

## **PCS & PCTA Bargaining Meeting Minutes**

**Date:** June 18, 2025

**Time:** 8:00 AM

**Location:** PCTA

**Present:** Lee Bryant, Janet Cunningham, Tracey McConnell, Paula Stephens, Brennan Pickett, Stephanie Woodford, Michael Vigue, Laurie Dart, Carly Spicer, Dave Richmond, Dena Collins

**Next Scheduled Meetings:** July 9 @ 1 pm at the District Building Room 134

and July 29 @ 8:00 am at the District Building Room 134

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 am

Lee Bryant, President of PCTA, opened the meeting by welcoming members of both the district and union bargaining teams. Each team introduced themselves, with Lee noting that the union team is expanding. Members sitting in the front row will be speaking, while those in the second row are there to observe and listen. The meeting's focus is on open book bargaining, with an emphasis on identifying areas for improvement. Lee shared that the legislative session has concluded, and the state budget has been signed. The base student allocation increased by \$41.62, and the unweighted FTE funding rose by \$53,784. Teacher allocations increased by just over \$101 million, significantly less than the previous year. Additionally, funding for the AICE program is being pulled from salary allocations. Like many other districts, ours is facing financial challenges. We are near the bottom in fund balance ranges, though we still meet legal financial requirements. Declining enrollment and the impact of recent hurricanes continue to place additional strain on the budget. PCTA's goal is to identify and enhance areas of value within the contract wherever possible.

Lee shares there is no discussion in Article 1-4.

Ms. Stephanie Woodford presented proposed changes to Article 4 and Article 6. For Article 4, the district is recommending a name update for the committee, suggesting a shift from "Professional Development" to "Professional Learning" to reflect the committee's actual focus and align with current terminology. While the name has not been officially changed in the contract, the district would like to begin using the updated title moving forward. Ms. Woodford then introduced a proposed revision to Article 6, which involves updating specific dates. She clarified that these changes would take effect once bargaining is finalized.

Lee addressed Article 7, *Grievance and Procedures*, stating the union's preference to retain FMCS (Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service), as it is a free mediation service. He then shifted focus to Article 8, which is a priority for the union.

Under Section A, the union is proposing expanded language to include mental health and related treatment. They also requested to update outdated pronouns by replacing "his/her" with "their" throughout the contract.

In Section B, the union is asking to increase the number of days of personal leave from 5 to 6 per year. They also propose reducing the notice requirement from 2 days to 1 day and adding language that gives employees the right to appeal denied personal leave requests for emergencies to Human Resources.

Laurie Dart raised concern about an appeal sharing there is already a grievance procedure in the contract. The union believes the ability to appeal in such cases is essential to protecting employees.

In Section D, the union is requesting that, when a doctor's note is required, the reason must be provided in writing and shared with the teacher.

Additionally, the union seeks to remove the district's ability to deny personal leave on days other than state-mandated testing. They are also requesting the ability to take personal leave on in-service days, including student days, professional development days, and days surrounding holidays.

Lastly, the union is proposing to add new language under Section C and introduce a new provision under Section 9.

Caucus at 8:37 am

Lee presents the following language changes:

## **Article 8 – Leaves and Working Conditions**

### **Bereavement Leave (New Section 9):**

The union is proposing the addition of a new paid bereavement leave benefit. Specifically, they are requesting five days of paid leave per year, separate from and not deducted from an employee's sick leave balance. No sick leave accrual would be required to be eligible. Bereavement leave would apply to the death of a spouse, parent, grandparent, grandchild, sibling, child, or their in-law and step-relative counterparts. The proposed language clarifies that bereavement leave is non-cumulative and must be used within 20 workdays of the family member's death.

Ms. Woodford inquired about the financial impact of this proposal. The district responded they would evaluate the maximum potential cost assuming every employee utilized the leave.

### **Parental Leave:**

The union is requesting up to 20 days (approximately 4 weeks) of paid parental leave for employees with at least one year of continuous service. Dart asked if this leave would be used prior to the 12-week FMLA entitlement. The union confirmed that it would be prior to the 12-week FMLA entitlement.

### **Domestic Violence Leave:**

The union proposes adding a statutory-based Domestic Violence Leave provision. The request is for three unpaid days of leave, available after all the other paid leave has been exhausted. Lee expressed strong support for including this language, stating it is urgently needed in the contract.

### **Declared Emergency Leave:**

The union is requesting up to 10 days of additional paid leave following an employee's return to work after a declared emergency. This leave would allow time for household recovery, family care, or treatment of personal injury. Dart asked for clarification and confirmed the leave would be in addition to the emergency period and only if necessary. The district will cost this proposal.

### **Compassion Leave:**

The union is developing a proposal for "Compassion Leave," which will be separate from the existing sick leave bank. This proposal has not yet been finalized.

### **Miscellaneous Access During Leave:**

The union is also requesting that employees be permitted to access PCS property while on approved leave, including personal leave, provided they follow site sign-in protocols. The district asked for a rationale. The union provided an example of a teacher returning midday after a personal or half-day leave but being denied entry by the school secretary due to workers' compensation concerns.

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## **Article 9 – Union Rights and Communication**

### **Section A:**

The union proposes inserting the phrase “interfere with” after “Meetings may not” and before “regularly assigned duties.”

### **Section D:**

The union requests removing the word “limited” to expand the allowable use of district email. The goal is to permit communication regarding union-related elections, surveys, or urgent matters that impact the full bargaining unit.

