

STATE OF WASHINGTON
BEFORE THE PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS COMMISSION

In the matter of the petition of:

ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARIES ASSOCIATION
OF SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 410,
UPPER SNOQUALMIE VALLEY

Involving certain employees of:

SNOQUALMIE VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 410

CASE NO. 1263-E-77-250

DECISION NO. 529-PECB

DIRECTION OF ELECTION

APPEARANCES

Mary F. Brickey, President, on behalf of the Petitioner

Lawrence A. Lindberg, Superintendent, on behalf of the Employer

Pamela G. Bradburn, General Counsel, on behalf of Intervenor, Washington
State Council of County and City Employees, AFL-CIO, Local 21 SV

On December 8, 1977, the Administrative Secretaries Association of School District No. 410, Upper Snoqualmie Valley (hereinafter the "Petitioner") filed a petition with the Public Employment Relations Commission for investigation of a question concerning representation of certain employees of Snoqualmie Valley School District No. 410 (hereinafter "District"). The Washington State Council of County and City Employees, AFL-CIO, Local 21 SV (hereinafter "WSCCCE") notified the Commission that it was the incumbent bargaining representative of the petitioned-for employees and as such it wished to intervene in any proceedings concerning them. A hearing was held on March 10, 1978, before Alan R. Krebs, Hearing Officer.

BACKGROUND

The District has 2,746 students, 140 certificated employees and 93 classified employees. Since 1967, the District has recognized the WSCCCE as the exclusive bargaining representative of all of its classified employees except for several administrators and three designated confidential clerical employees. That unit consists of custodians, food service personnel, maintenance personnel, warehousemen, bus drivers and cleaners, mechanics, aides and office clerical employees.

POSITIONS OF THE PARTIES

The petitioner seeks to carve out a portion of the existing bargaining unit of classified employees, resulting in the creation of a separate bargaining unit of office clerical employees. The petitioner bases its claim on differences of duties, skills and working conditions between the office clerical employees and

the other bargaining unit employees, and on a claim of philosophical differences with the incumbent representative concerning labor disputes and strikes.

The WSCCCE contends that the petitioned-for bargaining unit is not appropriate under RCW 41.56.060. In the alternative, the WSCCCE contends that the petitioned-for unit is not sufficiently distinct to warrant disruption of the existing and historical bargaining relationship. The WSCCCE particularly directs attention towards the clerical and related tasks which have been and would continue to be performed by other members of the existing bargaining unit.

The employer took no position on the matter.

DISCUSSION

The "clerical aide" classification relied upon heavily by the intervenor has been vacant for several years, and the District has no plans to employ any clerical aides. The record indicates that the other classified employees perform only limited clerical related work, and then only as an adjunct to their primary responsibilities concerning instruction or other support functions.

The ten office clerical employees in the proposed bargaining unit work under the titles: "principal's secretary", "assistant secretary" or "office assistant". They work in the offices of the various school buildings operated by the employer, and are supervised by the various building principals. None of the parties has sought to disturb the exclusion of three "administrative office" clerical employees as "confidential", and the petitioned-for employees therefore constitute all of the office clerical employees of the District.

The Commission has recognized "office clerical employees" as an appropriate separate unit and has approved severance of a unit of office clerical employees from a broader unit encompassing all of the classified employees of a school district. Franklin Pierce School District, Decision 78-D (PECB, 1977). On the other hand, severance of an office clerical unit has been denied in a small school district where the numbers of employees involved were so small as to indicate that a severance would merely result in fragmentation and proliferation of bargaining units and disruption of labor relations. Quincy School District, Decision 306 (PECB, 1977). The situation in the instant case is somewhere between those encountered in Franklin Pierce and Quincy. This employer and its office clerical workforce are smaller than in Franklin Pierce, but larger and with less interchangeability and interaction of employees than existed in Quincy. The WSCCCE argument that "adding another bargaining unit in a small school district would tend to unduly disrupt what have been stable labor relations" might have had some greater weight if the District also expressed some opposition to the severance. The District is a first class school district, one of the 84 largest among 300 districts in the

state, and the principle of appropriate office clerical units enunciated in Franklin Pierce cannot be ignored.

