Questions that teachers are asking, with answers

**Why am I only getting $1,000 extra this year?**

After weeks of hard negotiations with the administration, our proposed new contract includes a $1,000 supplement for all teachers, $700 for school related personnel, $500 for highly effective and $275 for advanced degree.

The proposal also has a re-opening clause that allows us to continue talking about salaries so that we can rebuild the salary schedule for next year and the years after that.

**But why am I not moving up the salary schedule like I used to?**

You can blame Bobby Jindal and members of our own legislative delegation for that. It goes back to the “reforms” that were forced on us in 2012.

Thanks to Act 1 of 2012, Louisiana teacher salaries can no longer be based on years of service. Your union opposed the act. We took that case all the way to the Supreme Court, where we were denied.

So the steps on our schedule do not relate to how long you’ve been teaching. They rely on other things like “teacher effectiveness” and “needs of the system.”

The Federation agrees that there are too many steps, based on things that are not under your control. That’s why we want to use the re-opener clause to keep working for fair salaries for all teachers.

**Why do we have to wait? Couldn’t the Federation have held out for a better deal?**

It will take several months to work out the details of a new salary schedule. The Federation wanted to be sure that teachers got money in their pockets now, so that we have the time to negotiate a better system.

**Is there really hope that we can get more?**

There sure is. Even though state funding has been frozen for most of the last eight years, our school system has a healthy surplus. The Federation will fight for every dollar we can get.

But we’re going to need your help. While we sit at the table with the administration, there must be discussions between employees and school board members. The Federation will be asking you to talk to your board members, to send them e-mails and make phone calls. We’ll give you all the information you need to convince the board that we need a much better deal.