### **New Sections F and G:**

- **Section F (new):** The union requests the right to participate in hiring fairs, new employee processing, new teacher orientation, and district-wide training events.
- **Section G (new):** Employees may use personal or compensatory time to solicit union membership during duty-free periods at any district worksite, provided the solicitation does not interfere with others' duties or school operations. The union clarified this would allow, for example, an employee to use a personal day to set up a membership table at a school other than their own.

The current Section F would be re-lettered to Section H.

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## **Article 10 – Professional Responsibilities**

### **Section A:**

The union proposes changing “unless advance notification” to “24 hours/1 day” and replacing “shall” with “will.” Additionally, they request revising the final sentence to read: *“An administrator who will treat all teachers with professionalism and respect and recognize a teacher’s authority in the presence of students.”*

### **Section D:**

Proposed changes include minimizing interruptions to class instruction in secondary settings and scheduling such interruptions whenever possible. They also propose that students are not allowed to enter or return to class during the final 10 minutes of a period (the union is willing to compromise at 5 minutes).

Dart raised concerns that the term “professionalism” is subjective and has been discussed by previous bargaining teams. Ms. Woodford asked for clarification on how many classroom visits are being referenced and whether this language refers to colleagues or staff such as guidance counselors.

Lee explained that disruptions have increased, particularly due to the new door policy that makes entrances and exits more noticeable. He added that students are sometimes marked present despite only being in class for the last few minutes. Dart asked whether the concern includes administrative visits. Lee stated that observations should be scheduled and not create further interruptions.

Janet Cunningham clarified that regular visits by district staff should be better coordinated to maintain instructional flow. She also mentioned that walk-throughs need clear guidelines, and the district is requesting a quantification of how often classroom walk-throughs occur.

The union shares this is all they had for today.

Move to Caucus: 9:47 am

Return from Caucus at 10:10 am

Ms. Stephanie Woodford presented several district-proposed changes across multiple contract articles:

- **Article 14:** The district is proposing to update terminology, changing "Professional Development" to "Professional Learning."

In **Section F**, the district is recommending striking existing language that limits negotiation to the contract day. This restriction has limited the district’s flexibility in offering additional learning opportunities. The district affirms its commitment to providing compensation when possible.

- **Article 16:** A revision to **Section D** is proposed to add that teachers are expected to demonstrate professionalism. Language in this section is updated to read: *Teachers are expected to display professionalism at all times which includes, but is not limited to appearance, communication, and interactions with other colleagues, parents and community.*

- **Article 18:** The district is proposing to remove Item 6, which currently includes language that violates legal requirements.

- **Number 7**, the revision clarifies that the district may transfer teachers up to the 20th day of instruction if a teacher is displaced at the school site.

- **Article 19:** The district proposes a cleanup of language related to seniority for clarity and consistency. Seniority is based on continuous service which is defined as the most recent date of hire to the present with no break in service.

- **Article 27:** The district proposes reducing the number of days teachers must input grades from 5 workdays to 2 days. Additionally, grades must now be entered no later than 2 days before they are due, instead of the previous 5-day window.

- **Article 31:** The district recommends removing the detailed instructional evaluation process from the contract and placing it into a collaboratively developed handbook. The section allowing the evaluation

committee to make recommendations will remain in the contract, maintaining flexibility. This change aims to ease the ratification burden, as state statute defines evaluations as a management right. The appraisal committee, comprised of both district and PCTA, actively reviews and refines the evaluation system and has worked collaboratively to provide an evaluation tool.

- **Article 34 – Supplemental Compensation:** The district proposes updating references from the “Associate Superintendent of HR” to the “Chief of Human Resources.”

Language from Appendix B is recommended to be moved directly into the CBA.

In **Section E**, the district proposes striking most of the language but keeping a provision to grandfather currently listed schools and teachers. Over time, this would transition to the supplement committee for oversight.

For PCCA, the district recommends categorizing responsibilities, such as theater productions and extra events, as supplemental duties—not fixed percentages—like other supplements.

- **Article 35:** The proposal is to clean up contract language by removing “Those under limitation” and replacing it with simply “Teachers” in item 1.

### **Union Response and Additional Proposals**

Lee Bryant requested to revisit **Articles 11 and 12:**

- **Article 11:** The union is requesting a new **Section D** to allow flexibility for highly effective teachers. The proposed language would exempt these teachers from rigid timelines and allow them to adjust pacing guides based on their professional judgment. Lee emphasized that teachers are too often criticized for not being on the “right page,” despite their effectiveness, and should have flexibility reflected in the contract.

- **Article 12 – Teacher Assault Reporting:**

The union is requesting updated language to improve clarity and process:

- Replace “immediately” with “within 24 hours” for reporting assaults.
- Add a final sentence stating: *“The school principal will review this procedure annually with staff during the preschool period.”*  
Stephanie Woodford raised a concern that this timeline may make investigations more difficult, but Lee noted it allows teachers time to process the situation.

In **Section B**, the union proposes:

- Allowing assault reports to be submitted through electronic communication.
- Ensuring teachers have the right to request and receive information about the outcomes of their report.

Both Woodford and Bryant emphasized the importance of all employees reviewing the contract

annually. Lee stressed the need for transparency around disciplinary outcomes following a report, as this remains an ongoing concern.

**Section C** involves a cleanup of language for clarity, with no substantive changes.

Lee concluded the union's proposed language updates. Dart raised a final point regarding workers' compensation, noting that psychological impacts are typically not covered under current workers' comp guidelines.

Schedule the next meeting to go over the remainder of language from both sides and allow the district to cost things out.

The meeting adjourned at 10:49 am.