

2014 – 2015 NTA / NCSB Collective Bargaining

Minutes Meeting 5

October 8, 2014 Meeting

The fifth meeting between the Nassau Teachers Association and Nassau County School Board bargaining teams was held on October 8 at 5:00 P.M. at the Team Center in Fernandina Beach.

Present were Mike Dale (FCSU director and chief); Beverly Kurak, Melissa Stokes, Jim Richards, and Nicole Sipka for NTA; and Martin Miller (NCSB chief), Dr. Edward Turvey, Kristi Simpkins and Suzanne Davis for the NCSB.

The minutes for the June 24 meeting were read and approved as read. The IS document for June 24 was reviewed and approved.

For the record, the Board chief stated that the meeting scheduled for July 10 had been cancelled and that the proposed consideration of a meeting during the second full week of August was postponed at the request of the Superintendent.

The Board chief next reported to the teams that the Superintendent had again sent a letter to the Commissioner on September 8 informing her that the Nassau School Board had passed a budget with a projected ending fund balance of under 3%. He distributed a copy of the summary of the Final Budget Analysis reflecting the estimated fund balance for the 2014 – 2015 fiscal year. He pointed out that, although the fund balance was projected to be 2.32% as opposed to the required 3%, the 2.32% was comprised of the sum of both the contingency reserve and the amount that the state has indicated we will need to pay for the McKay Scholarships later in the year. Therefore, he said, the actual contingency reserve is projected to be well under the 3% and under the current 2.32% reported to the Commissioner.

The Board chief stated that the 2013 – 14 contract for the other union has not yet been resolved plus the last proposal the Board had placed on the table for the NTA 2014 – 15 contract were not included in the current budget. He stated that any settlement agreed to for both units would have to be funded by the contingency reserve and the \$ 1.154 million contingency reserve would be insufficient to fund the current proposals. The Board chief stated that the Board had no choice but to pull the last offer from the table and replace it with another proposal.

The NTA chief asked why the proposal had not been included in the 14-15 budget. The Board responded that the Legislature had not provided sufficient free dollars to cover the Board's anticipated needs and that the law does not require the Superintendent to request an appropriation from the Board until the contract is ratified.

The Board chief then addressed the points raised in prior meetings that the final end of year fund balance could pay for the proposals. He provided several graphs that compared increases in expenditures to increases in revenues since 2010 and said the trend lines indicated that expenses are increasing faster than revenues and current spending could not be sustained.

The Board chief provided another Board proposal replacing the last Board proposal that had been made in June. He stated that the new proposal still provided for the \$300 incremental transition salary schedule but did not provide for the after-transition corrections that had been included in the last

proposal. He also said the proposal provided for immediate transition for all new personnel placed on the entry level schedule. He stated that since the last proposal had not been agreed upon or ratified, the new teachers to Nassau had to be placed on the old entry level schedule that was not structured with \$300 incremental differences in values; therefore, these teachers could not be adjusted next year on the performance schedule unless they were transitioned this year. In addition, he said new language required by law for the differentiated pay schedule was also included as was a new tennis coach position for middle schools requested by the Board. He also stated that the Board would not be able to include a 15 – 16 salary adjustment proposal in this package. The packaged proposal the Board chief distributed included a summary page and language for all remaining articles including compensation and differentiated pay as well as schedules.

The Board chief stated that the Board was not declaring financial urgency under chapter 447 but that they wanted to leave open the possibility of returning to the table to reinstate some of the proposal cuts should money be identified to fund them. The NTA chief asked if the Superintendent was working on a plan to find money to increase the contingency reserve and the Board chief replied that both the Superintendent and finance officer were working on cuts. He said they had already increased an initial contingency reserve of over \$113,000 to the present \$1.154 million and were continuing to look at cuts including reduction-in-force.

The NTA chief asked when additional money might be available and the Board chief responded that it would be wise to wait until the end of the calendar year or January to give them time to maximize their efforts.

The NTA caucused and upon returning asked if extracurricular activities or sports would be curtailed. The Board chief responded he did not believe so. The NCSB team pointed out pitfalls of doing this and said they felt like the administration would do its best to find money while not affecting student programs.

The NTA chief asked to meet again on November 5 to discuss the proposed language and answer questions. The Board chief agreed but reminded them the administration might not have had time to identify sufficient revenue.

Next Meeting:

All future meetings between the NTA and NCSB teams will be held at the Team Center in Fernandina Beach at the District School Board Office. These times and dates are subject to change but will be noticed if there are any changes.

NTA: Tentatively set for Wednesday, November 5 at 6:00 P.M. for the public meeting at Yulee Middle School Media Center.