

**MEA Bargaining 2021-2022**  
**Session #1**

Monday, November 1, 2021

Those present: Pat Barber, Tim Barger, Linda Bryan-Beachler, Kara Carney, Dan Evans, Helen King, Brian Kirchberg, Wendy Mungillo, Melanie Newhall, Bruce Proud, Marlyce Stringer, Jon Syre, Bill Vogel, Doug Wagner and Dawn Walker.

Caucus began at 4:45 p.m. Meeting began at 5:06 p.m.

Agenda

Welcome ▪ Introductions ▪ Official Notetaker designation ▪ Scope of bargaining ▪ Teacher salary credit for experience ▪ Payroll deductions ▪ Para job descriptions ▪ Budget update ▪ Next meeting

Bill said that he put up a draft agenda and wanted to check with pat – look ok?

Pat replied that those are all of y'all's issues. General stuff is ok with us.

Bill said ok good, always like to start with introductions. New team member. Pat, would you like to start?

MEA bargaining team introduced themselves.

Bill thanked and welcomed the MEA team. Always enjoy getting together with association, working through issues that come up.

Bill introduced himself and management team introduced themselves.

Bill said that the one thing about negotiations is that your president is very involved if any issues come forward Pat brings them to the administration. Most issues are able to be worked out. When we get down to negotiations issues have been talked though. Good way to process work. Full scope of contract this year. Past experience is to bring forth issues. Issues are usually very similar.

Both teams agreed that Dawn will hold the official record. Dawn will draft minutes and send to us for review. Very rarely find anything in notes that we disagree. We will approve at next meeting.

Bill talked about the scope of bargaining and that the district doesn't expect to present a lot of items. District is open to talking at future settings. Pending things for association to consider. Pat, Bruce do you want to add anything to agenda?

Bruce replied that the association has issues to add to agenda that we need to talk about one way or another, some connected to compensation, some may not.

Bill replied us, too. Not prepared to discuss today.

Bruce said that they all look like compensation to me.

Bill said yes, article XII. Going to be talking about other issues. First one is salary experience. For a number of years have been authorizing 8 years for experience brought in to Manatee County. What we're proposing is 10 years. Changed language to 10 years and added clause that's somewhat familiar. Taken out of another part of contract with teachers bringing in years for seniority pay. Giving teachers opportunity after contract is ratified to verify. Each step is \$300+ dollars. It would only be 2 of those steps. Not going up a whole 3, would go up 2.

(Management provided a handout.)

Bruce asked, any thought process around 60 calendar days?

Bill said it's the same contract language verifying experience for longevity pay. That's why we put that in there.

Bruce stated that the window is different. Longevity is internal. This is external.

Bill said we're open. Understand it takes time to verify. That raises an issue. Looked at ways to cost out. Not certain what it would take. Everyone prior to this date. Only would impact people who were in district back to point when instituted 8 years.

Bill continued with another issue. (Management handout provided.) Next one to propose is one that has been a little bit of a controversy. Once able to work out payroll model and went to 22/26 there was not issue with getting 22 pays for deductions for health insurance. Has been controversy with 26. Try to put something in contract that defines when we would do this pay. If teachers choose 26 pay would have 22 deductions taken from same 22 deductions that referendum is paid. The referendum supplement is larger amount so that would help with health insurance deductions. Would move faster than slower on this one. Now in the middle of open enrollment. Concerned because teachers ask when deductions would come out. If could agree on early TA would be helpful for teachers because they're asking in open enrollment. If you have a better suggestion asking for that, too.

Bruce said that he's not sure he has ever seen a calendar of when referendum is paid. It's not on the payroll calendar.

Doug said he can provide that.

Bruce asked, is it consistent every year?

Wendy said she was not sure.

Doug said that the district has 11 different calendars. Just talking about ones here. Some calendars have skinny check, not just teachers.

Bruce said he was not talking about the other calendars. Actually the contract has 4 days.

