

Draft Minutes of
The East Aurora Council of the AFT Local 604
April 16, 2026

In attendance: Arlette Gomez, Aviva Pollack Paradise, Alan Scott, Anndella Bee, Becky Roireau, Christy Harding, Cyn Citro, Carrie Snyder, Eileen Pasturczak, Jeff Hansford, Jill Doyle, Jon Kuehl, Jessica Fisher, Judy Durham, Jennifer Gentile, John Fanning, Kara Bown, Karen Mueller, Lisa Samp, Lisa Pena, Mary Carol Smith, Melinda Thomas, Michelle Hanna, Nicole Connolly, Nicole Thayer, Patrick Bednarik, Stephanie Campbell, Sara Lojewski, Sandro Bonilla, Sandra Williams, Susan Salinas-Ramirez, Tim Snyder, Trevor Schrage, Victoria Haier

Building Representatives, Executive Council Officers, or Senators Not In Attendance: Aishia Jefferson, Ann Snodgrass, Angie Sanchez, Amy Van Cura, Alison Mann Nile, Beth Cotter, Brittany Peterson, Beth Eadens, Brian Henricks, Danielle Grady, Dalila Sanchez, Dulce Jonsson, Dawn Stanfa, Elaine Halleran, Fatima Ballesteros, Gloria Salinas, Henry Johnson, Iliana Ochoa, Jessica Sheldon, John Burkhalter, John Devine, Janel Jaros, Jodi Eppenstein, Julie Melendez, Julie Schmale, Jessica Sheldon, Joy Caro, Justin Skattum, Joyce Ladewig, Kaliegh Soumar, Kim Stolpestad, Kristi Pokornowski, Lorraine Garciacano, Mara Clucas, Michelle Taylor, Mary Taylor, Pablo Macias Contador, Pamela Miller, Stacey Boyce, Sandra Vazquez, Stephanie Hansen, Tim Hollins

Secretary's Report:

- Reviewed union meeting minutes from [03/19/26](#)

Motion to approve: Mary Carol Smith, Patrick Bednarik - Approved. Pass, all. Nays, none. Abstains

Senators' Reports

Michelle: Senate Bill 2914 basically makes it more difficult to put a teacher on remediation. ["It allows teachers to file grievances through collective bargaining agreements against written warnings for "remediable" misconduct. It limits these warnings to four years"] It passed through the committee. It will now go onto the House. A notice-to-remedy can be FOYA-ed. Contact your state senators to make sure they vote for this.

Becky: At board meetings, they announce notice-for-remedies.

Christy: Keep an eye out for the election, coming out next week.

Becky: We are going to move onto the Conceptual Agreements. It was really hard to concentrate last time, if we can keep the side discussions to a minimum..

Rep: We could always run over to the library too.

Becky: It's fine to stay here.

I have a sheet to help with the role call votes. If anyone would like to volunteer?

A REP VOLUNTEERS.

Becky: Thank you, thank you.

Another suggestion was that we reverse the process, first showing the CA, then saying, "Can we live with it or not live with it?", then we discuss it afterwards.

Can anyone not live with that suggestion?

LAUGHTER

No? Okay, great.

Just a reminder, these are very confidential because when we are at the table we are working on your behalf, and we have observers in the room, Susan, Kara, and we are doing an improvement, two observers who can speak to any malfeasance. But we need some trust. Unless you do what Columbia College does, which is put the whole thing on video and show the whole thing.

Oh, so, these questions came up...

Are we rushing to get bargaining done? We have some who want it done before the start of the summer. But some want to spend more time. But we are striking a balance. We have put too much effort into this process to rush things now. But we don't want to vote over the summer, ten people, or whatever. If we need to continue negotiations next August, we'll do that.

But we are moving at a clip. I've aged twenty years in three years.

And the other question: Why can't the full membership see the TAs as they are agreed on?

Before we sit at the table, I realized that everything is coming together. Everything is intertwined. But a TA doesn't tell the full story. Any questions about that?

