

Text of an email from BOE to Denise dated 5.18.2016

Denise,

We want to follow up on the discussion regarding Q-Comp and the potential for the district and SPFT to explore the possibility of a joint application. We know that Senator Pappas has reached out to you personally on behalf of a number of our St. Paul legislators to try to find a way forward for what in their minds will be the best available source of revenue from the legislature to our district for the foreseeable future.

We ask you to consider this seriously in light of the combination of circumstances that challenge our district, including ongoing deficits and diminishing state and federal funding. We'd like to suggest a course of action that may help us collaborate on strategies for a sustainable plan to support the kind of district that provides what our students need to succeed.

You know of the Teacher Development and Evaluation Oversight Committee, whose members are representative of teachers in the district including PAR coaches as well as administrators. This committee has successfully designed and implemented the teacher development and evaluation plan, along with continued feedback from stakeholder groups to continuously monitor the progress and make adjustment as necessary. It has set a high standard around this work, and would seem like the appropriate committee to advance the Q-Comp discussion per Senator's Pappas request.

Our understanding is that many of the things currently in practice, including PAR, teacher mentoring, and PLC's could be paid for with Q-Comp revenue - and that existing contract language around modified salary schedules related to teacher improvement plans, collapsing steps, and in-service credits would likely meet the requirements of the plan. In addition, the board would be willing to recommend the use of the Minneapolis model - with a minimal (Minneapolis is \$1) compensation to meet the requirement in statute - as the focus has shifted from tying compensation to test scores, to teacher development and support.

With the achievement gap continuing to drive public and district strategies, Q-Comp could also provide a significant increase in resources (\$260 per pupil) to support teacher development in St. Paul - which would certainly help us as a district in overcoming this continuing and critical challenge.

As a board, we are committed to working to address issues of mutual concern, including school climate, support for dual language immersion teachers, additional supports for ELL and special education instruction, and expanding teacher choice in their professional development, to name a few. All of these would be better served by a secure and sustainable budget, which would be greatly improved with the additional money - \$6-\$9M - Q-Comp could bring to our district starting this year if the cap is removed.

We believe the TD&EO team is uniquely positioned to explore the opportunities and negotiate an agreement that could be supported by all members of our school community. As you know, time is of the essence and this work needs to begin immediately. While we would have preferred that the legislature passed a provision that did not tie teacher development to Q-Comp—the reality is the Senate has chosen this path and we feel the need to seriously consider this opportunity on behalf of our students and community. Especially in light of the legislature’s ongoing reluctance to give any substantial financial support to the schools - and this in a year of surplus. If Senator Cohen is correct, next year could be one of recession, which bodes ill for a district looking at a potential \$24M deficit.

Finally, we return to the conversation Director Marchese and Board Chair Schumacher had two weeks ago with you and Nick, where they laid out:

1. The work we are doing and will continue to do as a district to cut administrative costs and reorganize our approach.
2. The desire to work together on sustainable strategies for the future.
3. The inability to cover any deficits by referendum before 2017 at the earliest.
4. Our concerns about ongoing deficits leading into class-size and contract negotiations next year.
5. The knowledge that Q-Comp money could save critical staff & programs this year, reassure parents, and prevent further enrollment decline.
6. The concern that the legislature and parents will view our unwillingness to take Q-Comp as a continuing sign of our inability to work together, and that will cause further inaction from the legislature.
7. The increased chances of lifting the Q-Comp cap if St. Paul signs on.

We realize that trust is still an issue between the district and SPFT. We both need to work with intentionality to rebuild that trust for the good of our schools and students. The TD&OE committee has built confidence around its work in the past and asking it to host this conversation could further our ability to work together collaboratively for the good of our kids.

We believe the time for this discussion is now and we’re hoping you will agree to advance this forward to the Teacher Development and Evaluation Oversight Committee as a next step.

Thanks for your consideration, we are eager to hear back.

Sincerely,

The St. Paul Public Schools Board of Education
Jon Schumacher, Chair
John Brodrick
Zuki Ellis
Steve Marchese
Jean O’Connell

Mary Vanderwert
Chue Vue