



**Collaborative Bargaining Session**  
PCTA Building  
650 Seminole Blvd., Largo, FL 33770

June 24, 2015 – 8:30 a.m.

**Minutes**

Unions represented - PCTA.

**Protection for probationary and annual contract teachers – Article 33**

Peer review process is it the same as mentor? Peer review is connected to the evaluation process. In Hillsborough mentors are used as observers. Are the teachers getting the mentor assignment and is it helpful? Most mentors spend half the day reviewing and in their class the rest of the day– but the majority is full-time peer review.

It was suggested to look at the coaching model differently and make a change to include peer review.

New teachers have the certification for their assignment, but may not have all the tools to be an effective teacher. Are the new teachers being released (non-renewed) because they are not doing their job due to non-support? How many new teachers did the district hire last year? The district hired about 500 teachers, but would have to look to see how many were released for the first year. As a probationary teacher are they dismissed or did they resign? If the probationary employee is dismissed within the term can they apply to other schools? Yes, they can apply to other schools if it is their first non-renewal.

Are we providing the new teachers enough support to be successful? If you look at the numbers – yes, we are providing the support.

Annual contract – has an appeal process. PTCA is seeing some developing teachers being retained; those effective not being retained.

Probationary teachers – released without the principal providing a mentor and evaluation and following the steps in the contract. There is no appeal for probationary – but there could be. Everyone agrees that there should be conversation with the employee. What type of method of support (mentor, observation) can be provided to be a successful teacher without one day being told that they are non-renewed? Biggest issue is notice. No one should be blindsided about their position.

The absence of documentation doesn't mean that a conversation didn't happen with the employee. However, last year there was a process and there was a form that indicated that there

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was a meeting. It caused teachers undue anxiety so we stopped that and the process reverted back to the area superintendent – not documented in a template. That switch was probably not the way to go. Conversations need to take place to go back to the format where both parties sign a document to indicate the meeting took place and what was discussed.

The contract protects the process, not the decision to non-renew. Probationary teachers who have successful action plans are still being non-renewed. PCTA wants more follow-up to see that changes have been made due to taking classes or seeking additional help.

PCTA feels that the appeal process is a sham. Both parties want to make good decisions and hire good people. Anyone who is hiring should investigate who they are hiring.

It was noted that only 121 teachers were not renewed, which is a small percentage of teachers in a district this size.

The district could place a coaching memo in each employee's file if that is what PCTA would want for documentation, but that may not be what the teacher may want. We can revisit the letter. If the teacher knew 60 days going in that there would be issues, then it would be known that they have had conversations with the principal. Maybe have a peer reviewer observe the teacher. PCTA would like to see the mentor handbook.

Some teachers are saying that only the assistant principal observed them, and the principal is making the decision on retention. The process needs to be strengthened. Develop a way of work for the principals.

We can take the contract and go into the section regarding probationary contract and add an appeal process similar to the annual contract to clearly define the appeal process – in return appeal not being grieve-able. Clarify that the appeal is the process – no grievance. Need to strengthen Category 1 and 2 to make more transparent regarding non-renewals.

Discussion regarding dismissal - Based on severity the person may not be hired back.

What circumstances would a teacher not have a mentor? All new hires will be assigned a mentor. Sometimes it is difficult to find those to be a mentor.

Discussion regarding the different categories of contracts. As long as it is fair, agree to write the same as language for probationary for non-renewals. Is there a process that annual contract teachers who are being viewed as non-renewed? PCTA wants the teacher to go back to probationary status so they get extra support. It was stated that the law prohibits that action. A teacher who has been effective for several years, and are non-renewed – we would expect that you bring an appeal. Does HR review those files for individuals who are non-renewed to see their evaluation rating? The area superintendent and the principal reviews the individual's information. Forty percent of the workforce is made up of probationary contract and annual contract persons. The area superintendent is the cross-check to avoid competent teachers don't slip through the cracks. Is there a checklist that is used? No.

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How is the language written? The language will be written with a smaller group and then taken to the larger group. Today we are trying to determine the framework.

Discuss more on the process and assistance for annual contract people. Need to have an appraisal manual.

Discussion on working on language to include the success plan process which needs to be implemented, not just write the plan. Include 10-day language for evaluation data. However, there is no appeal to the results of the evaluation.

The district stated that it doesn't make sense to grieve an evaluation. PCTA doesn't feel that the area superintendent can review an appeal with fidelity. The first step is to discuss with principal, then it goes to area superintendent. Mike Gandolfo stated there is a trust factor across the district – teachers are afraid of their administrators. We have spent the entire morning talking about fear and distrust. If you look at it overall – teachers are saying that they like their jobs.

Teachers want to know why they are being terminated. Mike Gandolfo stated that most of the time, they are told that they don't have to be told why they are being terminated. Do we track appeals by area superintendent's – no. Ron Ciranna stated there is no one area superintendent that stands out with having more non-reappointments than the others. There is discussion with the area superintendents and administration to review their non-reappointments so they are aware of any issues.

Teachers and/or administrators who call are provided direction on the processes. Possibly the administrators don't have the support they may need to operate the school. A survey was submitted for feedback of teachers on the administration.

There is a different perspective between annual contract and professional service contract individuals. That is something that needs to be worked through, it is not a systemic issue – seems to be feelings and not evidence.

Faculty representatives and principal should be a team. New teachers coming in are afraid of saying anything for fear of retribution. The representatives need to share the rumors out there and help make it a better place to work. Several of the faculty representatives have the same issues.