I talked to someone in person who heard what I had to share and they said, *If I could have heard you in person*. But I can't talk to everyone in person.

Any thoughts, issues or concerns, please let me know?

Rep: Hermes says the communication has been better than ever.

Becky: Thank you. We are emailing, and using Hustle.

Rep: Some have doubts. Not that they don't trust the system. But it never went smooth in the past.

Becky: At one point, it was like PTSD. But I had to back myself up. It's normal.

Rep: They're excited. But cautious.

Becky: People don't know, *Should we trust this?* But we just need to keep going forward.

So, okay, great, ready to go? What time is it? Good.

This slide deck has everything. And we're adding to it so when we are ready to share with the staff, it's all there already.

CA #8: Paid holidays. Changes to law since the last agreement was reached. Add Juneteenth (when it falls on a weekday) and Federal ElectionDay (in November). They will be added, and that's for the Office Staff.

Is there anyone who cannot live with this?

Let's do roll call vote.

VOTE TAKEN: ALL IN FAVOR.

Becky: From start to voting, it was three minutes!

Next, CA #9: Elementary Band.

Solution: **Issue:** No language in CBA except for stipend; confusion as to what constitutes work day vs stipend duties

Solution: Work with students is to be done during the day (not before/after school only) / stipends are intended for extra duties; students should have access to band during the day consistently across buildings

Becky: Basically, this impacts mostly elementary. It has been an ongoing issue.

This is meant to rectify having parents take their children in the morning.

VOTE: ALL IN FAVOR.

Becky: #10, this has been an issue that we brought to the district.

Issue: SPED licensed positions looking for additional support as demands are growing and positions continue to be hard to fill; diverse PEL positions include SW, Psych, SLP, Counselor, Nurse, Coaches, Interventionists who all serve students with IEPs in different ways; "protected work time" isn't always protected, asked to sub/assist, inconsistent across buildings; note that a workload plan is required by law

Becky: We have joint committees with equal votes, equal representation, so they are going to get together and outline a process for workload concerns.

Protected days increase to five.

Days you got for IEP paperwork, and social workers did not get them.

Kara: Even SPED is going from 3 to 5.

Becky: No more than 2 consecutive in a row, which would be a burden on the building. But with approval from the principal.

It is inclusive of a larger group. So that's a huge win. The caseload protections.

Solution:

- Ad Hoc Committee to create and maintain Workload Plan
 - Will outline process for addressing workload concerns
- Protected work days

- Increase to 5 per year, no more than 2 consecutive with principal approval
- Must be done in person, but can be done at alternate site in district with approval
- Expand access to: Case managers/SPED teachers, social workers, speech paths, itinerants (HI, VI, DHH)
- Duty-free lunch for SW & Psych to be scheduled by principal

Becky: The lunches need to be duty-free.

And we will have some baked-in agenda items at union-principal meetings. To get the relationship going, but also to get needed information at the beginning of the year.

Rep: The DHH is deaf and hard of hearing?

Kara: I checked to make sure everyone is included.

Rep: Why aren't counselors included in duty free lunch?

Becky: We'll make sure to add that.

Any questions? Anyone cannot live with this?

Rep: The words coaches and interventionists is confusing.

Becky: If you aren't SPED, this doesn't apply to you. It hasn't been consistent.

Rep: Behaviorists?

Becky: They aren't even in our bargaining unit.

Rep: Can I ask a clarifying question? Do they have a plan in place for whether they need to make up minutes...

Rep: Right now, I do need to make those minutes up.

Becky: That has been an issue for social workers too.

And thank you for the clarifying suggestions.

ROLLCALL VOTE: ALL IN FAVOR.

Becky: I think we parked some of this for starting tomorrow. I just remembered that we parked some of this.

We are making an effort to not be hyper specific, but just specific enough.

