



Bargaining Edition The VOICE

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Summer Bargaining Update #2



We have completed our “full book” negotiations (reviewing all language in the full contracts for teachers and non-instructional staff and adding, deleting, or changing relevant language). However, we are still working towards a compensation and benefits package in hopes that whatever we agree to can go into place before school starts. Our next meeting in July 28th.

Compensation and Benefits(Insurance)

So far, there is a proposal on the table that would increase grandfathered and effective teachers on the pay-for-performance (P4P) salary schedule by \$1,000 for the year and increase highly effective teachers on the P4P schedule by \$1033 for the year. This would represent a 2.14% increase to salary overall. The proposal for CU is a step increase plus an additional amount added (equal to 2.14% for CU) to each step along with an additional step added to the top of the scale.

While the district has agreed to maintain the \$750 contribution to the H.S.A. accounts of employees who have FL Blue 5180/5181, they have not agreed to increase their overall contribution to premiums which has remained at \$6010 for five years. The district is wanting to add a 3rd insurance plan (high-deductible, very low premium) to the plan choices. It still requires discussion and making the best choices for the most employees. While the Insurance Committee has been aggressively questioning and pursuing outside consultants to work on decreasing the expected increase in FL Blue premium this year (for January 2018), there is considerable concern on the Union's part that we not see a double-digit percentage increase (which is what FL Blue has suggested). The Union negotiating team, with FEA's guidance, convinced the Committee to seek an outside review of our plan and premiums which has been very helpful. Keep in mind that last year we saw a 7% decrease in insurance premiums. We are looking towards a long-term strategy that might include a 3rd plan in the short term, as well. Reasonably-priced insurance that employees can actually use is our ultimate goal.

Long story short...yes, there will be a raise this year, but we are not settled on how much and we don't have a firm answer about how much the cost of insurance premiums will be. Stay tuned.

Supplements

The supplement base will be increased to \$25,500 (an increase of \$1,500) over last year. We also have a written agreement to increase the base incrementally for the next 5 years. Supplements for HOSA, HS Student Council, and MS Band Director have been increased to 5% and an additional Sideline Cheerleading supplement has been added so there is one for Spring and Fall. We have also added a salary supplement of \$500 for Certified Braille Translators and Intervenors for the CU personnel who do this work. Unfortunately, the district has inexplicably denied our request to make parity between ESE School Specialists (who get a supplement instead of an additional 1/2 hour) and the other jobs in our bargaining unit that are paid an additional 1/2 hour instead of being supplemented (like Athletic Directors, Guidance Counselors, etc). The total cost to the district to make this change is less than \$50,000.

CU Evaluation and CU Classroom Subbing Rate

The CU Evaluation is still being worked on and the next meeting of the group will take place on July 26th. Our goal is to clarify the rubric and process to ensure fair evaluations for all employees. The district rejected any increase to the CU Subbing Rate. We have dropped this proposal for this year, but did get clarified language on the amount of time a CU person must be in a classroom to qualify for full or half day pay for subbing.

Lowest Performing Elementary Schools (aka “Lowest 300 Schools List”)

Several years ago the state came up with another scheme to negatively label schools, and created the Lowest Performing Elementary Schools List also known as the Lowest 300 List (even though the list actually includes more than 300 schools in the state). The placement on the list has to do with Reading scores only. Each of these schools is required to implement an additional 100 minutes of reading instruction. This year, St. Lucie has four schools on the list: WBE, LWP, CAM, and SLE. However, because the schools already have nearly the total amount of minutes needed, only 20 minutes will need to be added to the student and teacher/staff day and we have signed an LOU that will pay all employees of those schools for an extra 20 minutes per day (on student days only) at their REGULAR rate of pay.

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Academic Freedom

If you recall, the Union proposed language to promote the professional judgments of trained teachers in their classroom content delivery. The district lock, stock and barrel rejected our language and proposal. We will continue to work on this concept where there are specific issues at schools and determine future year negotiation proposals for bringing back the “professional” to our profession.

Teacher Evaluation

The teacher evaluation system is as yet unresolved with issues still outstanding such as whether the DPP will be inclusive or additive, which tests will be used to measure student performance, and the non-classroom teacher evaluation system. However, we have agreed to work on and pilot a revised NCT evaluation for School Psychologists with the idea that we will work on revising other rubrics for NCT’s to be more job specific as the year progresses so that for 2018-2019 we have new evaluations in place. There is also a revised (with fewer elements) “Marzano Placemat” that is being used in other districts this year and we will be looking at that as a possible simplification of our teacher evaluation also.

What happens if we don’t have an agreement prior to the start of school?

We keep negotiating and working towards one.

Negotiating sessions are open to the public and are published on the district’s website. Upcoming dates are:

Friday, July 28th @ 9 a.m.

Chief Negotiator, David Freeland contributed to this report.



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