

**MEA Bargaining 2024-2025**  
**Session #4**

Wednesday, July 31, 2024

Those present: Rick Bailey, Pat Barber, Silvana Ianinska, Derek Jensen, Helen King, Rob Lyons, Gina Malinak, Donna Peregoff, Bruce Proud, Joe Ranaldi, Sharon Scarbrough, Rachel Sellers, Jon Syre, Evelyn Townsley, Bill Vogel and Dawn Walker.

Meeting began at 5:50 p.m.

BV – Welcome back. Sending around the meeting minutes from last time for team to review. 600 teachers attended staff development days. All set to go for teachers on August 5<sup>th</sup>. We're ready to go.

Follow Up Items

Referendum – ready to sign off. Authorized to go ahead and initial

PB – We need a copy to check it.

Board Proposal

BV – In the past couple of days we clarified some numbers and are ready to go ahead with agenda.

Management handout.

Spreadsheet includes \$5M that the board is contributing to health insurance. Maintaining 3/4 model. Added back people who were not evaluated. On the grandfathered schedule (GF) we had a discussion about the number of teachers. We had a large number come back from leave. All were on GF. 56 were on leave who have come back. That added to GF total. Cost of living adjustment (COLA) is the same. For the 11-month hourly rate equivalency we adjusted the number down. From 167 and change by looking at actual # of people. Think in agreement in the number. Still at 2% for supplements. Agreement that teachers at 16 and 25 will receive 3600 supplement. Added money in there. 9 teachers . 3 that didn't get it. Have to go back and take care of them. Stacked approach. Your proposal had 10 year. Open to discuss but there's a dilemma. We agree to linking 16 and 25. Together on that. Because of cost would have to have proposal that would have to be stand alone for 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15 years in Manatee County to receive the supplement. But then at 16 they would be eligible for 16 and 25 through that process. Concerned about opening that up all the way. Your cost is \$1.5M. If you're willing to consider that as a standalone we could certainly counter that. Next is supplement for self-contained ESE teachers and aides. \$500 for a teacher, \$250 for an aide.

Handout. 10 year teachers – 446 that have all Manatee experience. Next, paras – proposing 2 steps for paras and an additional 10 cents a step. Final cost out includes additional money board is putting in for health insurance (HI) plan. Added increase the board is contributing and that's a high number. We are pleased to bring you this proposal. Would bring starting to \$59,215 and teachers eligible would be 2579 for E teachers and 2891 on HE. On collaboration – essentially all we are doing is suggesting that we trade collaboration which is already in

contract which is outside contract to within the student day. On record day give teachers flexible time. Most teachers would rather meet during the day and are anyway. Heard your concerns about high schools.

BP – So, even though it's a different circumstance you're proposing the same language?

BV – Right now, yes. Can look at language. You expressed your concerns, and we think we addressed every one of them.

BP – Your para proposal is 2 steps. So, for those that are at the compressed areas, this proposal is actually less cost. They get 2 nickels rather than one, and instead of 15 cents they get 10, so it's the same. Am I understanding correctly?

BV – Have to look at that. Wouldn't want people to lose money.

BP – Your last proposal said step + 15 cents. 2 steps is 10 cents. So, it's the same as your last proposal.

BV – Will look at that.

BP – For TA6 schedule, it's quite a few steps

BV – Thanks for bringing that up. If you have a suggestion of how to work that out.

BP – Our proposal IS to work things out.

RS – It is more because in addition we have the ESE supplement as well.

BP – For 229 paras?

BV – Yes. We expanded it quite a bit as well.

BP – Expanded what? You didn't give any idea of what that was previously included.

BV – That's why I'm bringing it to you now. We discussed it internally.

BP – Now that you have included increased cost for district we will put in increased cost for individuals because employees will have to take that out of their pocket. That is a shared cost, not just the district. And then we'll add what the employees are paying out of pocket (OOP) for the benefits once they use them. Since you want to give credit to the district. When will the (\$5 million to the health insurance plan) contribution take place?

RS – For year end. Already posted it. Will be in financial statement; we will have already paid for it.

BP – Will be for this or last budget year?

RS – Just did it at year end not as an expense for 23-24.

BP – But you're taking credit for it in this proposal this year.

RS – If we don't put it in, we will have to have a premium increase of 21%. Put it in so we're starting in a good place for 24-25.

BP – It does matter when it's put in when we're talking budget to budget. I don't want confusion of what it's costing the district this year.

RS – We did need to put that money in. We did not want to have to come to the table with a 21% increase.

BP – It came out of reserves.

RS – Yes exactly.

BP - \$5 million that you didn't tell us about last year in bargaining.

RS – We didn't expect to do as well last year in investments. 21% would be too hard on any employee.

BP – You didn't know the year before. The budget shows what the reserves are, and they increase by \$10M year. And each year you didn't spend one year. It's still a lot of money that you could use for employe salary and benefits. So when you have money left over it will be available or next year's bargaining. We understand that it's a priority. The question is whether employees are.

BV – Teachers are always a priority

BP – Apparently not.

BV – Try to be as accurate as you can.

BP – This proposal isn't much different than last one.

BV – That's where we put in additional money for ESE supplements.

BP – Have to calculate. It's not a difference for 50 % of the paras. It's the same proposal for 50% of the paras.

