

# MSCF Minute



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## Bargaining Update

*by Kevin Lindstrom, MSCF President*

Early in the school year we visited each of our chapters to provide a bargaining update. As you heard at that time, a considerable amount of time was spent over the summer months bargaining language items in the contract. Although the product of those efforts doesn't alter core contract provisions in any significant way, I believe it's fair to say that good progress was made on issues of interest to both parties. If nothing else, it makes sense to review and update language on a fairly regular basis.

As the process of bargaining around language items came to a close near the end of the summer, the focus of bargaining turned to monetary items. The process started as it often does, with each party making an opening monetary proposal that everyone in the room knew wasn't close to the likely final product. In relatively short order, which isn't always the case in bargaining, both

parties revealed their "bottom line" monetary position. Unfortunately, those positions are quite a ways apart. Despite several conversations and each side offering fairly detailed explanations of their rationale, the parties remain in their "bottom line" positions.

As you know if you've heard us talk about bargaining over the history of MSCF, the legislature performs calculations designed to compare state bargaining settlements to one another. You also know that we have historically lagged well behind other state settlements in base monetary value. The so-called "pattern bargaining" that is theoretically to happen in the state has often left us behind. For all kinds of reasons, most of them firmly founded in principle, we simply can't continue to take settlements worth less than what others got.

The current situation is

complicated, in part, by a significant discrepancy in the value of bargaining settlements reached earlier this year. In late June, AFSCME and MAPE settled at a number that theoretically established the "pattern." Early this fall, IFO settled at a number considerably less than that. As you might expect, the MSCF position is based on the value of the AFSCME and MAPE settlements, while the MnSCU position is based on the IFO settlement. The difference, in real dollars per member, is very big.

So, you might ask, "What's next?" First, we have filed for mediation through the Bureau of Mediation Services. Second, we plan to visit each of our chapters over the next couple of months to provide a detailed explanation of where we're at and to seek your feedback. Beyond these two items, we will continue conversations with those who influence the final

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outcome. We'll also continue discussions with our executive committee regarding options in this realm.

We're at a point in this process where your input is critical. Please plan to attend the meeting we'll be scheduling at your chapter. If you'd like to provide feedback to the bargaining team before or after the meeting, you can contact me anytime ([kevin.lindstrom@edmn.org](mailto:kevin.lindstrom@edmn.org) or 763-350-2355) and I'll pass your feedback along to the team. We look forward to talking with you soon.



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