**Soap Lake School District #156**

**RESOLUTION #17-11**

**A Resolution Improving Transparence by Negotiating Collective Bargaining Agreements in a Manner Open to the Public**

**WHEREAS**, a transparent government is a priority for Soap Lake School District (“District”);

**WHEREAS**, the Open Public Meetings Act (“OPMA”), Chapter 42.30 RCW, was enacted by the Legislature in 1971;

**WHEREAS**, the legislative declaration of the OPMA (RCW 42.30.010) states in part: “The people of this state do not yield their sovereignty to the agencies which serve them. The people, in delegating authority, do not give their public servants the right to decide what is good for the people to know and what is not good for them to know. The people insist on remaining informed so that they may retain control over the instruments they have created.”;

**WHEREAS**, both taxpayers and employees deserve to know how they are being represented during collective bargaining negotiations;

**WHEREAS**, the potential impression of secret “deal-making” will be eliminated by making collective bargaining negotiations open to the public;

**WHEREAS**, public observance of collective bargaining contract negotiations will not preclude bargaining representatives of both sides from meeting ( i ) separately and privately to discuss negotiating tactics, goals, and methods and (ii) separately and privately for dispute resolution purposes (e.g. mediation);

**WHEREAS**, the District will conduct labor-management contract negotiations with employee organizations in meetings that are open to the public. Any member of the public attending such meeting will not be permitted to speak or participate, but may attend solely in an observational capacity. The audience may take written notes.

**WHEREAS**, the District will provide notice of such contract negotiation meetings via the District’s website.

**WHEREAS**, collective bargaining is defined in statute (RCW 41.56.030) as: “...the performance of the mutual obligations of the public employer and the exclusive bargaining representative to meet at reasonable times, to confer and negotiate in good faith, and to execute a written agreement with respect to grievance procedures and collective negotiations on personnel matters, including wages, hours and working conditions, which may be peculiar to an appropriate bargaining unit of such public employer, except that by such obligation neither party shall be compelled to agree to a proposal or be required to make a concession unless otherwise provided in this chapter.”;

**WHEREAS**, making collective bargaining contract negotiations transparent does not conflict with and is not preempted by state law;

**WHEREAS**, the OPMA (RCW 42.30.140) permits collective bargaining contract negotiations to be exempted from the open public meetings requirements, but this exemption does not compel such negotiations to be private and/or secret; and

**WHEREAS**, the OPMA does not prohibit public school districts from making these negotiations open to the public.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF SOAP LAKE SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 156 AS FOLLOWS:**

The District shall endeavor to conduct collective bargaining contract negotiations in a manner that is open to the public;

The District may provide public notice of collective bargaining contract negotiations in accordance with the OPMA (RCW 42.30.060-42.30.080);

This resolution does not preclude meetings related to any activity conducted pursuant to the enforcement of a collective bargaining agreement after the agreement is negotiated and executed, including, but not limited to, grievance proceedings;

This resolution does not preclude District bargaining representatives from meeting:

 ( i ) separately and privately to discuss negotiating tactics, goals, and methods and

 (ii) separately and privately for dispute resolution purposes (e.g. mediation); and

The Superintendent or designee will send a copy of this resolution to all departments in the District, to all exclusive bargaining representatives, and all others deemed appropriate by the District.

Adopted this 23rd day of April, 2018 in Soap Lake, Washington.

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS:**

ATTEST:

Sunshine Pray, Secretary to the Board Signe Knudsen, President of the Board

Curt Dotson, Director Nicole Frazier, Director

Renee Detrick, Director Donald Clark, Director