

School Law Update

FEBRUARY 14, 2019

Consumer Price Index (CPI) for Bargaining Agreements Beginning July 1, 2019 Confirmed, and Other Base Wage Negotiation Reminders

The Wisconsin Department of Revenue (DOR) has advised the Wisconsin Employment Relations Commission (WERC) that the CPI-U increase applicable to one year collective bargaining agreements with a term beginning on July 1, 2019 is 2.44%.

Base Wage Negotiation Reminders

This CPI rate is only applicable to bargaining units for which the bargaining representative was recertified during the November election conducted by the Wisconsin Employment Relations Commission (WERC). Unless designated by board policy, it does not apply to any other group or individual and does not apply to setting new hire wages.

This CPI rate is a cap. Unless approved by referendum, a school board is prohibited from making any change in total base wage that exceeds this percentage change in CPI. Offers and settlements can still be negotiated or implemented at a level below CPI.

Total base wage is the only mandatory subject of bargaining. Districts are required to negotiate both the amount of total base wage increase offered and its distribution. All other subjects of bargaining are prohibited.

Total base wage increase means the maximum increase to the sum of all base wages in the applicable bargaining unit; it does not refer to the base wage for individuals.

Distribution of the total base wage increase in a proposal does not have to occur on an equal dollar or equal percentage across-the-board basis. Individuals or groups of employees can, if not discriminatory, be provided different levels of base wage increase. However, it is common for Districts to offer an equal dollar distribution (even if that means an individual within the bargaining unit may receive an individual percent increase above CPI).

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact any of the following for more information.

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