The district hasn't received calls from principals complaining about their faculty representatives. We are always looking for ways to ensure that we are transparent. Mike Gandolfo would love it if more people would step up to be the building representative. There has to be a connection for it to work.

How can you not grieve the process of an evaluation? Bruce Proud doesn't want to leave the impression that the only way you can grieve the process is if it fits one of the appeal processes. If a teacher was not given a timely observation, then they should have the opportunity to grieve the process. Have conversation about having the right to grieve the process.

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Paragraph 10 – are you suggesting that a teacher can grieve the results? Results are appealable only – not grieve-able.

Pay is now tied to evaluations and changes things – how are we going to deal with the disagreement?

Need to add a paragraph about the pay for performance deadline to select salary level.

Issue with pay for performance – artifacts and evidence – to be considered in appeal – teacher states they deserve to support their appeal. Teachers should have the opportunity to grieve. Unreasonable expectation that the administrator doesn't have to accept the evidence. Bruce Proud stated that a third party needs to be able to determine if the process was followed. It is expected that the district and administration follows the process. The teacher comes in and provides additional artifacts – principal doesn't agree. It is not grieve-able. Only the process is grieve-able, not the outcome. The issue is the remedy for a grievance of the process cannot invalidate the evaluation. A "do over" may not be practical.

The only time it is grieve-able is if there were no pre-conference and the timeline was not followed.

Effective annual contract teacher wants highly effective, but a pre-conference didn't occur. How would the lack of a pre-conference change the rating? It wouldn't. The rating isn't going to change.

Add subject to grievance, if early enough assign someone else to evaluate them. Have a panel to review evidence – not just the administrator – that is acceptable to the employee and the district. Subject area specialist from the district, the person assigned and you don't agree – is that grieve-able too? Weighing the evidence it may be appealable; the process could be grieve-able.

Evaluation is to be between the teacher and the administrator. Is disparity grieve-able? It would be something to share with the Board to ensure that everyone is evaluated equally. Until you have the consistency, then there will be a concern. As the evaluation is skewed, how to make the money not attach to the evaluation so quickly? The statute is very clear.

What if we added language to appeal at the school? Can an assistant principal overturn a principal? Administrators have been trained on how to observe. Marzano has many options that determine the highly effective, effective ratings.

Language will be drafted for the small group to discuss.

## **Planning Time**

Equity in planning is not consistent in elementary – 50 minutes in block – the specialists are only getting 30 minutes instead of 50 minutes. Different positions require more/less time. The ESE teachers seem to need more time due to IEPs. Look at what's fair – not just equitable. It's not a full 30 minutes due to picking up/dropping off students. Can we provide everyone 50 minutes for elementary? There is no transition time for the special teachers.

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Teachers are having meetings during planning time (common, PLCs, etc.) Planning time needs to be defined. Planning 30-minute is not interrupted for each teacher (IEPs, PLCs, common planning, coaches). When these meetings take place 2-3 times a week, the teachers lose their planning. When would the IEPs PLCs, common planning take place? District disagrees that PLCs and common planning are not planning

Would like to see PLCs non-mandatory as some of the teachers don't teach every subject. There is a definite need for PLCs. PLCs take place usually in the morning 2 times a week. Time is also being taken away in the morning for teachers to be in class to accept students.

The original purpose of planning time was to develop a lesson plan. Elementary has many things which have become mandatory events. Administration can't ask that everything is mandatory as things can't get done. For example - testing – covering someone else's class to proctor.

Ron stated that the principals on the team need to have input and will share with those on the team. Having specialist's available all week instead of only a couple times a day; Janitorial staff are assigned to other duties in the beginning of school. More staff, extend day, identify mandates, and define what planning is. Mike Gandolfo said we need a different coaching model. Even though it states that the schools can work it out, it is more driven by the district. It was suggested that Teaching and Learning Services needs to weigh in on the schedules.

Why can't the leadership team members meet after school since they are being supplemented. What are we doing pre- and post-school time? Departments want to have meetings also. Need to streamline things that are coming down from administration. Create language that protects planning time that pushes everything out pre- and post-school other than when the planning time occurs.

Some PreK and ESE teachers do not have any planning time as they are in the classroom all day. Lou Ceretta asked for some additional information on where that is taking place.

PCTA asked why do the teachers need to submit lesson plans? The response was that It is required by law. PCTA thinks that the lesson plans don't need to be reviewed by principal. The teachers should just make sure that they have them if asked.

PCTA stated that there is a lot of technology that has to be learned – and you're cutting the planning time. There is a lot of redundancy in paperwork, etc.

Article 31 – states the meetings be reduced. The meeting maps will be reviewed.

## **STUDENT DISCIPLINE**

Need the student code of conduct – just updated.

Two strike – Back to non-renewed teachers – we all want good teachers – we are open to modifications to the non-renewal process. PCTA stated that the branding for teachers who have been non-renewed is the issue. The district stated that we have to have the two-strike rule. District noted that Hillsborough has a no strike rule, other districts have a two-strike rule. We can't

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have a revolving door for teachers who have not been successful. Asked if a strike can be removed if the teacher is now performing effectively after a period of time?

### **LEAVES**

PCTA would like to have 5 personal days instead of 4. How do we resolve the teacher absences in April and May\*? PCTA responded alleviate some of the stress. We will look at number of leaves taken, understand what they are entitled to and how long, cost to it, staffing, FMLA, ACA, etc.

\*It was noted that sick days are sickness of self and family, not additional days off. We routinely have 800 teachers who fail to come to work on Mondays or Fridays. This is a problem for Student Achievement.