

**MEA Bargaining 2024-2025**  
**Session #5**

Tuesday, August 6, 2024

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

Meeting began at 6:10 p.m.

BV – Apologies for being late. Started executive session late. We were all busy with that. Another challenge was successfully met with the storm. MEA and Pat worked hard with the superintendent to work out the day and the rest of the week. Appreciate that; it's a good example of collaboration between our organizations.

Read the minutes. The second and third minutes were fine. Just got minutes from the last session today and haven't had a chance to review.

Management handout. Health Insurance – think we are in agreement with 10.9% increase. Moving to use 4/5 model. \$1248 for effective (E) for performance pay (PP) increase. \$1560 for highly effective (HE) for PP increase. Those rated not evaluated would move 4 levels. Grandfathered (GF) would move 4 levels. Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) \$510. Agreed on 11-month hourly equivalency adjustment. Moving from 2 to 3% on supplements. Agree on retention on stacked approach. ESE supplements – \$500 for teachers, \$250 aides. 229 aides. Years ago, we talked about creating a separate salary schedule for ESE paras – open to putting \$250 on salary schedule. Paras – one step + \$0.40/hour step increase. Collaboration – position remains the same. Still have concerns about 10 years. Had to counter that. Huge cost item. Can't absorb that in this year's budget. This year's budget is less than last year. Had an increase in teacher salary increase allocation (TSIA). But not in as good a financial position as last year. Anxious to get it resolved tonight and move on. With paras, we're very close or at your proposal.

Bp – No questions about proposal. Take caucus to discuss.

Caucus at 6:15 p.m.

Reconvened at 7:56 p.m.

MEA handout.

BP – Start with para information. Proposing \$0.60 per hour + step. Your dollar values and ours, it appears you calculated benefits twice for step and \$0.40. We believe step is \$187,277. Proposed ESE supplement for teachers. Not sure the best way is to say people who are self-contained. Not sure people who are responsible for managing cases are the ones who are self-contained. Think there has to be recognition for people managing caseloads for ESE. That's where the bulk of extra work is managing IEPs.

BV – Can I go back – Appreciate you bringing that to our attention. Show us your numbers.

BP– Calculated step at \$187,277.

BV – We should be the same on that.

BP – Should be. I used people where they were on the schedule and added 30 because the data I had only had 758 paras. Wanted to get close to FTEs we’re talking about.

BV – \$228,000 without benefits

BP – You’re showing \$228,000; I’m showing 187. Your 40 cents also looks like you have calculated benefits twice.

BV – We will check it out.

BP – Hope to get to some agreement as to what 1 step costs and whatever steps and per hour cost we get to.

BV – Think we can work together. Thank you for the clarification.

BP – Created a new schedule that is 25 cents more than the TA6 schedule. I calculated it at the average cost of TA6 people at a quarter an hour. Separate schedule. Would reflect TA6 schedule but a quarter more. Job description - still not clear as to what that means right now. Open to have that conversation about what jobs would be placed on that schedule. Coming in at \$81,000 on that one.

BV – We are at \$57,230.

BP – Quarter comes out to \$355/year.

BV – We were at \$250 a year

BP – Need to have differentiation between schedules. Can have more conversation.

BV – You prefer that over supplements?

BP – Yes.

BV – We’ll look at that. Good job.

BP – Teachers – went back to percentages. Simple enough to address that’s worth doing if we can come up with 4% model. 4% and 3%. 4% for anyone evaluated HE on PP. Anyone E would get 3%. GF – 3%. In my mind, GF would be calculated at 3% more than the current schedule. Stay at same level but receive 3% more than they were making previously. GF would get a new schedule. Wouldn’t need the old schedule. Can eliminate first 10 levels because no one is there and will never be. Go from 10a. It has been that long. On PP need 2 schedules – one 3%. and one 4%. Move to either 3% or 4% depending on eval. Side by side schedules. One dilemma – the base. People who are not evaluated or are brand new. We propose to give 3% at base, and that’s included here

as well. Same for people not evaluated. Stuck on this for 2 big reasons – 1. Majority of the bargaining unit (BU) is on PP schedule. Nearly 1500 are at the base. Level increase provides no recognition of performance. They are only eligible for COLA. When levels are small, the COLA even when maximized, it's still a very small amount of money. It's 1% at best. Do we continue to tell people they're HE that they're not eligible for an increase even though the law tells them they are? People are concerned they're getting left out. So, we're concerned that anything that does not recognize this issue will not be ratified. They will realize they are not getting what the expectations are for HE. Almost 800 of those are at the base somewhere from 1c to 10a on PP.

BV – Any other suggestion on how to address through the current model for this year?

BP – It's been a concern of mine for 3 years. As the group grows, it's a bigger number who are disenfranchised. Doesn't reflect their performance in any way.

BV – Do you have a suggestion – back to my question. That puts the cost way above where we can afford.

BP – You said way above. No cost as far as COLA in this model. Removed 10+ supplement for retention. We've moved \$2M off our proposal. That's how serious we are. Think we have come up with a way of doing it that's not complicated and manageable for this year and gives us time to talk about something that will work in the future. Know it may not be sustainable; may not agree it's the best option to agree in this model in future when talking about PP. Have looked at 6-7 different models - individual pay rates, only in-coming person schedule, etc. Those become complicated. To have something like that would take work, time and upfront time to make sure everyone understands how it changes. Don't want to go out for ratification and not have it ratified.