Doug said the challenge is getting benefits hitting on other employees as well. Have deductions taken from 22 checks when teachers work that's when referendum hits. Try to standardize across district. When built system hard coded it in to the system.

Bill said let's send that to Bruce maybe tomorrow. If we've got it that would be great. Issue was teachers concerned because had deduction or didn't, this year had to make up for it.

Bruce said you know, I don't know, Bill, you probably weren't in bargaining when talked about the stupidity of going to 26 pays. We raised issues at that time. Now changing everything except when pay dates are scheduled. We still have trouble with payroll and it always seems to be us fixing the problem when no one is listening to us on the district side. This is not directed at you because you weren't there. Not sure if Doug was there or not.

Bill said that's good. We want to solve these things once and for all so it's not a guessing game. Will get you the calendar and take a look at it and see if we can get agreement or come up with something else.

Bruce said that brings up the issue of 1, 2 or 3 days. We have a MOU (memorandum of understanding) this year for 4 days. Contract was negotiated for 5 days. We talked about this issue. 4,3,2,1,5 because of changing to 26 pays for 10 month employees. Not interested in having annual MOUs about issues because district isn't listening to what's going on in its own system and keeps making the same mistake.

Bill said that the one thing that's tying the district's hands is the legislature. Students can't start before August 10<sup>th</sup>. Open for suggestions that might come forward. Reason that the early check was put in place was that it is a long time for teachers to wait for 1<sup>st</sup> pay. We can't pay in advance. Maybe we don't need the early check. It's a smaller amount but gets people started. Open to getting the issue resolved once and for all.

Bruce said he wants to see how many times we bring up solutions and get shot down and told the system doesn't work that way. Every year we talk about payroll issues. System so inflexible that it can't manage the system the way it is.

Tim has knowledge of system and wants to resolve the issue. The sooner it can be resolved the better.

Bruce asked, "Is there an explanation for the referendum not being paid as it should be in the regular pay periods?"

Bruce said he's concerned it may be a ULP (unfair labor practice). We never negotiated 22 pay for referendum.

Tim said he doesn't know the history.

Doug said he will bring the reason why the referendum is paid the way it is to the next meeting.

Bill said there is going to be follow up for us. Want dates for referendum checks and history. Most importantly want to solve the problem. Simple way may be to make calls to Tallahassee to change dates to start school. It's a challenge.

Bill stated that the next thing is 2 job description proposing to change. Para job descriptions. Para ESE and Para ESOL. Acknowledge positions are in the bargaining unit. Because of special talents needed proposing pay grades change. See presenting to the association, get input and school board approves job description. Those that meet the requirement would benefit from the pay rate. Nobody is going to lose job if they don't meet qualifications.

Bruce said that in the job descriptions you changed the payrate. If approved by board it will be a ULP.

Bill said that's why we brought it up. Could be debatable whether it's a ULP.

Bruce said it's clearly established in law that it's a bargainable issue.

Doug said one job description is for ESE, one for ESOL. To be a para you need 60 hours or pass ParaPro test. Looking for something in between ParaPro and 60 hours to increase wages. These are tough jobs to fill. To Bruce's point there is no current pay level between these 2. On both job descriptions we added back 30 hours. If they passed the test they're working in the system. 30 or more ours would qualify. Added performance responsibilities involved around specialized training. Current staff would come through and show they have 30 hours to be placed on higher wage. We're talking about ESE and ESOL, not all paras, who work with these students. It would be a \$1.31/hour increase if you just did middle of road between current para and current teacher assistant. Could be someone with a year of college.

Bruce asks what happens to those who don't meet minimum requirement?

Doug said they stay. Might be an incentive to get additional college.

Bruce asked what duties would they be responsible for?

Doug asked, the ones who stay?

Bruce said the ones who don't meet the minimum requirements.

Doug said that they remain on their current job description. Not proposing changing current job description.

Bruce said so you're adding a job description.

