

## **HERRICKS TEACHER NEGOTIATIONS**

### **BOARD STATEMENT ON 1/24/2019**

As you are aware, the Board of Education and the Herricks Teachers Association have been engaged in negotiations for a successor labor contract for almost one year.

This fall, when it became apparent that the parties were unable to reach an agreement after eight negotiations sessions, a Declaration of Impasse was filed with the New York State Public Employment Relations Board. PERB appointed Jay Siegel, Esq. as mediator. During five mediation sessions, the Board of Education made various proposals for consideration by the HTA, including proposals for wage increases.

While several other issues appear to be susceptible to resolution, the central issue separating the parties is compensation. In response to a “final” wage increase offer by the District made during last evening’s mediation session, the Herricks Teachers Association declared that further mediation would be fruitless. Consequently, the Board of Education and the HTA will now be moving on to a process called Fact-finding wherein the parties will receive further assistance to reach an amicable settlement. The Public Employment Relations Board will appoint a neutral as Fact-finder who hears argument and proof by both parties on the various issues that divide them. During Fact-finding, both parties will present information in support of their respective positions to the Fact-finder. Each side is given a full and fair opportunity to explain to the Fact-finder the basis for the position it has taken with respect to the issues still to be resolved. The Fact-finder then reaches his or her own conclusions with respect to the issues and recommends a resolution to the parties. This process is non-binding. The Board is confident that, given the opportunity to present the facts underlying the positions it has taken in negotiations, a neutral third party will agree that the District’s positions are fair and reasonable under the circumstances.

Should this process fail to achieve settlement, a super conciliator who is a mediator, is then appointed to work with the parties toward a settlement. There is no further step in the law for the settlement of collective bargaining disputes involving the public schools of this State.

Throughout these impasse procedures, the Board of Education has and will continue to be mindful that our teachers are paid nearly at the top of the fifty-six school districts of Nassau County, placing a significant burden on our residents.

Nonetheless, the Board of Education remains committed to a fair and equitable contract with the HTA. The Board of Education is optimistic that the parties will eventually find common ground and looks forward to a fair settlement with the HTA.

The Board of Education reiterates that it respects and values all teachers in the District and is hopeful that the next step in the statutory process results in an equitable resolution to this matter for all involved.