

Vacaville Unified School District And Vacaville Teachers Association

Bargaining Ground Rules

Bargaining Approach

The Bargaining Teams will utilize an interest-based approach during negotiations, which include the following concepts:

- Every person is important.
- Honesty and integrity are essential to building trusting relationships.
- The Bargaining Teams will not tolerate behavior that demeans the self-worth or dignity of any individual of the group.
- Focus on issues.
- One person talks at a time.
- Participants practice good listening skills.
- Identify and address "elephants" (relationship problems) as they appear.
- Everyone in the group is responsible for protecting the process. Process checks prevail over substantive agenda items.
- Sit in mixed groups.
- Teams will alternate facilitators each session.
- Participants will keep an open mind.
- Participants will be actively engaged in the process.

Sessions

- The dates, times, and length of the next negotiating session are to be mutually agreed upon at the end of each session.
- At the end of each session, the teams shall discuss and agree on the scope of communication to constituents.
- The Collective Bargaining Team of the VTA and the Board's Representative Team agree to negotiate in good faith and to meet as frequently as necessary to achieve a contract in the shortest possible time.
- Location (including by Zoom) shall be mutually agreed to prior to each bargaining session.
- There shall not be discussion/negotiations of any outstanding grievances or unfair labor charges during a regularly scheduled bargaining session. Special sessions to specifically discuss any grievance/unfair shall be scheduled separately from a regular bargaining session.
- Negotiating sessions are not open to the general public. (The general public is defined as anyone outside the membership of the bargaining teams, or their substitutes, and the consultants.)

Records of Sessions

- No official minutes shall be kept. It will be the responsibility of each party to maintain its own record of the sessions.
- Artifacts (posters, whiteboard images, etc.) of sessions shall be dated and preserved, physically and digitally. Digital copies shall be shared with each team.
- Artifacts shall only be shared with the respective governing boards of VTA and VUSD.

Topics and Sunshined Articles and Written Proposals

- By an agreed upon date of September 1, 2021, all Topics shall be introduced. Date is subject to change based on flexibility needed for bargaining related to COVID.
- No other Topics shall be considered for negotiation of the contract unless mutually agreed to by both parties.
- Only articles initially sunshined shall be considered in negotiations, unless mutually agreed to by both parties.
- Options shall not be considered "official" proposals from either the Association or the Board's representative(s).
- At any time, either team may present a written proposal.

Caucuses

- Either side may call a caucus at any time.

Release Days

- The District will provide release time for the negotiation sessions for the VTA Bargaining Team, including the VTA President, to meet and negotiate with no loss in compensation.

Requests for Information

- All typewritten or printed material, reports (all in electronic form, when possible), or other information necessary for negotiations shall be requested orally or in writing by either Chairperson from his or her counterpart.
- Requested information will be delivered in a timely manner so as to begin, continue, or conclude negotiations in an expedited fashion.

Use of a Copy Machine

- The use of a copy machine at the District Office or at any site where bargaining is occurring will be made available to the VTA Bargaining Team Chairperson or the VTA Bargaining Team to reproduce materials to be used during collective bargaining sessions.
- No charge will be made for reproduced materials to be distributed to both teams during negotiating sessions.
- Reproduced materials not distributed to both teams shall be paid by the VTA.

Consultants

- Either team may be assisted by no more than two consultants per negotiating session, as needed to advise and/or represent the group at the direction of the team Chairperson.
- Reasonable effort will be made by both parties to notify each other of consultants by at least forty-eight (48) hours before a bargaining session.

Tentative Agreements

- If mutually agreeable, the tentatively agreed upon items shall be reduced to writing, dated, and signed by the Chairperson of the VTA Bargaining Team and by the Board's Representative(s) prior to adjournment of the meeting at which the tentative agreement is reached.
- Copies of all signed tentative agreements will be distributed to all members of the negotiating teams.

Agreements other than Tentative Agreements:

- All non-tentative agreements, including those regarding district budget numbers, shall be reduced to writing, dated and signed by both parties.

Ratification

- Any agreement negotiated shall be reduced to writing for ratification by the parties.
- When the Board and Association reach tentative agreement on all matters being negotiated, the complete Agreement shall be submitted to and approved by the membership of the Association and the Board prior to implementation.
- All negotiated, signed, dated, and approved agreements shall apply to the entire contract year being negotiated unless otherwise specified or delineated.

Chris Hulett
VUSD

Brenda Hensley
VTA

Date _____