Doug said they're not going to lose their job.

Bruce said it looks like revisions to current job descriptions. Going to confuse people. If you are revising this for some people but others are remaining on the old schedule how will they know the difference?

Doug said that's a good point

Bruce asked what's the rationale for not moving to PP6.

Wendy said PP6 is teacher assistant. Job needs 60 credit hours. Some don't have that but might have 1 year of college that would get them close to higher wage.

Bruce said he's talking about the PP6 job descriptions. That's how you establish a pay rate and determine how jobs are different.

Wendy said we don't have a job description for those jobs specifically. We don't have a PP6 job description for ESE and ESOL.

Wendy said we can send the ESE and ESOL job descriptions to you.

Bruce asked are they online?

Wendy replied yeah.

Bruce asked how was it determined that it should be a classification of 7.

Doug said it was just an idea to move forward. TA7 is between aide and assistant pay. Half way between is where it came from.

Wendy said that we do have ESOL middle and ESOL high but no one budgeted in those. Do not see anyone sitting in those roles right now. But those job descriptions are online.

Bruce asked there are job descriptions that say that?

Wendy said yes.

Bruce asked Pat, did you have new team member come in?

Pat replied yes, and Marlyce introduced herself.

Bill said we have our follow up items? Management team acknowledged. Bill said that everything we're looking at is helpful in defining an issue. Hope to address some issues with paras but also thought we'd like to give you a budget update? Does that work?

Bruce said sure!

Tim began by saying his update is similar to what we've shared in the past

Bill said we have updated information. Management handout shared.

Tim said that sometimes the district will budget salaries in original budget. I have experience when budgets have built in salary increases and sometimes when it is not. Board member did ask how much was budgeted for salary increases. 2% increase. Of course negotiations will happen to determine if more than 2%. General fund only. Not referendum money. Tim reviewed the budget packet. Decrease in student funding compared to prior year. \$122 less. In Tim's opinion we don't have the flexibility to negotiate with those dollars (mental health, i.e.) so it shouldn't be called an increase. Wanted to bring that up because looking at decrease in student funding how do you contemplate increases? Some concepts shared with board in executive session. Hoping to have non-staffing expenditure reductions to offset raise costs. That's why difference in raise and salary budget.

Bill commented we're receiving less from state but proposing an increase in salaries?

Tim said it brings up the question – is it sustainable?

Bill said that putting a starting point for salaries normally does not happen.

Tim said that we have 51,146 – more than 2000 students above normal projections. Hired more teachers on 10 day count. Can't adjust revenue based on this yet for 2 main reasons. State put somewhere around \$480M in a bucket and let it sit and put it there for unprojected enrollment. Realized Manatee County was probably low. That will help fund enrollment increase. We found out in last 6 weeks is that enrollment is in McKay and Family Empowerment Scholarships is off the charts. For Manatee went from \$8M to \$14.5. Statewide \$450M almost all will be eaten up by students enrolling in McKay and Family Empowerment Scholarships. McKay – \$6.990M Family Empowerment Scholarships - \$7.566M going straight to private schools. Have more info. \$464M set aside by state. That's unfortunate. Little of that money left to go toward those students. Palm Beach is 6000 students down. We are 2000 up. Statewide enrollment doesn't exceed what entire projection was we will get a big chunk of that 2000. We won't know what's going to happen until December. Just processed October enrollment. 120-150 out of 2016 students are in charter schools. Still way over projection. Hoping to get a ton more money. That was in budget. Next 2 pages deal with TSIA (teacher salary improvement allocation). Got beginning salaries up to \$46,439 last year. This year getting around \$9M again. \$9,188M. \$8,352,767 has been allocated to paying for what we implemented last year. State doesn't care if it cost more than that. When we used to hire first year teacher used to be \$39,000. Now 8A is at \$46,439 so that's going to be inflationary from now on. If continue to fund at original level going to be more burden on district. \$8.352M is to cover last year. Convoluting language. It's like pay for performance. Would love to get everyone to \$47,500. Took numbers on this sheet. 1633 teachers are making less than \$47,500. Would cost \$1.674 to bring them up to \$47,500. District has \$711,000 to play with. \$1.415 short of getting everyone up to \$47,500. Good place to start the conversation. Have to spend \$628,000 more than cost of what we did last year. Took salary before raise then after raise. Compares cost before and after, took out charters. FL retirement rate increased as well.

