



AT THE TABLE

Brevard Federation of Teachers

July 9, 2009

Following the report of a subcommittee of union and district personnel, which provided the School Board and BFT joint bargaining team with a synopsis of key issues regarding comp time accrual/utilization, the teams devoted four bargaining sessions to the long and arduous task of carefully examining all of the current language.

Much discussion focused on whether there is a problem with the procedures or whether the problem lies with a lack of clarity of the language, and if so how BFT and the School Board could more effectively explain accrual and utilization procedures to teachers. It was also crucial that the bargaining teams interpret the language in the same manner, so the many ways it could be interpreted by the teams both individually and collectively also had to be discussed. The BFT and School Board teams will continue such an examination for any ambiguity contained in the language.

After completion of the thorough review of the existing comp time language, planned for our next session, we hope to have a proposal ready that is easier to understand and will also contain some procedural changes. A notable clarification of the language -- which overlapped and created much confusion -- now has it separated into two distinct accrual and utilization sections. In addition, only the words "accrual" and "utilization" (or their derivatives) will be contained in the language. A tentative agreement has been reached regarding the change that up to fifteen (15) hours of leftover comp time will be automatically extended to the new school year. The former language allowed only twelve (12) hours of such comp time to roll over, and then only if a request for its utilization had been denied.

If the proposed comp time language is ratified by the teachers and the school board, both teams believe it should be presented at the beginning of the year so teachers will be better able to utilize this valuable contractual right. Therefore, it has also been agreed that BFT will train Building Reps and the Department of Human Resources will train Principals, so that during pre-planning they can work together to present all the new and improved procedures to teachers.

Our next bargaining session is scheduled for July 23 at 9 a.m. in the BFT office and is open to all interested persons.