



A Union of Professionals

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Dear Member,

Our negotiations for the 2007-2008 school year began this week. Since 1999, we have been using a negotiation strategy called Interest-Based Bargaining or IBB. This strategy differs from traditional positional bargaining in that the focus of IBB negotiation is on parties' "interests" rather than their "positions." Traditional positional bargaining becomes "oppositional" bargaining leading to compromise, while IBB attempts to create functioning, cordial relationships achieving a win-win solution.

Negotiations are facilitated by an objective, third-party facilitator specializing in IBB negotiating. IBB begins by determining each party's interests with regards to an issue. Every member of both negotiating teams shares his/her interests clarifying why everyone is motivated to solve this particular issue. Once all the interests are shared, members of the negotiating teams begin to brainstorm possible options. These options could lead to a Memorandum of Understanding (where an issue is studied for a period of time), sub-committees, or a consensus. Once all the options have been discussed and exhausted, the negotiating teams must commit to a particular solution based on consensus meeting as many members' interests as possible. We always negotiate with your interests and needs in mind.

When IBB came to us in 1999, some people were skeptical of this new approach, but I have watched it eliminate rancor between the District and the Union, create better solutions for teachers and students, and meet more members' interests. I am proud of the results our negotiating team has provided for you in the past.

The DCF negotiating team works to secure the best compensation and benefits package for our members. We have collected data and met with many teachers to decide which issues to bring to the table. Here is a list of the items we will begin the year discussing:

- Itinerant Language
- Knowledge Level Advancement
- Schedule A
- Language Clean-up

Please e-mail us with any issues you feel should be discussed. Because we have a Living Contract, we negotiate all year. Living contracts provide for on-going discussions and decision-making. The goal is to reach agreement on issues in a timely manner without delaying action. If we find items pertaining to antiquated, inaccurate or unclear language or practices, we can bring these to the bargaining table. We appreciate your continued support as we go through the negotiation process.

Brenda Smith
President, Douglas County Federation