

17:03-19:07

**Rick Hess**

There's a second, and to me more fundamental question, which is that Wisconsin, like the federal government, like just about every state government, has been living beyond its means for decades. There are accumulated shortfalls and deficits, and the problem is that we have had governor after governor and state after state who has been content to kick the can down the road.

So the real rationale for trying to both roll back collective bargaining and to go after teacher contributions to pension and healthcare was not because that was actually going to help with the 2012-2013 deficit. Here I think Walker was, you know, less than forthcoming. It's because it was to change a trajectory as you look five, ten years out in terms of the fiscal condition of the state.

**Mike Petrilli**

But Rick, why do you need to curtail collective bargaining rights in order to change that trajectory?

**Rick Hess**

Because school boards and superintendents in Wisconsin and elsewhere have made it clear they lack the intestinal fortitude to negotiate responsibly or to do a good job of curtailing giveaways.

One example: the Wisconsin teacher pension system, for instance, stipulates that employers will make a 6.8% contribution to the pension system on behalf of employees. Employees were to make 6.2 percent. The Milwaukee public schools, in 1996, negotiated a way so that they are paying the entirety of the employee of the employee share; so 13% payment on top of each employee. In addition to that, there was a supplemental 4.2% percent contribution made entirely by the district. So MPS was paying 17.2 percent of each teacher position into pensions and supplementary pensions; employees were making zero contribution.

It's probably not a shock that while the median compensation for an MPS teacher this last year was \$56,000, fully loaded with benefits they were a \$100,000 a piece. School boards and superintendents who are engaging in this over a period of decades have suggested that they are, frankly, not to be trusted in these kinds of negotiations.

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22:51-24:39

**Randi Weingarten**

What collective bargaining does, is that it's actually the vehicle by which, to create, not just economic dignity for people, but to actually create voice to enable the tools and conditions that teachers need. And that's what collective bargaining has done in districts that have actually worked effectively, both here and abroad. And that gets missed in this entire debate.

So for example, in New Haven, there is—they really—one of the most innovative, interesting contracts in a long time, because they actually used collective bargaining to problem solve. In Toledo, in the last few months, with the cuts that they had, they used collective bargaining to problem solve. In Baltimore, they used collective bargaining to problem solve. Now that's different than the whole issue in terms of pensions and things

like that, because a lot of that was actually statutory, not done through collective bargaining.

My point is, when actually the public was confronted with, “Should peoples’ rights be stripped away?” in Wisconsin and Ohio, two-thirds of the public, in the winter, said “No, these rights shouldn’t be stripped away.” Does it mean that we have to use these rights responsibly? Yes. But when you start thinking about what’s happened in America these days, and even you said it, ok, we don’t trust our elected officials, so let’s strip away their right to actually do something. That’s not accountability. Accountability should then be, then the next election people are accountable for what they’ve done.