LECTF – October 10, 2016

In Attendance: Vicki, Janice, Kim, Amanda, Katherine, Jen, Anthony, Matt, Jennifer

Janice welcomed the committee.

Motion to approve the minutes from September 26, 2016. Approved

- The co-chairs signed the copy of the minutes.

Janice excused Melissa from today's meeting which is why she is conducting today's meeting. Janice explained that she will be absent at the meeting on November 7 and Melissa will conduct that meeting.

<u>Survey-</u>
Anthony updated two questions on the survey (clarification and format). The survey will be sent first thing in the morning (October 11). The survey will be sent to all licensed employees, minus administrators. The survey will be open for one week (Tuesday-Monday). A reminder will be sent to administrators midweek through JAM so that they can push their employees to complete the survey. Anthony will send the responses to the LECTF committee for review before our next meeting.

<u>Job Description-</u>
The committee has already reviewed the general job description several times and is waiting for the Joint Relations Committee to provide further information and direction.

Katherine expressed a concern about the section that refers to No Child Left Behind (NCLB) which has been replaced by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). As the document is updated, those changes will be made.

<u>State Office of Education-</u>
Janice shared that she heard from her daughter that the Utah State School Board discussed doing away with high school accreditation because it costs too much money to pay the company to do the accreditation. The school board also discussed the possibility of a state wide salary schedule based on the state evaluation tool, and doing away with steps and lanes. She mentioned it would be important for us to pay attention to any further discussions around these topics. There was a discussion about the school board's ability to dictate to districts how they pay their teachers. It was noted that the school board can make rules which the districts have to follow.

“Other” for Educators-
There were no other items to add to the “other” category for compensation for educators. More items could be added to the list if the survey results indicate a need.

Restoration of Frozen Steps-
Anthony indicated that the cost to restore frozen steps, not back pay but just bumping an employee up to their rightful step, is $4.1 million. That does not include administrators or classified employees. There was a recognition that all employee groups were frozen. Janice said that as a board, if they were to restore frozen steps for one group, they would feel obligated to do it for all groups. Anthony said that calculating the cost to restore steps for classified employees is complicated based on the job study (money approved to pay people commensurate with what the job study determined their pay ought to be). If the board chooses to include classified employees in the restoration of steps, they would need to meet with JESPA, the classified employee’s association. Another concern is for those employees who were classroom teachers when steps were frozen but are now administrators. There will be some considerations that need to be calculated differently. This group (LECTF) will focus on classroom employees and let the school board focus on the other groups.

The committee reviewed data gathered from other districts who froze steps in past years, some of which have restored those steps.

Salary Schedule-
The committee reviewed two previous JSD salary schedules, for 2004-2005 and 2006-2007. A few reasons that the salary schedule was changed from 25 steps to 15 steps was to eliminate plateaus mid-salary schedule, increase the amount of money between steps, and get teachers to their highest earning potential faster to maximize the lifetime earnings which positively affects retirement benefits. It was noted that once you reach the top of the ladder (step 15), you are plateaued indefinitely and no increase is given unless a COLA is added.

Janice asked the committee to discuss altering the salary schedule so that everyone gets a salary increase every year or keeping what we have with a small salary bump across the board. Matt distributed and explained the salary schedule from Davis District to provide an example of a single lane salary schedule.

Janice asked for an explanation of the $4,200 salary schedule adjustment. Matt explained the history of the money which is provided by the state legislature. That money is dependent upon continued funding from the legislature and if it is taken away, JSD cannot be responsible for making up that difference.

The example for Davis School District (DSD) includes 40 steps with only one lane. The structure is designed to be more likely funded during lean years. It was pointed out that using letters instead of numbers for the steps feels different and less confusing, especially when steps have been frozen.

Matt assumed that DSD awarded all anticipated steps and lanes based off of the previous salary schedule. Then when employees were placed on the new salary schedule, they were placed on the step that best met that salary assignment without losing money. For those people in the dead zone, they were given at least some of their years. This demonstrates the concept of “do no harm.” If we were to redo the salary schedule, we would need to assign our own dollar amount to each step, not use the numbers from Davis School District.

A discussion about college credit vs. relicensure credit for use towards a lane change, and about the importance of submitting documentation for lane changes.

Vicki pointed out the importance of being capped at the very top of the salary schedule vs. being capped in the middle of a salary schedule. One reason is for potential life time earnings but also the perception of being frozen mid-salary schedule when there is still an option for more earnings.

