



THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF LEE COUNTY

2855 Colonial Boulevard, Fort Myers, FL 33966

Overview of the Interest-Based Process

- There was an Interest-Based Bargaining training recently to ensure that all the new members of the bargaining team are aware of how the interest-based process works
- Not everyone on the bargaining teams has had the chance to attend this training; there are several new members, so we would like to do a quick overview of what was covered
- To begin with, Check-in is done before we begin each bargaining session; it gives everyone a chance to say how his or her day is going and what their expectations are for the session
- Norms are established before we begin to discuss any of the issues we'll be going over: norms are there to keep the process on track and to be sure that we keep things civil
- We then determine a Calendar for bargaining sessions, which is important because it allows everyone to provide input on how to expedite the process
- Snapshots are taken at the first meeting, so we know the concerns that exist and the direction that the group is trying to go; we discuss our Interests as a group and requests for Data are made at this time; we can always add to the Snapshots later, if necessary, but we try to get everything on the table before we move on
- From there we continue with a Collaborative Process; Interest-Based Bargaining is not adversarial, there are no secrets and everyone has a say in how we work and input as to what our plan of action should be; it's more time consuming, but produces better long-term results. From the Snapshots we begin to develop the Story; each item is discussed and everyone has the opportunity to answer the question, "Why are we having this discussion?" There's often a great deal of valuable information shared at this time, it's where we build context
- Once we've run out of Story, we develop Options by brainstorming possible solutions; every idea is considered and there is sometimes discussion about whether the options meet the Interests that we established in the Snapshots
- Straw designs are sometimes developed, which combine different options and are then voted on by the group
- Sometimes before voting one side or the other will call for a Caucus; these are sidebars that can be called for by any member of the District bargaining team or TALC bargaining team. For the SPALC bargaining team Caucuses are called for by the Director of FEA or the President of SPALC; only the members of the side calling for the caucus are present for the caucus; members of the public are asked to leave the room, if necessary, so that the group has a quiet place to discuss any issues that might come up or to make sure everyone is on the same page; when we return to the table, a report is given by the Chief Negotiator for the side calling the caucus



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- We test for Consensus by voting with a thumb up (I love it), thumb sideways (I can live with it), or a thumb down (I can't support it); if there is a thumb down, then that person must explain to the group what it would take to get them to at least a thumb sideways, a thumb sideways means that while you don't love it, you will support it since it's the best option the group could come up with at that time
- Once we reach a Tentative Agreement (TA), we begin to discuss Implementation; everyone works together to make sure that they're doing their part, whether it's holding a ratification vote or preparing payroll systems for a salary increase following Board approval
- Joint Communication is important and we often decide as a group when to issue a joint communication to the press or to everyone in the District, whether they work in a school or at the District office; this typically takes place when we have a milestone moment
- Spectators are sometimes present in bargaining sessions; however, they are here to observe, not to participate. These are publicly noticed meetings, however there is no public comment and they are not allowed to disrupt the work of the bargaining teams
- Bargaining Team Members, if we take a break, please be careful that your discussions don't violate our norms or the legal requirements for conducting business "in the sunshine"
- For everyone present, please be careful with what you communicate with others outside the bargaining room, there's often a number of things that can be taken out of context and it's taken us years to build our unique collaborative relationship; otherwise thank you for being here and we encourage you to attend as many sessions as possible and to invite others so they can see what the interest-based process is all about
- A reminder that we have Facilitators who are moderating the conversation and we have someone who is taking minutes on the computer; sometimes people get passionate about what we're discussing, so please speak **slowly, clearly, and audibly** and allow for pauses every now and then, so they can keep up with what's going on
- Raise your hand and the Facilitator will call on you to speak; this is usually in order of who raises their hand first, but sometimes there's follow up to a question or people will yield to another speaker