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Snoqualmie Valley School District No. 410 is a school district organized under Title 28A, RCW, and is a public employer within the meaning of RCW 41.56.
2. Administrative Secretaries Association of School District No. 410, Upper Snoqualmie Valley, a labor organization and bargaining representative within the meaning of RCW 41.56, timely filed a petition for investigation of a question concerning representation of certain employees of Snoqualmie Valley School District No. 410 in a bargaining unit described as: "Administrative secretaries, excluding all other classified personnel". The bargaining unit claimed appropriate consists of ten employees.
3. Washington State Council of County and City Employees, AFL-CIO, Local 21 SV, a labor organization and bargaining representative within the meaning of RCW 41.56, timely moved for intervention in the matter on the basis of its status as the recognized exclusive bargaining representative of a unit which includes all classified employees of the District and all of the employees claimed by the petitioner herein. Such recognition has been in effect since 1967, and Local 21 SV was party to a collective bargaining agreement with the District for the period July 1, 1975, through June 30, 1977. A 1977-78 collective bargaining agreement was not executed until February 13, 1978.
4. The parties stipulated that the Public Employment Relations Commission has jurisdiction in this matter pursuant to RCW 41.56.
5. The employees in the petitioned-for bargaining unit are office clerical employees who perform typing, filing, telephone answering and office machinery operation functions and may perform other functions such as first aid, ordering supplies, bookkeeping, scheduling of students and voter registration. These are the only employees of the District whose duties and skills are primarily clerical and related in nature.
6. Neither the employees in the existing bargaining unit nor the employees in the petitioned-for bargaining unit have common supervision or work locations. There is little evidence of interchange between office clerical and the other 21 classifications in the existing bargaining unit. Separate pay scales and work year provisions are made for each such classification.

7. The fringe benefits, overtime compensation and other terms and conditions of employment are generally uniform for all classified employees of the District.

8. The WSCCCE has represented the classified employees of the District since 1967. The record does not reflect that the WSCCCE has failed to adequately represent the office clerical employees, and the WSCCCE continues to be a viable organization interested in the representation of the affected employees.

9. The petitioner has supported its petition with a showing of interest demonstrating that it has the support of a substantial majority of the employees in the petitioned-for bargaining unit.

10. The severance of an office clerical unit from the existing bargaining unit would not change the extent of organization among the employees of the employer.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. A bargaining unit composed of all office clerical employees of Snoqualmie Valley School District No. 410; excluding the superintendent of schools, confidential employees, certificated employees and all other classified employees is a unit appropriate for the purposes of collective bargaining pursuant to RCW 41.56.060, and may appropriately be severed from the existing unit of classified employees.

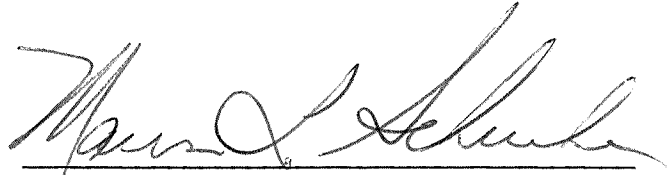
2. A question concerning representation exists in the bargaining unit described in the foregoing paragraph.

DIRECTION OF ELECTION

An election by secret ballot shall be conducted under the direction of the Public Employment Relations Commission among all office clerical employees of Snoqualmie Valley School District No. 410, excluding the superintendent of schools, confidential employees, certificated employees and all other classified employees, for the purpose of determining whether a majority of such employees desire to be represented for the purposes of collective bargaining by Washington State Council of County and City Employees, AFL-CIO, Local 21 SV or by Administrative Secretaries Association of School District No. 410, Upper Snoqualmie Valley, or by neither of said organizations.

DATED at Olympia, Washington this 26th day of October 1978.

PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS COMMISSION

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Marvin L. Schurke", written over a horizontal line.

MARVIN L. SCHURKE, Executive Director