

MEA Bargaining 2023-2024
Session #5

Thursday, September 7, 2023

Those present: Rick Bailey, Pat Barber, Silvana Ianinska, Derek Jensen, Helen King, Brian Kirchberg, Rob Lyons, Gina Malinak, Bruce Proud, Rachel Sellers, Jon Syre, Bill Vogel and Dawn Walker.

Meeting began at 5:21 pm.

Vogel – Had a late night last night. Got a lot accomplished. Going to see if we can add something to para schedule. Can offer a 60 cent an hour increase. Along with step and compression. Believe that was remaining item. Can take caucus.

Proud - Would like to take caucus but have question about proposal on memorandum of understanding (MOU) on ESSR fund of \$1000. Payroll taxes include employer and employee portions. Tell us what that really means.

Sellers – \$1000 is the gross. All taxes come out of that before coming out. FICA, Medicare, employee 1.45% employee 6.2% social security, withholding 22%.

Proud - What is the employer portion?

Maliniak – Employer is 7.65%.

Proud – Rationale for employee paying for employer portions?

Sellers – Employee is the whole dollar amount. It's not the employee paying the employer portion. It's taking out all applicable taxes, and they get the net. The whole complete dollar amount is \$1000. That is amount they were able to get from the grant to pull that out.

Proud – Why is it that Manatee is \$1000, another district is \$1200 or \$3000?

Seller - That's what different districts have applied for. They chose to make it higher. Back in March that was our starting point. Had no idea what other districts were submitting at the time.

Proud – Thank you. No other questions. We'll take a caucus.

Caucus at 5:28 p.m. Reconvened at 5:52 p.m.

Proud – MEA handout. MEA summary of where we believe we are on compensation items at this time. You'll notice it's a little different. Took off reference to TSIA because we never agree on what that means. After this year you will take whatever money and use it hopefully for teacher salaries and report it as such and we will know what you took out of that and what went into the general fund (GF). We didn't ask for that specific data or we might be on a better page – what's maintenance and what's not. I still believe you have more funds for salaries than you say you do. Nevertheless, we will address that if it still exists next year.

Vogel – Appreciate that. Could probably talk about a lot.

Proud – Unfortunate because how it gets to a point of a budget; if we can't agree on the budget. Believe you are not paying enough for teachers particularly at the bottom of the schedule only getting a COLA. Not going to be easy ratification. It's an issue. We will address through ratification process, I'm sure. Some numbers should look familiar. Taken from your numbers. Para numbers includes 60 cents per hour calculation based on the number of people in spreadsheets which came from your data. Also included bonus at bottom and note about referendum and ¼ hour included. Referendum supplement is separate and not included in this document. At some point would be good to know what's coming out of district budget in negotiations that's in this proposal.

My perspective ESSR, referendum, categorical that doesn't touch your budget and a few things that do. What I noticed in the annual financial report (AFR) is sizeable reserve at end of year and less calculation that what you spent than what you budgeted. Those in instructional category are not expending your budget. Concerned with how you're predicting. Concern about data and getting good numbers. Will follow budget and expenditures. It will take until next September to see what next year's AFR actually says. Real concern is that economy isn't getting better, and these people are suffering. Need to find ways to compensate teachers to keep them. Referendum is not as stable as you think. Pinellas referendum actually decreased years in a row, stayed the same and didn't increase. Not long from being a reality here. There will be challenges. Beginning teachers will have a concern. Experienced teachers will have a concern. Particularly with HI costs changing in January. None of this gets close to covering that. Teachers will be really concerned we're going in the wrong direction and will leave. Will pursue ratification. Will be telling them realities, not smoke and mirrors. You seem to be hell bent on going beyond what the law says. We will talk about a lot next year including longevity at a point when it's becoming problematic. This is the max we can get under law and this is what the district says their budget is. You can say all you want about our legislators doing a great job. It's not showing up. It's not here. What shows me that legislators have done a good job of teachers having higher teacher pay? It didn't come across the table.

