

SUMMARY OVERVIEW – Updated 2/1/10

SURVEY OF RI SCHOOL DISTRICT WAGES AND CO-SHARING **FY2009 AND FY2010**

The RI Department of Education and Secondary Education (RIDE) surveyed all RI school districts in December of 2009. The survey focused on four main questions to determine district response from a negotiations viewpoint to the current economic environment facing RI and the nation. The response rate to the survey was 100%.

Three questions were posed regarding wages for both teachers and administrators. The questions addressed pay reduction, pay freezes (no COLA), and pay increases. One additional question was presented to look at changes in co-sharing of premium in response to the economic climate. The results of the survey are summarized below.

When asked whether either the teacher group or administrative group had taken an actual reduction in pay over the previous year or years, three districts reported decreases in pay with a combined savings of \$4.3M. These districts were: **East Providence, North Providence, and West Warwick**.

In response to the query concerning a waiver or deferral of a pay increase or COLA, nine districts reported adjustments in this area with savings of \$6.5M. They are summarized as follows:

- **Coventry** – Teachers extended contract and waived 3% increase + \$500 they would have received in FY10.
- **Lincoln** – Administrators and support staff waived a 3% COLA.
- **Pawtucket** – The FY10 teacher contract was reopened and teachers took a pay freeze instead of the 2% COLA they had negotiated. Administrators did not receive an increase for FY10.
- **Portsmouth** – Administrators waived a COLA increase.
- **Warwick** – In FY09 teachers deferred 1.5% of their COLA until retirement.
- **West Warwick** – Teachers waived a 1.45% COLA in FY09 and a 2.5% COLA in FY10. Salaries were rolled back to the FY08 level.
- **Woonsocket** – 1.5% of the half-year employee increase was deferred for 5 years.
- **Exeter-West Greenwich** – All administrators took a pay freeze. Certified staff provided concessions including forfeiture of buy-backs, reduction of stipend payments, and waiver of stipend for some activities.
- **Blackstone Academy Charter School** – A COLA increase was waived saving \$15,000.

When asked whether pay increases were provided to either group in FY09, 45 districts or 86.5% reported providing increases either in the form of steps movement only or steps along with a COLA increase. FY09 increases ranged from 1% to 10%. The increased cost resulting from these increases in FY09 was \$19.2M. FY10 saw a decline with 33 districts or 63.4%, reporting either increases based on step and/or COLA. Increases ranged from a low of 0.5% to an isolated high of 9.22%. The increased cost reported in FY10 was \$18.8M.

The final question on the survey asked whether or not co-sharing of premium had been increased. In FY09, 14 districts or 26.9% reported increases in co-sharing resulting in additional savings to the district of \$2.01M. FY10 16 districts or 31% reported increased co-shares resulting in savings to the district of \$4.86M. It should be noted that 8 districts have reported increases in co-shares for FY11 and FY12.

A SNAPSHOT OF THE CHARTER SCHOOLS

(Data incorporated in overall summary)

Since Charter School populations are generally smaller in size than most districts, presented here in excerpted form is a summary of the Charter School survey responses. The response rate to the survey from the 13 Charter Schools was 100%.

When asked whether either the teacher group or administrative group had taken an actual reduction in pay over the previous year or years, there were no charter districts who reported a reduction.

In response to the query concerning a waiver or deferral of a pay increase or COLA, one charter school, Blackstone Academy, reported doing so achieving a savings of \$15,000.

When asked whether pay increases were provided to either group in FY09, 10 of the 11 or 91% of charter schools in FY09 responded that increases were provided, either in step movement or step plus a COLA. FY09 increases ranged from 1% to 10%. The increased cost resulting from these increases in FY09 was \$600K. FY10 saw 10 of the 13 providing increases ranging from 1% to 15% for a total increased cost of \$857K. Two charters, Democracy Prep and the Segue Institute for Learning were in the initial year of operation in FY10.

Pay scales in the charter schools are closely aligned with the public districts in which they reside. Textron and Times 2 follow the Providence district; Highlander's original scale was based on the Providence scale and has varied slightly since that time; Learning Community Charter School was based on the contract of Central Falls with slight variances; International was based on the Pawtucket contract; and Beacon Charter mirrors the Woonsocket pay scale. Compass Charter recently aligned their pay scale with South Kingstown and then added an additional \$1,000. Blackstone Academy originally followed a district contract and now has pay ranges while Kingston Hill has an independent pay scale. Democracy Prep, one of the new charter schools, does not follow a district contract. Information is not currently available for Segue Institute for Learning. Salaries at the charter schools are described as very competitive with the other public districts.

The final question on the survey asked whether or not co-sharing of premium had been increased. There were only two reported increases in co-share by Times 2 Academy and NE Laborer's Career/Construction Academy beginning with FY10. This achieved a reported savings of \$34,866.