Janice pointed out that we have teachers that have taught for more than 40 years. There was a quick discussion about how to compensate them. Matt suggested a longevity bonus.

Matt reminded the committee that this phase of LECTF is to focus on compensating employees for time and education. Additional phases will focus on rewarding good teaching. He asked if a system like what DSD is using adequately rewards time and formal education. The committee agreed that it does.

Kim asked about the possibility of offering district PD to enhance the classes offered by higher education to use towards lane changes.

Matt asked why do we, even in our current system, reward the achievement of credits from formal accredited universities. The committee responded that at some point, someone said to do it. They went on to say that there is a level of quality from those classes and that you are more likely to learn the newest and greatest strategies. A continued discussion about the quality of classes offered by universities.

College credit is more verifiable due to transcripts for the LPIC process which approves credit for lane changes. Confirmation of attendance at conferences tends to be from a principal.

Questions for Davis School District about their new salary schedule:

1. Why did you stop at Level L if they don't have more than a Bachelor's Degree?
2. Did you run a lifetime projection on the new salary schedule?

Matt asked the committee if they preferred to progress or if they wanted to get to their earnings as fast as possible? Vicki pointed out that it is nice to get an increase every year but when you look at things long term and you know you are reaching your highest level sooner and it is going towards retirement, it is one of those things that you ask – do you want to get paid now or do you want to get paid later?

The committee hopes that the legislature will continue to fund the WPU so that part of the new money can go towards a COLA for employees.

Anthony clarified that knowing you will get an increase every year and you know exactly how much it is, is easy to understand and is welcomed by employees.

Vicki mentioned that there are districts that have added longevity steps to their salary schedules to reward employees for loyalty to the district. A third option could be to keep our current salary schedule and add longevity steps to it.

Matt distributed copies of a worksheet that he has created to reflect a possible salary schedule similar to DSD's as well as a professional bonus structure (phase 2 of LECTF). Matt explained his worksheet with a discussion about mentor and teacher leader tracks. Matt feels strongly about isolating rewarding time and education from the other things that we want to reward.

It was pointed out that it would be important to have a consistent district wide professional bonus structure so that an employee can move from one location to another without loss or change of benefits. Anthony pointed out there are circumstances that vary from one school to another that will change the circumstances around the bonus structure.

One of the features of the professional bonus structure would be to allot a certain amount of money to each school to distribute according to the needs of each school (local control). A school could determine the "weight" of an activity which equates to money for the employee.

A concern that was addressed was the possibility of a teacher making a different amount of money from year to year based on if they choose to do extra items on the professional bonus structure or not. Kim pointed out that teachers are already doing this (example: one year a teacher in a MS can teach and be paid for a 7th period but the next year that period is not needed so they don't receive extra pay). The committee determined that as long as the base salary is in place, it can be up to an employee to determine if they are up to doing the extras.

Katherine expressed concern that the same few people might monopolize the spots/jobs/tasks that earn the extra money. Matt hoped that as part of negotiations additional spots/jobs/tasks would be opened up each year. The hope is that teachers aren't competing over the spots/jobs/tasks but accountability could help identify the right person for the right spot. Also, an employee placed in a position should not have the expectation of continued placement from year to year. The placements will be reevaluated each year.

There was a discussion about how mentors are chosen, placed, and reviewed each year.

Anthony mentioned that if an employee receives extra compensation for a spot/job/task as defined by the Professional Bonus Structure on the salary schedule, replacing them in that position in future years could be seen as job action since the employee will be receiving less pay. It was determined that an employee would be informed from the onset that the position is year to year.

Matt suggested the following hypothetical situation:
Year 1 – Put $3 million towards the bonus
Year 2 – That worked well, we'd like to have $3.5 million in the bonus pool because we think we can move our teachers in this direction. Negotiate the total amount and look at the point system for possible changes. This could be a higher level discussion about what is quality teaching than what is currently happening.

Matt proposed for this committee to write this idea in concept and then move to the bonus structure after the data is collected from the survey. After that, move to the mentor track and the teacher leader track.

Janice pointed out that at the next meeting the committee members will have read the survey responses which will help prepare them for further discussion.

Vicki reminded the committee that recommendation that comes from the LECTF is just a recommendation that still needs to be approved by the full school board and be approved by members of the Jordan Education Association.

Next Meeting:
November 7 (Jessica)
November 28 (Jennifer)