

MEA Bargaining 2019-2020

Session #2

Wednesday, October 23, 2019

Those present: Pat Barber, Kate Barlaug, Cory Bernaert, Linda Bryan-Beachler, Kara Carney, Willie Clark, Jacob Davis, James Horner, Heather Jenkins, Helen King, Brian Kirchberg, Rena Morano, Melanie Newhall, Bruce Proud, John Rikard, Lesli Strickland, Tammy Taylor, David Underhill, Bill Vogel, Doug Wagner, Dawn Walker and Genelle Zoratti-Yost.

Caucus began at 4:35 p.m. Meeting began at 5:22 p.m.

Agenda

Welcome ▪ FTE Update ▪ HE/E Update ▪ Difference in Board/MEA proposals ▪ Board proposal ▪ Language Clarifications – Health Insurance Terminal Benefit, Position Vacancies, Audit Language, Wellness

Management agreed they were good with the minutes from the 10/3/19 meeting.

FTE Update

Heather – FTE count is up - a little over 900 kids which includes charter and district students. Any extra funding would go to teachers to support class size and there may be some additional funding to work with.

Bill – We are not certain what the situation is statewide. Some districts drop, some add. This is reconciled by DOE. We will receive information in December about what happens to enrollment statewide. If enrollment up statewide and exceeds then they reduce funding. Regarding McKay scholarships, I think they have budgeted for that. We have the ability to do a little more in our counter proposal.

HE/E Update

Jacob - Review of HE/E teachers – Comfortable with these tentative numbers:

50.45 % HE,

38.08% E

1.85% D/NI

9.62% not rated for performance pay (PP) schedule. Those individuals would be added to effective.

700 rated as E.

420 listed as less than HE on this schedule. Vast majority going to be on PP this year. 500.

Appeals underway. 700+ who are effective will probably decrease.

Bill – The prediction is good because we have done this for a couple of years.

Difference in Board/MEA proposals

Bill – The association's proposal includes level movement of 4 and 6 versus 2 and 3. Recommend COLA. \$3.5M apart. With fringe \$4M apart. For paras - 3 versus 1. \$600,000 apart without fringe. \$650,000 apart with fringe. Reasonable proposals but funding does not allow the district to meet those areas as much as we want to

do that. Try to get as close to middle ground as possible with you. Have not done cost of living adjustment (COLA) here before but see advantages for association and district. Good concept to introduce. District adding \$300 COLA to previous proposal of 2/3. COLA provides a small increase for those new to district. Commend MEA for thinking of them. Raise starting salary to \$45,427 from \$45,127 making Manatee #1 in the bay area. Solidify position. Advantages for us. Does stretch budget. Because of teachers receiving funding for subs instead of going into pot stretches us pretty tight but can go and meet you half way. Paras can meet in middle with 2 steps. Would bring paras up with steps.

Handouts – teacher and para proposals.

Jacob – talked about stagnant schedule. \$303 differential. Based on 7.75 differential is \$312/\$313. Feel comfortable sticking to \$302/\$303 number.

Bruce – Explain that because I don't guess how it could be.

Jacob – Change in steps comes out to 302 or 303

Bruce – If you add additional ¼ hour doesn't change differential between steps.

Jacob – have a schedule based on 7.75 hour day. Divide by 7.75 multiply by the number of levels. Differential is \$302 and \$303. Last year talked about having stagnant schedule if referendum was not renewed.

Bruce – Right. Ok.

Bill – I know you want to talk about proposal with team. I also want to talk about language. Instead of new language and us bringing proposals, we're looking for clarification. When issues come up in year we have conversations.

1. Health insurance termination for teachers that might have been nonrenewed and later find positions in district that start back has been a question mark. May not be non-renewed because of allocation, not performance. Make allowance so don't lose health insurance. Pat has language.

2. advertising – when we advertise has changed because of technology and postings. We want to put this in contract language.

3. Performance on the grandfathered (GF) schedule – Language needs to be added to address an audit criticism. We know that the understand has been there in past negotiations.

4. One member is concerned about the wellness program. Program that HIC approved a while back, and we are in agreement with that.

