Preparing for a Bargain

Presenter:
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About Mike Parker

• 41 years in public education
• Began in Fall of 1976 (remember Mark Spitz?)
• 14 years as School Superintendent
• 17 years of negotiation experience including Classified, Certificated, Administrators and Coaches
• Will “shift gears” vs. retire
• What I share with you is what I have learned
Tell me about you...
“Please, Mr. Wolf, now we’re just splitting hares.”
“Why don’t you channel your aggressive energy to something constructive; like football, rugby or macrame?”
They’re trained, are you?

- Their training manual
- Examples
Complete this sentence: Collective bargaining is like

• Talk to your elbow partner.
Pre-Bargain (before your first session)

• How is your relationship with the union? It’s leadership? **Jean vs. Laurie, Tom vs. Jan

• Are there any unresolved issues? ** Use of school vans vs. Taking a bus

• What do your monthly union meeting notes tell you? ** high needs para vs. para

• What did you set “aside” in the last bargain? ** MOU or Letter of Agreement?
Their check list and Your check list

• **Your check list should be similar plus:**
  • Prototypical school funding model
  • F-195 report
  • 1197 monthly apportionment
  • 1191 entire report
  • Enrollment projections
  • Monthly revenue/expense report
  • Facility costs and upgrades
A few ‘hot’ topics

• Respect
• Compensation- TRI for Classified?
• Article VII-Section 7-Hours of work and overtime
• Paid Professional Development
• How are jobs to be filled?
• COLA
• Article X- Section 10-Probation, Seniority and Layoff
• Article II-Section 2-Management rights
• Paid vacation
Prepare Your TEAM in advance

• The other side is preparing right now….are you?
• Meet with the Board to discuss parameters and their role
  Key: Paint a worst case scenario
• Superintendent: His/her role
  Key: Communication is vital/ loyalty/
  Ask: What is the absolute bottom line? What **MUST** the district get from this bargain?
• Your team make up-who will be on the team/ Suggestions
  Key: Importance of mentoring young talent
Gather data/issues/interests

• What do past meetings during the year tell you.............
• What do past negotiations tell you................
• What do bargains in other districts tell you..................
• What problems need to be addressed this time? (example: HS staff meeting time must be increased)
• Clarity? Example: Who weighs in on School calendar
• House keeping issues?
• School Board concerns? You got to ask!
• Ask Administrators who work in the trenches
Do your homework

• Look at other recent settlements in the area
• Can you locate these agreements? See ERNN
• Gather accurate district financials
• How do you spend MSOC?

Is it the truth! Nine Mile
Your first session

• How will this bargain shape up? Interest Based or Traditional (Positional)
• Ground rules for the bargain( see their example)
• Who will be the team’s contact person/spokesman?
• Calendar 2-3 meetings out
• When/where shall we meet? Your place then my place, you provide, we provide
  ex: Nine Mile Falls vs. Hoquiam
First meeting continued

• How will proposals be presented?
• When is the cut off for “new” or “additional” items?
• Does their team have authority to make decisions? TA items?
• Caucusing and parameters? (see their example)
• Note taking? Need someone/ together?
• Common communication following the bargain?
Caution: 
Importance of accurate notes

• “what was the intent of the language”?
• How was the topic brought up and what conversation took place around the topic?

• Example: 1987 language was referred to in a 2007 bargain
Final thoughts

- They’re trained- are you?
- Prepare for the worst- don’t hope for the best
- Do you want to win the battle and lose the war?
- Do you think they are concerned about the fund balance? Or district climate?
- Importance of your integrity-its lasting
- What is it that you(district) absolutely want from this bargain?
- How will you communicate to the constituency during the bargain?
Strategy during the bargain

• A topic for another time...
Win

Win