



WEST ORANGE BOARD OF EDUCATION

179 EAGLE ROCK AVENUE

WEST ORANGE, NEW JERSEY 07052

(973) 669-5400 FAX (973) 669-1432

WWW.WOBOE.ORG

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The West Orange Board of Education has been engaged in negotiations with the West Orange Education Association (“Association”) for a successor collective negotiations agreement since May 7, 2015. The parties have reached tentative agreements on several issues.

Unfortunately, the Association cancelled six (6) sessions on July 30, 2015, November 11, 2015, November 24, 2015, January 28, 2016, February 1, 2016, and June 1, 2016. Further, the Association also informed the Board that they were not available for the month of August 2015, due to their negotiator's vacation schedule. While the Association claims that the Board refused to meet this summer, dates were provided by the Mediator to both parties which were ultimately rejected due to conflicts in scheduling by both parties.

While the Board was interested in continuing face-to-face negotiations, the Association declared impasse on May 26, 2016. Therefore, a mediator was appointed by the Public Employment Relations Commission, with whom we met on Tuesday, September 6, 2016 and presented the most recent contract proposal to the Association to which the Association has not responded.

The Association’s allegation that the Board has failed to promote and hire internally is completely inaccurate. While this is not part of negotiations, it is important to clarify inaccuracies from a published article. In fact, the West Orange Board of Education has promoted District employees multiple times during the last three (3) years, including two (2) Assistant Principals at Liberty and Roosevelt Middle Schools, supervisors (4) in Social Studies, Science, World Language/English as a Second Language, and Technology Education. Additionally, numerous district paraprofessionals and substitutes, many who are West Orange residents, have been hired as permanent teachers.



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The West Orange Board of Education remains hopeful that the parties will negotiate in good faith and finds it unfortunate that the Association is criticizing the West Orange Board of Education for the employees' State-mandated statutory requirement that mandates contributions toward health benefit premiums for all public employees.

Moreover, the Board is deeply disturbed that the Association has violated a long-standing practice of attending Back to School Nights. However, all Back to School Nights will occur as scheduled. The hope is that the Association will reconsider their decision so all tenured teachers attend Back to School Nights as this is one of the most important parent/teacher/student partnership nights.

Accordingly, the West Orange Board of Education strongly encourages the members of the Association to contact their leadership for specific details on negotiations to date and the recent contract proposal from the Board.