five percent (5%) raise. The proposed raise was in addition to the two percent (2%) raise the parties already agreed on.

As explained in my previous letter, I proposed this raise in recognition of the dedication of our teachers, and to acknowledge the flexibility and commitment our teachers have shown to the success of our strategic plan. I want to address concerns that the school district cannot recruit and retain talent because teacher's salaries are too low. Our plan to transform the district for the benefit of our children can only succeed with the full support and engagement of our teachers.

I asked for nothing in return except continued hard work and dedication. Of course, I thought you would enthusiastically accept higher pay for our teachers – but unfortunately you did the opposite. On May 5, 2017, you refused to modify our CBA to give our teachers a raise.

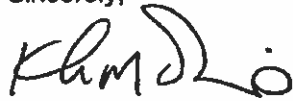
I can only assume you refused to change the CBA *to increase the pay of our teachers* because the current leadership of YEA does not want our strategic plan to succeed. I am disappointed. It seems you care less about the success of our children than about blocking any progress that could be achieved in the district under the leadership of a CEO.

Your letter claims that YEA would not oppose unilateral action by the school district to increase our teachers' salaries outside the terms of the CBA without any negotiation or agreement. As you know, Larry, the school district is a public entity. We cannot make payments inconsistent with our collective agreements. The only way to increase the pay of our teachers and improve retention is to update that part of the contract with YEA.

I have tried to work with you, but you've chosen not to collaborate on this matter. So after consulting with the chairperson of the academic distress commission, I have decided to reopen the Section 8.022 of the Successor Collective Bargaining Agreement for the purpose of renegotiating its terms pursuant to Ohio Revised Code § 3302.10(H)(2) and 4117.

As you know, YCSD and YEA entered into a Successor Collective Bargaining Agreement on July 1, 2016. As CEO, I have the discretion to designate provisions of this agreement for reopening and collective bargaining. I am available to bargain on May 11, May 12, May 16, and May 17. Please let me know who your bargaining representative will be, and I look forward to bargaining **solely** for the purpose of raising the salary of our teachers under Section 8.022 of the Successor Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Krish Mohip". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Krish" and last name "Mohip" clearly distinguishable.

Krish Mohip
Chief Executive Officer
Youngstown City School District