Vogel – I share your concern about teacher salaries. Agree with you that referendum is moving in right direction right now but can't be sure it can continue that way. Starting salary and those in that area, they're in compression area. Starting salary will end up being one of highest in state. With referendum, it's over \$57,500. If people don't realize it, MEA has played a big role in promoting the referendum. That's significant. Pleased to put longevity in there for teachers with more experience. Veteran teachers with master's degree we know we were short; we increased that area, too. Those who take on extra responsibilities – put 5% know it's not enough. We saw the package differently than you. Saw it as something that had increases for all teachers. You're correct. Took general operating, TSIA and referendum. Challenges of health insurance – realize people will have to pay. More money that will help in that regards. Your proposals laid the groundwork for future opportunities. Even though we may not agree this year. Don't see it the way you do at all. Talked about it with people we work with. They support it, too.

Proud – All that said, we are prepared to TA with what's on this page. At some point we need to work through para and teacher schedule although teacher schedule is not changing. Need to make sure it reflects what we agreed to with modifications and compression and PL1 schedule. Will be several years before anyone gets to that point.

Vogel – Silvana going to work through this.

Ianinska – Started updating teacher salary schedule. Didn't start para because we didn't know where we were going to land. We have the one that was published.

Proud – If you have something that would be good to know. I don't have a record. Talking only about the highlighted here. Step 22 – 27.

Vogel – Looking at implementation.

Barber - We asked for the schedules. They were sent to us.

Silvana – I didn't send them.

Vogel – Thought that had series of steps that were out of whack. Highlighted here? PL1 – they were not fixed. By gaining experience you lose money.

Bailey – Will make sure corrected schedules are in their hands for sure.

Proud – Don't think teacher salary schedule other than masters schedule and little box that talks about masters schedule. 3 schedules to work through and performance schedule in box.

Ianinska – Adding COLA. That's what we have to add to all schedules. Grandfathered – have to add COLA and \$500 on masters.

Proud – Others are in the box.

Vogel – Placement schedule. That doesn't change. Silvana is going to be our contact.

Proud – MEA handout. MOU on ESSR. Appreciate references to FL statutes. Not applicable since we have authority to bargain over issues. Feel free to review and determine anything missing you believe is essential to be in there that isn't. 1 is taken from CBA. Only other piece I thought was significant was LOA which I guess is a long-term leave without pay?

Vogel – OK.

Proud – MEA handout. Duration of agreement. In 2nd of 3-year agreement. Proposing to extend another year so that next year and following year would be reopeners. Wouldn't be full book until '26-'27.

Vogel – Compensation is always open and either side can open 2 sections. Gives both sides flexibility if things come up, if mutually beneficial. Fine for extending it one more year.

Proud – I think that's all we have.

Vogel – Have one change. On longevity. Management handout. Went back to current contract language (CCL) and one – opening statement – agreed to eliminate JDE. Prefer to use existing contract language based on total time of employment. Appreciate your clarification under 6. "Retention payments do not become part of teacher's base rate of pay."

Proud – I'm ok with that.

Vogel – Health insurance (HI). How do we want to sign off on HI?

Proud – Usually included in packet. Look at contract. There's provisions in there now. Described in 22 paychecks in language of contract. We can certainly tentatively agree (TA) on whatever structure you have but transfer it for the contract.

Vogel – Management handout. Health insurance update. We added 6 months to this one. That was information you talked about last time. That was the only change we made.

Sellers – Yes. That's what he wanted to see.

Vogel – What we'll do is insert plan design and put that in.

Proud – We'd like to take a caucus.

Caucus at 6:29 p.m. Reconvened at 6:49 p.m.

Vogel – Revised format. Open to revising format to work for as many people as we can. Revised management handout. Also note this is calendar year (CY) '24, too.

Proud – Thank you.

Vogel- Believe that completes the items we had outstanding. Brings us to TA on this year's negotiations.

Proud – Thank you.

Vogel - Really appreciate you and your team. Know you teachers have a full-time job and appreciate all the work you do and paras, all day. Gave good rationale for changes we made throughout process. Think some things we did laid the groundwork for future successful negotiations. Going to be work to get salary schedules together. It has been a pleasure. Honored and humbled to represent the Board.

Proud - Always good working with you. Appreciate your team. Now it's a lot of work to get to point where we are satisfied and can get to TA. Appreciate all the work.

Vogel - Normally Pat and Bruce will come up with a release. I'll contact Wysong. We don't say anything at all. We let them take it from here.

Barber – Board members need to know that, too. They need to not be the conduit of information.

Vogel - Going to call Wysong and board members and ask them to keep it to themselves.

Adjourned at 6:55 p.m.