BV – A lot is at stake this year.

BP – A lot is at stake every year. Maybe more this year with the referendum.

BV – ESE supplement for teachers . . .

BP – ESE supplement for teachers is still at \$500. Same number you used. And changed supplements to 4%.

BV – We'll go back and talk. Thank you.

Caucus at 8:15 p.m.

Reconvened at 9:54 p.m.

BV – We were trying to come up with a proposal. Don't have something at this late hour. Want to talk through your proposal. Spent a lot of time looking at percentages. Not necessarily opposed but have issues for implementation this year. Feel like we need to spend more time studying it. 3% and 4% cost is beyond what we have available. If we decide to go that model and come up with less percentage – you're not going to accept it. It's going to cause a huge education issue with people. Someone might say I got 4/5 model, this year I only got 2. Really concerned would have the same issue, that it would cause confusion. Still feel that we really can't move to that model. Other concern is that it still does not address compression. That's why we were late for bargaining. We're trying to address compression. Everyone wants to address it – the board, MEA, us. Feel need

to study. Other concern – needs to be parameters put in model to looking at maximums. For that reason, unable to go with that model this year. Even though we're willing to work with MEA. As you know, there isn't a district that I know that is satisfied with the salary schedule (SS) because of parameters that have been put on us by the legislature. In agreement on 11-month, supplement pay – you're at 4, we're at 3. Retention we've resolved. ESE supplements – able to work with you on that one. Our proposal is \$500 for teachers, paras we're able to work on the para schedule. You were correct on benefits. Can work through to come to agreement on additional cost and come up with separate schedule. Para increase – We are at \$0.40 and you are at \$0.60 and step advancement plus benefits. Our numbers agree on that. Still have collaborative planning item. Would like to schedule next meeting for 8/14. Hoping for any thoughts, know we made some progress but moving toward agreement.

BP – You used 'maximums.' What were the issues?

BV – Heard sometimes that without some parameters on maximum salaries it has caused schedules to become extremely expensive.

BP – I'd like to know where that is. Not anything I ever heard from anywhere about maximums being expensive.

BV – That's preliminary checking I've done on schedules. Concept is one we're open to looking at.

BP – Issue is that we have a big problem this year. Has nothing to do with maximums. No one is there.

BV – Our feeling is that we are unable to do the 3% - 4% model you proposed. We're just uncomfortable for the reasons I've already given for giving anything less than that. May be in same boat. Our proposal does provide some substantial monetary increases.

BP – Not for the 1500 people at the base.

BV – They're still getting an increase.

BP – No there's no plus. It's \$510 – not even the maximum allowed by statute.

BV – They're getting the referendum supplement. \$510 is part of negotiation.

BP – Teachers will see the schedule and will understand. I'm struggling to see how we get to agreement if the only proposal you're willing to give is so short sighted on the base that you're willing to let people challenge the whole bargaining process over numbers clearly within the attrition rate of the district every year. In a district that continues to mount savings year over year on backs of employees.

BV – Not going to be able to counter with percentage. You regressed to percentage model.

BP – It's not regression. It's good conversation in caucus about people voting no. And we said \$710 as cost of living. Significantly more than you're proposing. Not feeling comfortable going below that.

BV – If we gave max COLA, a new hire would get COLA and referendum supplement. They would be at \$59,371. Those in compression would get COLA and referendum would get \$1,799. E on PP or GF would get \$3,047. HE would get \$3,359. As far as settlements in the state that would be the highest I've seen.

BP – Not on average because of 1500 at base. When you calculate on average it's not comparable to those who have already resolved issues. Concerned district is attempting to persuade the association to agree to something that is problematic. We are proposing solutions that will help, and the district is ignoring those.

BV – We seriously considered them. Share your concerns but feel like we need to spend more time fixing compression.

BP – It is a step in the right direction in fixing compression. It impacts them in a positive way. Will still have compression areas but won't be as significant because you will have differentiation which is required by law which your proposal doesn't do.

BV – 5:30. Back at main building. Your 3% - 4%, is that your bottom line on your percentage?

BP – As always, we'll look at it and see if there is any room. Can't be much. Going to be a tough sell no matter what.

BV – Any other suggestion? Any way to move teachers out of that. Teachers moving 4 to 5 steps are moving out very soon.

BP – Do you want to move everyone up to 10c and give a raise and see how many people will feel undervalued? That's the way to handle compression. That's what we're trying not to do.

BV – Is there any other way to differentiate that might work?

BP – Create a new schedule. How do you differentiate them? A nickel didn't do a lot. If you wanted to put money out to fix compression all of a sudden you will find money. In a tight year how do you do that? And 30 steps. I hope you're telling your legislators about that. They created it.

BV – It put districts in a bind. Paras - I think we'll be able to get together on. Still have collaboration out there.

BP – You haven't sold us on collaborative planning that no one wants. People are not happy giving up planning time. Don't see the value that you are trying to portray as a wonderful thing. Nor does it seem fair. You want more time? You have to think about giving up more time. Want to get serious? Start adding more time. Doesn't sound like a tradeoff at all.

BV – They already have it outside.

BP – Right. They don't like it, but they do it. How many opportunities do you want to give people to vote no? I'm not willing to put out something that is going to fail.

BV – Ok, we will see you on the 14<sup>th</sup>. See where we end up on that date.

Meeting adjourned at 10:18 p.m.

Next session, Wednesday, August 14, 2024, at 5:30 p.m. SSC.