

**PRESS RELEASE – EAST ALLEGHENY SCHOOL DISTRICT
ARBITRATION AWARD – FINAL BEST OFFER**

A neutral arbitrator selected by both parties to hear the contract dispute between the East Allegheny School District and its teacher's has issued a Final Best Offer Arbitration Award. Although the District worked hard to reach an agreed upon settlement, there was no agreement and this award must now be considered by the Board. In selecting the District's proposal on wages, the neutral arbitrator noted that "[a careful review of the applicable District finances clearly establishes a significant financial hardship in meeting its financial obligations." The arbitrator also selected the District's proposal on the health care contribution rate noting "[a] substantial amount of health care costs are paid by the District. The District's request to have employees absorb a portion of such health care costs is not unreasonable." The arbitrator also recommended that health care contributions be assessed bimonthly and that they be administered through a section 125 plan. No other changes in the agreement were proposed by the arbitrator including the language of the Distance Learning portion of the contract. The District sought changes to allow greater flexibility with regard to distance learning as a means of enhancing the educational opportunities available to our students. As is often the case in contract disputes, this proposed solution does not provide either side with everything they requested but the District does extend its sincere appreciation to the arbitrator for his efforts in this matter.

The Board will now carefully consider the arbitrator's suggestions and make a decision on Tuesday, May 26, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. If the arbitration award is accepted by both parties, the contract will be settled consistent with its terms. If the suggestions are rejected by either party, the parties must resume negotiations. A copy of the Award is available for review on the District website at www.eawildcats.net.