

Management Update - Special Edition - Feb. 25, 2009

This is a special edition of Management Update regarding Kent State University/AFSCME collective bargaining. The information is confidential and is intended for distribution to Kent State University management and supervisory personnel only. Please do not share this information beyond those individuals.

AFSCME Update: Fact-Finding Report Issued

The fact-finding report has been issued to both sides in negotiations between Kent State University and Local 153 of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME). Fact-finding took place on Jan. 26 after both sides agreed to the selection of a fact-finder.

The report, issued on Feb. 20, recommends acceptance of the university's offer of a three-year package. The package includes a 3 percent salary increase in each year of the contract, no increase in cost for health benefits in the first year of the contract (2009) and a 2 percent increase in cost for health benefits each of the last two years. The fact-finder also found in favor of the university's proposals related to equalization of overtime and sick leave.

The fact-finder recommended a fair share payment by non-AFSCME members included in the bargaining unit when union membership totals more than a 50 percent majority based on verified authorization cards as opposed to a unit-wide vote. This was a proposal put forth by the Kent State AFSCME chapter.

In making the salary recommendations, the fact-finder noted that the university's salary proposal would cost just over \$900,000 for the three-year contract, and the union's proposal (a 70 cents per hour increase each year), would total \$1.6 million. According to the report, while some Kent State job classifications may be behind similar classifications at other Ohio public universities, this is not the economic climate in which to make up those differences.

The university administration is in agreement with the fact-finder's report. The fact-finder's recommendation is nonbinding, and both sides have seven days (from the issuance of the report) to accept or reject it. According to state law, if neither party votes to reject the recommendations then the State Employment Relations Board will view the report as being accepted, and the terms will be implemented immediately.

In October, the Kent State AFSCME chapter voted down the university's final, three-year package. Since that time, Kent State has honored all elements of the old contract, which expired on Sept. 30, 2008.

Further updates will be communicated to managers through regular or special editions of *Management Update*.