Bill thanked Tim for the presentation. Good summary. Language says, "Beginning July 1, 2021, and until such time as the minimum base salary as defined in s. 1011.62(16), equals or exceeds \$47,500, the annual increase to the minimum base salary shall not be less than 150 percent of the largest adjustment made to the salary of an employee on the grandfathered salary schedule. Thereafter, the annual increase to the minimum base salary shall not be less than 75 percent of the largest adjustment for an employee on the grandfathered salary schedule." What our challenge is if it would be nice if we could get to \$47,500 since that takes away 150% for grandfathered (GF) schedule. Cost to do that exceeds amount state has given us. Have to dip into other sources. We're open. This is where Bruce and your team working together in meeting intent of statute and maximizing giving raises. Tim one more time give possibilities – ESSA money, enrollment money. There are possibilities. Don't want to say we don't have the money to do what we need to do right now.

Tim – enrollment won't know until December. That's typical. Got ESSER 3 notification of award last week. \$89M. One program area we can use is lost revenue. If get prorated rollback. Plug in with ESSER money just don't know what that's going to be. We have some options with additional federal funding. Have a good model from ESSER 2. ARP. Anyway there are positive things out there. Will be as creative as we can. Only 6 districts got applications approved, and we were one of them. Can use ARP ESSER 3 to help health insurance fund to provide temporary relief to general fund. Good news is that we got notification. Don't have money yet but have notification that we will get it. Governor is standing in the way.

Bill asked, any questions?

Bruce said I don't think we have any questions. Thanks, Tim, for overview of budget.

Tim said if any more details are needed shoot me an email.

Bill said that Tim has a spreadsheet of all 1633 teachers. We have all that data.

Bruce said he probably needs that to see who's there.

Tim said he had an updated version.

Bruce said he can see where it causes people to land and how that impacts the numbers. Biggest challenge is always what the number of new people is and where they are.

Tim said yes we have that.

Bruce said that while we're on data, I've asked several times about seasonal supplements but haven't been able to get accurate portrayal of who got what. Don't have seasonal athletics. Got some.

Dan said we can provide that. Working with HR.

Tim asked that was for last year?

Bruce said yeah. Do we have any data on potential individuals who may be eligible for these ESE and ESOL positions and where they are on the salary schedule?

Doug said we don't track where they are with college, only degrees.

Bruce said he is looking for how many current people who may be in current positions and who have qualifications and who they are and where they are on salary schedule.

Wendy said we can pull that.

Bruce said that the only data we have says TA6 or a couple of TA2 and 4.

Wendy said we can pull job codes.

Caucus at 6:12 p.m.

Reconvened at 6:38 p.m.

Bruce said that in caucus we discussed issues and talked more about it. Will be helpful once we have requests that we made. Will wait for data to come and look at additional information. Like job descriptions.

Bill said that we will get payroll dates, history, job descriptions, 1633 individuals, seasonal supplements. Open to suggestions for ESOL and ESE. If you have better idea. We have got a real problem. Got to deal with that

situation. Can't get people in the classrooms. Job is very challenging. Very open to your ideas. Don't want to put anyone out of business. 100 para openings. We need to work together.

Bill asked about future meeting dates. We're thinking the week of 11/29. Will have more data by then. Will continue to share information. Team is available the whole week. Think we had good discussion. Thank you very much.

Bruce said we'll look at dates and get back to you.

Meeting adjourned at 6:42 p.m.