



AT THE TABLE
July 14, 2010

During the June 23rd bargaining session, BFT began its review of the Board's answer to BFT proposals for improving teacher working conditions, many of which have so far been rejected by the Board.

While the Board negotiator repeated a desire to return to interest-based bargaining, BFT remains optimistic that the traditional approach will be more productive.

BFT and Board proposals are vastly different. The following summarized lists should not replace your reading of both as linked on the BFT website at <http://www.bftteach.org>

BFT PROPOSAL: Define "discipline" and make disciplinary procedures more uniform.

Board Response: We do not want a definition of "discipline" in the contract.

BFT PROPOSAL: Define "emergency" so it cannot become an excuse for a principal caught unprepared.

Board Response: We do not want such a definition of "emergency" in the contract.

BFT PROPOSAL: Hold principals accountable for inaccurately citing BFT support in regard to bad or awkward management decisions (knowing it was a direct violation of the Collective Bargaining Agreement, we know of secondary principals who told faculties that BFT agreed teachers had to teach 6 of 7 class periods or face layoffs).

Board Response: We disagree.

BFT PROPOSAL: Define "retaliation" as set forth in a recent U.S. Supreme Court ruling, in order to support our strong belief that teachers need protection from such actions.

Board Response: "Retaliation" does not need to be defined in the contract.

BFT PROPOSAL: Clarify grievance procedures to ensure that teachers receive timely responses.

Board Response: We do not want any changes made to the grievance language.

BFT PROPOSAL: Make planning time be at the teacher's discretion to prepare for classes, evaluate student work, etc.

Board Response: We decline BFT proposals for planning time protections and enhancements.

Board Counter Proposal: Use one of the three end-of-semester release days for teacher training.

BFT PROPOSAL: Provide the end-of-year checklist at least 2 weeks in advance, allowing no new items to be added.

Board Response: We reject this idea.

BFT PROPOSAL: Provide a 30 minute, duty free lunch from the time students are dropped off to the time they are to be picked up.

Board Response: We do not accept a duty free lunch that does not include the time needed to drop off students.

BFT PROPOSAL: Teachers should know their anticipated assignments for the next school year before any voluntary/involuntary transfer periods begin in the spring. (NOTE: This year at least 80% of Teachers who were involuntarily transferred were BFT members, including many Building Reps that had openly upheld contractual rights in their schools.)

Board Response: We reject this idea.

Board COUNTER PROPOSAL 1: Move the current provision for notification of anticipated assignments from May 1 to the middle of the summer.

Board COUNTER PROPOSAL 2: Wait until 3 weeks after June 30, or 3 weeks after FCAT scores are ready (whichever comes later) to make final recommendation for moving qualified AC teachers to a PSC contract.

BFT PROPOSAL: Principals will explain what a meeting is about when they summon teachers.

Board Response: We refuse to require this.

BFT PROPOSAL: Avoid drastic (fifth grade teacher moved to second grade; teacher of seniors moved to teaching freshmen) involuntary and arbitrary assignment (and possibly retaliatory) changes for teachers who are already getting quality results in their current assignments.

Board Response: We reject such language. (Is it possibly because the district will not acknowledge that retaliation occurs in this district?)

BFT PROPOSAL: Require that evaluators be trained in and follow the Board-BFT jointly created *Instructional Personnel Performance Appraisal System* manual. All teachers will be assured of having a copy of the *IPPAS* manual.

Board Response: We reject these requirements.

BFT PROPOSAL: Protect teachers from being pressured to work dozens of extra hours for awards (at a loss of instructional time for students) that serve to make the principal and district look good but do nothing to support increases in student achievement (e.g. Music Demonstration School, Excellence in PE, etc.).

Board Response: There is no need to provide such protection.

BFT: Fortify with contract language the Board's anti-harassment and anti-bullying policy.

Board Response: We reject this idea.

BFT PROPOSAL: Allow teachers in a school that is being closed to be given first choice in following their students to a new school.

Board Response: There is no need to do this.

BFT PROPOSAL: Limit unnecessary and unproductive time spent in faculty meetings by, among other things, requiring administrators to distribute information electronically wherever possible.

Board Response: We do not agree that faculty meetings need to be efficient, and respectful of teachers' time.

BFT PROPOSAL: Fortify the teacher protection article of our contract, especially as it relates to a student receiving no effective consequences for a referral.

Board Response: We refuse to do this.

BFT PROPOSAL: Prohibit any asking of teachers to "volunteer" to search a building during a bomb threat. (Such an outrageous incident actually occurred at an elementary school this year.)

Board Response: We do not find there is a need to do this.

Board Proposals:

- Ed-line will completely replace paper grade books.
- Change current contract language, which allows teachers to choose the format of their own lesson plans, from teachers "shall" decide the format to they "may" decide the format.
- If a teacher takes leave on a day that subsequently finds the school closed (due to a hurricane for example), the teacher will still be charged for that day. If the day is later made up and the teacher works the make-up day, the teacher still will be charged for the leave.
- Everyone will be placed on a 24 paychecks per year cycle.
- A teacher hired who is not "highly qualified" must complete that requirement within ninety (90) days or be terminated.

The Board's rejection of BFT proposals only means they were not initially accepted for further discussion, but it does affirm the need for teacher solidarity. Although the Board's rejections and counter proposals indicate that the Board is not looking to make strides in protecting teachers' time or helping them better serve students, the tone between the chief negotiators has been respectful, and we expect to it remain that way.

BFT is determined to work to bridge any differences of opinion in order to formulate positive contract changes and obtain what teachers want, need and deserve. BFT has yet to bring to the table the vital issue of salary, and will do so only after we have attended all Board budget workshops and received the final budget statements as reported to the DOE.

Respectfully,
The BFT Bargaining Team.