5. MOUs – Put in addendum somewhere so we have them all.

6. Referendum is so critical to us that there has been how millage is paid out. Wants to know how association feels about that but don't have to talk about it. Not proposing new language. Although would like to do more we try to meet MEA half way including adopting concept of COLA.

Bruce – 9.62% not captured in price out.

Jacob – We did not budget for that last year. On the back end we gave the same adjustment as E. We priced this out in commensurate fashion.

Bruce – The note references last year?

Jacob – correct.

Bill – Regarding sub cost, we don't know what the end result will be but will closely monitor with open book to MEA. If any variance, any left over open to setting aside for supplements. Not into leaving any money out of available dollars for bargaining.

Bruce – who is eligible for longevity?

Jacob – we're in a tough situation regarding bridging time. Eligibility no longer based on JDE date. Can use original hire date and then could bridge time on one by one basis. It's a manual reconciliation and examination. Some may have received longevity on old schedule.

Bill – This is another instance where district and MEA have worked together. Appreciated you sharing data on salaries throughout the state. Obtained a look at all settlements across state. Some outliers. Feel our offer is one of the better but there are always a couple. Fortunately with referendum and with what we put here we put our best foot forward but wish we could do better.

Bruce – what number was used to calculate COLA?

Jacob – 2742.47

Sub money based on data actuals from last year. Transferred into \$110 for title I, \$100 for standard schools. Projecting \$715,940.

Heather - Was \$50 for school.

Jacob - This payment directly benefits the teachers.

Heather - Already made unfilled sub payment for year. This is unbudgeted. Budgeted over \$318, 000 for payment to schools. When budgeted we were unaware of this change.

Bruce - Next year you will have \$315,000 you won't have to budget? We'll talk about it next year.

Caucus at 5:47 p.m. Reconvened at 7:31 p.m.

Bruce – We had a lengthy, good discussion about proposals. Prepared to give counter proposal. Handout provided. Used Jacob's number in terms of FTE and amount per level for PP and GF schedule and para 2 steps. 1st column – included \$400 COLA using FTEs provided. 4/3 model for PP and GF schedules. Included teacher longevity. Paras 2 steps and 15 cents/hour COLA. Easier to manage their schedule that way than across the board dollar amount. Done by hourly rate. We did this before a few years ago. Used FTEs and amount you provided. Numbers I had for employees and hours. A little over 1 million hours. 742 people. Different –

COLA, 4/3 and for paras additional amount on schedule. Other – longevity. Don't believe there is that many people that are lost. Pat worked hard to identify as many people as possible within the last 2 years to catch everyone up. District should be more systematic in identifying people. I'm not calculating as high – 50 and 20 for those who are there. That's ½ cost. Also, didn't include subs, for teachers to be paid when there isn't a sub. The goal is to fill position with a sub. Guessing you didn't budget for subs at 100% for vacancies that exist?

Heather – No, we budgeted based on average of subs needed for last 3 years.

Bruce – I believe you won't expend that amount or won't expend if you do a good job of filling position. It's in the district's discretion to have HR recruit more subs. Proposal to manage how many not filled in hopes that vacancies are filled by a sub. That is a goal. Worked with other districts in that end. This is a HR issue. Has to be approached systematically. You have data of where unfilled subs are. Important for HR to find people who will do the work in those places. Cost for teachers and paras (see spreadsheet). At bottom put notations around PP and GF performance ratings. Not in disagreement with notations. Have another proposal on those issues.

Bill – would like to be able to agree tonight but have to go back and look at this. Appears to be beyond what we're able to do this year. Will take a look at it. We're hopeful to be able to reach agreement tonight and move forward and be able to start process of getting people on a new schedule. Some calculations don't agree with.

Bruce – Let me know where you think I made mistake.

Jacob – Not saying mistake. Noticed influx. Disagree on longevity piece. And sub.

Bruce – Work on longevity and figure it out. You should already know. The people should be here. Should be able to figure it out. It's October. I think that is damn laziness on the school district's part.

Bill – We can lock down a certain date. This is all the people who believe they should reach the thresholds. Overall concern is that it appears beyond reach. Will look at difference in cost. That's all I can say.

Bruce – Want to talk about other language issues?

