MEA Bargaining 2026-2027

Session #1

Thursday, July 9, 2026

Those present: Pat Barber, Christina Britton, Willie Clark, Valerie Finnegan, Silvana Ianinska, Derek Jensen, Julie Kerber, Helen King, Brian Kirchberg, Gina Maliniak, Mitcheal Pearl, Bruce Proud, Rachel Sellers, Jon Syre, Evelyn Townsley, Mark West and Mercedes Wildman.

Meeting began at 5:21 p.m.

Mark West (MW) started with introductions. Christina Britton will also be taking notes and we will compare.

Rachel Sellers (RS) – Reviewed the Board Workshop presentation from June 23rd. Already received report $16.7 million increase $5.9 million Will go to two new elementary schools. $3.6 million to Teacher Salary Increase Allocation and $2 million to utilities. GF reserve decreased $91 million. Over the last 5 years the district received grant funds that did not have to be paid back. For fiscal Year end the reserve equated to 9.93%. The reason we did well was because we had grant funds available. Tentative budget comes to the board on July 28th.

MW – We started with this because this is a full book year. We started with economic because the legislature has tasked us to focus on TSIA first. Handout sent given with details on "How the Appropriated Salary Money Can Be Used?" This is self-explanatory, but he read it aloud. $2,593,845 is the amount. We have to take out for charter schools and Florida Empowerment Act.

BP – How do they apply that to a teacher. It doesn't say that.

MW – It's how it was explained to me.

BP – It's taken out before the (1026) I've read it all and I don't see where it says that anywhere.

MW – It is what we are being told, and this is the first time they are taking the FEFP dollars out. I had to ask that question too. In regard to that, those TSA dollars are put in the budget as part of our increases. This is the first time we've been given parameters on what we can use these dollars. To bring up teacher salaries. This year legislature is saying that funds are to be used to give salary increases to classroom teachers. Read definition and said it is limited to those teachers with 10 years of teaching in a Florida Public School. We've done a number of things to identify what the intent. We've identified what teachers fit this category. We have 955 teachers that fit that category.

BP - Who is excluded?

MW – Those not listed.

BP – Listed who is excluded Media Specialist, SSS, Guidance … So anyone who isn't an "A"

MW – That would be 1,706 excluded and 955 who are eligible.

BP – Requested a list of who is included and excluded.

MW – We will get that to you. Those are the tentative numbers we have and our task is to see how those dollars are to be split and paying out those dollars.

BP – What does that mean.

MW – Any funds that are remaining. If we have enough money to give these eligible teacher more that $3,000. We can use these funds to increase others.

BP - How would you use those funds.

MW – To offset benefits

BP – Do you think they don't mean an increased cost. Did they give you 2.8 million in that pot.

MW - No, not quite

BP - So they didn't really want to give you $3,000 for everyone. If we should agree to this how do we get it ratified when it effects less that half of the bargaining unit? Kind of puts us at an impasse before we even begin. Unless you have an idea that you think would pass muster.

MW – I think I understand the legislative intent to give this money to veteran teachers, but they don't understand how this complicates things.

BP – What do you think their intent is.

MW – I think they want to increase veteran teachers and that they are trying to fix compression. It's pretty clear in how they want to spend it.   That is where we are and I think it would be a good time for a caucus.

Broke for Caucus 5:50 p.m.

Reconvened at 6:30 p.m.

MW – We sent you the eligible numbers. You should have those now. Susanne Pridgen, Deputy Commissioner for Florida Finance and Operation. Jennifer Warner is her assistant. She will be the one to contact for clarification.

BP – So this is DOE interpretation of the Legislation

MW – Correct

BP – She will be able to answer all the related questions on the provision.

MW – She's the one who gave us the information. In regards to the FEFP and TSIA. $2,593,845. The figure used for salary related costs for this year is 22.24%

BP – There should be a lot saved this year. Same number of people and same salaries there should be a lot of savings.

RS - The benefits were more last year.

BP – All these people that are paid out of the budget are costing you less.

Willie Clark - If their salary stayed the same.

BP – I'm assuming that's how you prepared the budget.

RS – 22.24% was what we used for this upcoming year.

BP – Anything else? Are you making a proposal or not?

MW – Yes this is specifically for the TSAI money. If it's just a flat amount that we're talking about would be $2,593,845 divided by the $2221.91 for 955 eligible.

SI - I used seniority numbers and identified 133 that are included in the 955

MW - Do we know how many are excluded.

SI – 134 excluded, not a classroom teacher with 10+ years. Media Specialist, Guidance Counselors and Support Specialists.

BP – Those 134 are apart of the 1,706.

SI – Yes

BP – We will need a short caucus.

Caucus 6:42 p.m.

Reconvened at 7:23

BP – We don't have a specific proposal at this point. We have another session scheduled on the 23rd.   Are there any additional dates.

MW – Suggested the morning of the 20th.   8:00 – 11:00 a.m.

BP – Anything else the following week.

MW – Evening of the 22nd was suggested.

BP – We will get back to you on these dates.

MW – We didn't present anything in writing because we just took the money and divided it by the eligible teachers. I say that because the 955 may change. We want all that are eligible to get

BP – The number will need to be solidified by the end of bargaining.

MW – We will need provisions for those who we missed.

BP – You do have a general fund besides this   How do you get to an agreement on this small chunk. The state doesn't get to dictate how I negotiate.

MW – Hopefully by the next session we will get the information we need.

BP – We need to negotiate all.

MW – I think we need to negotiate because of the timeline we have for this money.

BP - The school board is who this goes to should we go to impasse. The legislature doesn't get to participate in the impasse process. I don't have anything else.

Meeting adjourned at 7:33 p.m.