BV – Explain how that is.

BP – Step + 15 cents. Anyone in TA6 is compressed; there is no additional money in your proposal. It's the same for compressed steps. Actually, for the beginning of the schedule it's less money because you put it in on steps and since there are about 200 people who don't move year after year that are new people or they leave and you have 200 people on 1<sup>st</sup> step. All they will get is 10 cents. Your proposal is less than previous proposal. It doesn't sound like your priority is employees. Except for particular ones you want to point out as ESE.

BV – We addressed the teachers who are starting and in that category, most experience.

BP – You haven't addressed except for COLA. You reduced or stayed same for everyone else. Less of a proposal is you're using levels rather than percent.

BV – They get the referendum.

BP – The referendum may go backwards.

BV – This year they are getting an increase. I think we need to talk about that.

BP – The community stepped up along with the board, the community and the unions.

BV – That's the whole point.

BP – I will add the referendum into mine so it looks richer as well. I will add things that aren't part of the board's budget; it's part of referendum. Taking away planning time during the day - I don't know anyone who is anxious to do that. Someone else is controlling that time. Not the teacher. That's their time to prepare for their students and be successful. You want to change that; for someone to have control of time and for some that might eliminate time for them to go to the restroom. If they have to be somewhere else they can't be in collaborative planning time and use bathroom.

BV – I haven't heard any teacher who hasn't been able to use the restroom.

BP – It has been a bargaining issue in this district. It's one more thing you want to take away. We'd like to take a caucus to finalize our counter proposal.

Caucus at 6:19 p.m.

Reconvened at 8:16 p.m.

#### MEA Response

BP – Reviewed your proposal and talked in caucus. Frankly we're disappointed. We were making progress last meeting. Don't see much progress in this proposal. Unfortunately, not going to see much progress in this proposal either. Concerned we're moving in an impasse direction instead of getting an agreement. Still at 7/5 model plus COLA. Appreciate coming to sense on 11-month issue. Don't think there's an issue there. Appreciate recognition of teacher retention as we believe it was intended. Not sure it is a cost factor this year since it was for prior years to correct. Not showing cost factor. They should have been paid - plain and simple. Although some movement on paras was confusing. Worked hard to get paras to place where they were more consistent with where they were in actual employment process on the schedule. Your proposal would make that inconsistent. Hoping not to have to go through the process again of how paras are placed on the salary schedule based on experience.

BV – We appreciate that. Working on that. Thanks for bringing it to attention. See what you're saying.

BP – Not much room for us to move. Complicating world even more. It's not a direction paras desire to go. I added negative impact of health premiums. Over \$1M that will come out of employees' pockets to pay higher premiums. May not be a big impact to the district, but it's an issue for ratification. With that, 10.9% is probably the best option at this point in time. Clearly understand district's contribution in premium increase. I can tell you that doesn't sway people as much when talking about what is coming out of peoples' pocket. Recognize

percentage that is the same in terms of increases but that doesn't challenge them to ratify something. They're thinking: What's the impact on MY pocket?

BV – Did you look at ESE supplements?

BP – Struggle with the way it was proposed more than the proposal. Shifted errors. The only money you put was to pay ESE people, not everybody. Not looked at favorably. Supplement for some and not all. Looks like VE teachers were excluded and don't understand why.

BV – That was our intent. It would be self-contained.

BP – Paras would be assigned and would stay there in that same room

BV – Every circumstance is a possibility.

BP – Once they are assigned what happens if they get reassigned?

BV – Something we would have to work out.

BP – Who has control over that – principal or district? Appears it is a district not a school supplement.

BV – 10-year retention?

BP – Can't see that it's something in your proposal. Well, we're going to take 1000 away from you and give you 2100 but you only get the difference. Not sure what your proposal is. You understand it would be a larger impact this year. The only real impact is this year. Future years would be about 100 teachers after 10 years based on numbers of people who get 16 and 25. More people who reach 10. Maybe it starts at 12? Open to talking.

BV – This year funding is less. That's a problem.

Question: health insurance and 11-month hourly rate equivalency and teacher retention essentially in agreement. Not ready to sign off probably. Going to have to go back and get additional direction from where we are at this point. Would like to get priority issues from you. Understand fully your para issue now. What are your priorities?

BP – The priorities are on this sheet. Recognize impact. Salary and dollars in peoples' pockets. Don't want to go backwards and have employees that have to pay the district (for health insurance).

BV – Looked at that and think we've got it pretty well covered. Anything else? ESE supplements? Any other questions besides who assigns? You had a question about VE. Are you proposing any new supplements?

BP – We'll discuss whether we have new supplements that we haven't talked about previously. We're talking about people who work really hard with ESE students in Title I schools in low performing schools. Lot of things people talk about. Realized impact of being in a full time ESE position. How to counterbalance in some other way. You're going to pay attention to 229 people and no one else. You had no other priority other than those

229 people in proposal you gave us. Talking about teachers. Appreciate your proposal on paras even though it doesn't help those at bottom of schedule.

BV – We will take a look at this and meet on 8/6 at 4 p.m. same location.

PB – I will confirm.

BV – We wish everyone a good first day for teachers.

Meeting adjourned at 8:34 p.m.

Next session, Tuesday, August 6, 2024 at 4:00 p.m. PSC.