



EVANSVILLE LODGE #73 FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE®

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July 21, 2015

Evansville Vanderburgh School Corp.
Board of School Trustees
951 Walnut Street
Evansville, IN 47713

Reference: EVSC Contract talk with Teamsters Local 215

Board of Trustees,

I am writing in reference to the contract negotiations between the Evansville Vanderburgh School Corporation and Teamsters Local 215. It is my understanding that the contract talks are currently at a standstill over two contract items, union dues, and employee grievance procedure. Both of these items have been a part of Local 215's contract for years and I fail to see why these two items would cause talks to stop.

It is my understanding that Local 215 allowed its members a window of opportunity to choose whether to be a part of the union. Allowing members to opt in or out at a whim would create utter chaos for both the union and the EVSC. The EVSC payroll department could be in a constant flux on payroll withholdings. Local 215 could have members joining the union when they need them, and opt out afterward, yet benefiting from the unions contract the whole time. I believe Local 215's policy of only allowing members to opt out during a specified time is fair.

I firmly believe that the second item, the employee grievance procedure using an independent third-party arbitrator, is the fairest option to all parties involved. I fail to see how the EVSC school board can make a fair and impartial decision, as they are part of the EVSC administration. I believe the employees covered under the contract deserve this.

I am also troubled by the selection of Susan Traynor Chastain as the EVSC School Board Chief Negotiator. Ms. Chastain was brought in from outside the Evansville Metro area; when there are people, more than qualified, living right here in Vanderburgh County that could fill this position. Why would the school board want someone, as their chief negotiator, that does not live in this community and does not know what is **best** for this community. The only answer I have is that the EVSC school board is attempting to remove Local 215 as the bargaining agent for EVSC employees. I find this ironic, as there is at least one member of this school board that benefits from a collective bargaining agreement at their full time place of employment.

The members of Local 215 have worked hard over the years representing EVSC members and obtaining a contract for them. The Evansville FOP Lodge has also worked hard over the years in obtaining and renewing contracts for the members of the Evansville Police Department and the Vanderburgh County Sheriff's Office. I am at a loss as to why a select few members of the school board are creating turmoil for Local 215 and are trying to throw away years of hard work by both Local 215 and the previous school boards.

On behalf of the more than 1,100 members of the Evansville FOP Lodge, I am urging the EVSC school board to return to the bargaining table with Teamsters Local 215 and get this contract signed in a timely manner. I would also suggest removing Ms. Chastain as chief negotiator, and replacing her with someone locally, that has this areas best interest at heart. I believe that, based upon her history, Ms. Chastain's presence at the negotiating table will only result in roadblocks to reaching an agreement. The new school year is rapidly approaching and there are more pressing matters that this board needs to address, such as educating our children and working on improving the security in our schools.

Sincerely,



Michael Sides
President
Evansville Fraternal Order of Police

Cc:

Charles Berger, Esq.

Local 215 President Chuck Whobrey