



# CMSD News Release

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

May 10, 2016

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Eric S. Gordon

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## **CMSD REJECTS FACT-FINDER'S REPORT, COMMITS TO RESOLVING REMAINING ISSUES THROUGH CONTINUED BARGAINING**

The Fact-Finding phase of negotiations between CMSD and the Cleveland Teachers Union began in mid-April and ended with a report released to both parties on Friday, May 6. Tonight, on behalf of the District's bargaining team, CEO Eric Gordon recommended that the Board of Education reject the Fact-Finder's report.

While the report included a number of good recommendations for the parties to consider, there are still a number of key issues of importance to the Board that remain unresolved. In these cases, the Fact-Finder recommended that a small group of representatives from both parties negotiate solutions. Accepting a report under these terms would bind both sides to current contract language for the duration of the new contract until an agreeable alternative solution is found; this is problematic, as it provides no recourse for either party if a more agreeable solution cannot be reached.

In addition, the Report references a number of Union proposals that were neither presented to the District by the Union nor presented to the District through the Fact Finder. The District therefore had no opportunity to consider and respond to those proposals. While many of the references to these proposals may in fact move the parties closer together, the Board simply cannot vote to accept proposed contract language the District's negotiating team has never seen.

(more)

Finally, in several instances where recommendations are made by the Fact-Finder, the report either fails to provide the contract language required for the parties to live by or sets forth language recommendations that are unclear in their intent. Therefore, accepting unclear or vague language would have the effect of creating an agreement in which neither the Board nor the Union would know the terms and conditions of employment by which our relationship is to be governed.

While the CEO expressed gratitude for the Fact Finder's work, which clearly moved both sides closer to a deal, he cited a number of valid concerns that remain unaddressed. As such, he recommended that the Board vote to reject the Fact-Finder's Report and that the District's bargaining team continue negotiations with the Cleveland Teachers Union.

Gordon said CMSD remains committed to negotiating a contract that is good for the District's children, fair to its employees, and protects the reforms that will continue the progress the District has made.

"The People of Cleveland have invested in reforms that are built around what's best for kids," said Gordon. "While bargaining continues, there is evidence in the progress we have made so far that we can and will reach an agreement that enables us to move the District forward and build on the gains we have seen over the last three years."

An annotated version of the Fact-Finder's report is attached and posted on the District website

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