Bill – I think it would be good.

Handouts provided by MEA – audit language and health insurance

Bruce – language regarding movement on the salary schedule. Appendix A. Beginning on line 38. Rest is current language. Another proposal and what happens when health insurance expires and people terminate employment. Article V, Section 12. Added word in 1st paragraph so could be numbered. Pay in advance which makes it that they would have to have been hired early in the year.

Bill – If fired in probationary period now, it could be interpreted that their insurance continues.

Bruce – Only until June 30th. This is if they worked through the year. Last day of service in the year.

Lesli – In September if employee buys month in advance then extend coverage until 7/31. Everyone else would end 6/30. If terminated in midst of year benefits end during that month.

Bill – Maybe that needs to be clarified.

Pat – 1st paragraph refers to that.

Bill – This has been a challenge for all of us.

Lesli – Was bullet D on Lesli's original language. Lesli said that 'C' was wrong. That would be any time they terminate.

Bill – Will work through that one.

Bruce - #4 is when someone works a full year and hired prior to first duty day. No break. Continue employment. Didn't miss any days of work.

Lesli – Any teacher? Not just nonrenewed teacher.

Bruce – Yes, lots of people who resign instead of being nonrenewed.

Bill – Only thing is if they resign what this would do and they resign earlier.

Lesli – The issue is COBRA. For those who leave if they elect cobra. If they terminate in June. Hired on 8/1 then playing this, it's difficult to track. Being notified of COBRA rights. Then starting on first work day no break in service. But already paid for COBRA coverage.

Bill – Will take a look at that.

Bruce - #5. New hire. Unless the employee pays 1st premium in advance. Is that practice?

Lesli – Yes

Bill – May need to add language. Think this is something we can work out.

Bruce – One more page. From para contract. Reflecting same language as it relates to paras. Article 11 in para contract.

Bill – It's essentially the same but has to do with para. Ok. Anything else?

Bruce – no.

Bill – Copy of MOU on vacancies, transfers and promotions. Handout provided. Leave you with one concern. Team will go back and talk. Concerned is what's critical to this organization and during caucus talked about phenomenal things going on in this district. Lead to an "A" this year. Got nice facilities, safety program intact. Going well. Lot of noise out there that is beyond control. Governor starting proposal. Cost \$625M. If he would just give us that and divide and negotiate, but he's not doing that. Public hearing a lot of noise on outside. Governor proposal not helping us at all. Concerned millage would be at risk. Millage has to be on general election next time. Have to say that we have put our absolute best foot forward. Will take this back. If we end up at impasse it is going to be a bad result for everyone. Have to start with strategy to pass millage again. We can't wait. Only have 2 more years to go. If you wait and it doesn't pass. 1 year away from moving forward. If

public feels we don't need it because governor is going to raise salaries. We are going to hurt ourselves and our ability to pass millage again. If don't pass it will be a crisis in this district. Please go back and look at what our proposal is. Will get with Pat on some dates. Know we are not available next week. Available on 11/4 and 11/5.

Bruce – Appreciate your concern about the governor. Here you have three legislators publicly stating that districts have money. All they have to do is negotiate with unions. Need to talk with legislators in this county about how hard we negotiated in the time I've been here. Know this can't just come from unions to say this is not an issue of negotiating money. Be clear to legislators not putting money on the table. They don't really understand how much money is flexible. Seem to think there is more flexibility than districts telling us what isn't flexible. Getting mixed message from district and legislators.

Bill – If we don't reach agreement among us it doesn't concern them too much. You're right. They just say they are not negotiating. Legislative delegation hearing – know in other districts they're doing this. Legislators using disagreement we have in their favor. We need a united front. I don't have an answer to that. Have done battle with legislators. Went around county with charts. Legislators didn't like that. The best way to do that is for us to work together.

Bruce – We're trying to do that.

Bill – You have put forth not unreasonable proposals. It's just that we are unable to agree to them because we don't have the dollars available. But will take it back. Can meet on November 4th if you like.

Bruce – OK.

Meeting adjourned at 8:08 p.m.

Caucus at 8:09 p.m. Caucus adjourned at 8:39 p.m.