

TEACHER BNC MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2019
GMTCC COMMUNITY EDUCATION CENTER

BNC members present: Sue Hamlyn-Prescott, Bernard Barnes, Katie Orost, Mark Nielsen, Chasity Fagnant

Teachers present: Melissa Greenwood, Patrick LaClair, Eric Hutchins, Louis Weller, Gail Whitten, Betzi Goodman, Paul Legris, Carol-Lynn Willean

Others present: Charleen McFarlane

S. Hamlyn-Prescott called the meeting to order at 6:30.

S. Hamlyn-Prescott reviewed the BNC proposals. The rationale behind the proposal regarding article IV is that administration is finding that May 30th is just too late to be uncertain about the school year and too late in terms of the recruitment timeframe. It also cuts it close for teachers to obtain provisional licenses from the state. That is why the BNC is proposing that contract renewal extensions be only to May 15th.

Patrick LaClair asked if the BNC has a sense of how many teachers have been taking the extension. About a dozen? C. McFarlane said yes.

P. LaClair asked if most teachers who take an extension end up staying or leaving. C. McFarlane said she would say that more than half end up staying.

P. LaClair asked if the teachers tend to give their intent before the end of the month extension. C. McFarlane said no. She said we can provide more specific information before the next meeting. Sue said extensions need to come before the board and we have seen an increasing number of requests for extensions in the past few years.

P. LaClair said it would be nice to get the numbers of people who ask for extensions, how long they took to give their intentions and how many stay or leave.

C. McFarlane said we usually don't know until the last day of the extension whether they will stay or not.

S. Hamlyn-Prescott said that, regarding the Article V proposal, it is very important that all staff participate in professional development. That is why we have moved the proposed language up to the very start of the article to emphasize that piece. People who are part-time would be compensated for attending professional development. They would get additional pay based on their normal pay.

M. Greenwood asked, they would be paid whatever their standard rate of pay is, is that correct? S. Hamlyn-Prescott said yes. M. Greenwood asked if language stating that could possibly be added.

M. Greenwood asked how this might work for the handful of teachers who might work not just in our supervisory union but also in another supervisory union part time. Their workday might overlap

on an in-service day. S. Hamlyn-Prescott said her thought is that it would be on a case-by-case basis but the BNC can get back to the association about that.

S. Hamlyn-Prescott said our goal with the proposal regarding Article XIII is that other advisors should not be present. They are not familiar with all the nuances of our contract and teachers are best guided by their association representative. That was what we are looking for, that it would be an association representative. This is just for the formal warning, not further down in the process.

M. Greenwood asked if the BNC would consider language allowing for a representative or representatives, perhaps adding (s). There have been some cases where the building rep has come to those informal warnings and also the negotiator for the building might be there. If there are questions on contract interpretation sometimes they can answer them more clearly than the building representative. An association member might feel they need more than one person. S. Hamlyn-Prescott said the BNC will need to speak about this.

M. Greenwood said the teachers would like to propose a small change to their first proposal. They would like to propose a three-year contract instead of a two-year contract. That would give everyone a little break and breathing room. They are hoping to offset teacher and support staff negotiations so that the two contracts are not always being negotiated at the same time.

S. Hamlyn-Prescott said the BNC is not in a position tonight where we want to say yes or no to multiple year contracts. We really want to see what the arbitrator decision is on healthcare because that may impact what we decide. She will change the association proposal to indicate that it is for 3 years.

P. LaClair said the association's second proposal is something that largely is already taking place in all the buildings. However the conditions under which these association rights and privileges are achieved are different. In some cases the building administrator requests that the building rep gain permission for each individual instance of communicating with members by putting materials in mailboxes, sending out email communications, etc. In other cases it seems like building administrators are open to whatever sort of action the association is taking as long as that is happening at an appropriate time. The proposal seems like a way to produce equality across the district.

S. Hamlyn-Prescott said the BNC feels we need to do some further investigation to see what current practices are at all the different schools. P. LaClair asked if she means looking at other districts. S. Hamlyn-Prescott said no, she means looking at schools in our own district to find out from administrators what currently is being done at different schools.

P. LaClair said that this is language that is fairly standard in other districts' agreements. It is certainly not universal but he would say that in the majority of other districts the association is generally afforded these rights in the contract.

S. Hamlyn-Prescott said that all the remaining association proposals have financial impact and the BNC is not prepared tonight to go into any depth about things that are budget-related.

P. LaClair said regarding their next proposal, one thing the association has found is that there is a discrepancy in the contract when it discusses professional days. It discusses the fact that those are going to be requested days for time off from work but they are also days where teachers request funds for conferences and occasionally lodging or transportation. That presents a problem when a teacher may have a conference they would like funded in the summer or on a weekend and they end up being docked one of their professional days off from their in-service school days even though it is taken on an out-of-service day. They have teachers that have taken week-long workshops over the summer and have received pushback from their administrators that they have already taken their three days even if it is a free conference that has no additional cost to the school during the school year.

S. Hamlyn-Prescott asked, is it just the days that you're speaking about? P. LaClair said it is the days. The funding – for instance for the fee to attend a conference – is subject to approval by the principal. What they want to avoid is the days being counted if the teacher is taking them on a day that would not normally be considered an in-service school day such as on a weekend or in the summer.

M. Greenwood said another association proposal is extending CTE for the GMTCC teachers through the entire salary schedule. Currently it stops at Masters plus 15. They would like every instructor to have full access to the salary scale regardless of whether they have a teaching credential or a CTE credit. It is difficult to hire some of those industry professionals when with a technical degree they can easily make a lot more money. They're choosing to work with children and share their expertise and the association would like to keep them here as long as we can, so they would like to extend their CTE credits across the entire salary schedule for equity.

P. LaClair said individuals under the teacher contract are able to obtain national board certification and if they do so they receive a one-time cash reward. The one position on the teacher contract who is not able to obtain a national board certification because there isn't one is a speech language pathologist. There is a comparable certification called American Speech-Language Hearing Association certification so the association proposes language stating that if they receive that certification during their employment they also will get a financial reward. The association does have materials showing that the certification is comparable in its rigor and length of process to national board certification. S. Hamlyn-Prescott asked if they can provide the BNC with that documentation. P. LaClair said yes; he can email it.

M. Greenwood said more and more colleges are offering online masters degree programs. And they have shrunk the length of time from a 16-week class down to 10 weeks. What is happening with teachers in those programs is that they have a gap from about mid-January to July where they cannot take any classes while they're waiting for the new fiscal year to come so they will have more money available to pay for credits. What the association is asking is that 3 credits be changed to 6 credits of advancement for those in those types of programs so they can continually work on their degree and not have a 5 1/2 month gap. Instead of taking two years as a master's degree would in a traditional course it ends up taking three years to complete these programs.

M. Greenwood said last year Deb Clark made a wonderful Excel sheet that could be used in creating a new salary schedule. The association is wondering if the board would be interested in

asking D. Clark to create a shared tool that both the board and the teachers could use when working on salary numbers. S. Hamlyn-Prescott said that is something the BNC will have to discuss.

S. Hamlyn-Prescott suggested using Doodle to identify possible dates for the next meeting. The board needs to vote on a budget on January 13th so will probably be looking at a date beyond that.

P. LaClair offered a couple of dates that would work for the association. January 23rd is their second choice and January 30th is their first choice.

The two groups separated to caucus at 6:54. At about 7:00 the teachers came in again briefly and then left.

The BNC entered into executive session to discuss contract negotiations.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:15.

Minutes submitted by Donna Griffiths