CA #11 GRIEVANCE LANGUAGE

Issue: 3 separate processes for teachers, office, support staff - only some have rights before Board with discipline; all interested in prompt and meaningful resolution process

Solution:

- "Calendar" days
- Combine discipline into the "General" section of the CBA with same steps (note that p.34-C is for teachers only under school code)
- Allow all EE groups to contest discipline of suspension or higher in closed session

- New Step 3 in Grievance Process: if not satisfied with answer at Step 2, the union may within 10 days request a hearing before the Board in closed session, to occur within next 2 BOE meetings, with a written answer to follow within 10 days
- If FMCS ceases to exist, parties will meet to determine mutually agreeable agency

Becky: We should all have the same rights, regardless.

Right now, you appeal to the superintendent designee, and it's the same person who initially rejected you. Now you can bring the board into the process. Which is also good for the board, because they might, for example, see the same issues popping up again and again.

Those are the main changes. So, calendar days, the general section of CBA will have as much as possible to pertain to all three groups, and the process will now include the board but won't give up the arbitration rights.

Can anyone not live with this? I know you are all excited about grievance rights.

Roll call?

ROLLCALL VOTE: ALL IN FAVOR

CA #15 Dual Language 1

Issues

- The workload for DL teachers is greater than non-DL
- many split classes
- Class sizes not enforced or imbalanced
- prep time utilized by consultants

Note: the District has an early priority deadline to plan for SY27, and we now know that around 81% of families have requested DL and it is anticipated to be in every building with English-language hubs at certain schools (this should help resolve class size issues)

Becky: We did the survey, got lots of feedback.

Solutions All outside of CBA -

- Ad Hoc Dual Language Committee functioning by Summer 2026
- Admin will be mindful of the need to keep TAs in the program vs. pulling to sub
- District will be mindful of the amount of time dedicated to consultants, new materials, etc. in order to protect prep time

Becky: A committee, equal numbers, equal votes.

Skeptical?

Rep: It's been such a waste of time.

Becky: It has. But, this year, we had committees, a changing of the guard. And we see some running like a well-oiled machine. They will be a model. There will always be a union lead, a district lead, and they will co-plan.

They committed to get this up and running by 2026. They've agreed to get this committee running for the summer to plan for the Fall.

Some of our TAs sub to make extra money. Some want to sub, some don't. It's a balancing act.

What we want for the most part is having the big decisions coming from the committees. The more coming for the committees, and less from me, the better.

Can anyone not live with this?

ROLLCALL: ALL IN FAVOR.

CA #16: Calendar

Issue: The Calendar Committee went very well this year and will come together after spring break to draft the calendar for SY28; in the past, staff felt it too long to develop and made planning difficult

Solution:

- Educate committee members on legal side; annually draft in the spring and approve in the fall; maintain a practice of having official calendar by end of March and draft for subsequent year by end of school year
- In CBA: revise process to match current practice: jointly develop, committee meets Q1, keep March timeline, scrap 2 proposals, reflect 2-year cycle; move this to the General section of CBA

Becky: March is much earlier. So you can start planning. So that is good news.

In the past, they did two proposals. This is about working together. In the past, two groups, two rooms. But now it will be working together. And a two year cycle.

Can anyone not live with this? Perfect? Vote!

ROLLCALL VOTE: ALL IN FAVOR.

CA #17: Professional Development.

Issue: Employee groups do not feel there is relevant PD for their positions and believe PD lacks choice

Solution: Outside of CBA - Break up the PD Committee by group, look at how to best meet needs of each employee group

Becky: Haha. We had a PD Committee. It was a mixed bag. What we thought was a great idea to break the group up to include subgroups. And look at how it can best serve each employee group.

Anyone who cannot live with this?

This has been an issue since being here. I can't think of anyone being happy with PD.

Anyone cannot live with this?

ROLLCALL VOTE: ALL IN FAVOR.

Issue: When class caps are exceeded, there is inconsistent support from building to building and no contractual obligation to find a resolution; note that start this year, Jon's department pulls a weekly report to review and address class caps leading up to the October 1 deadline; not clear what class caps look like for secondary electives.

Solution:

- Update language to become more actionable (*change #4 "...or leveling", change #6 "mutually agreed-upon supports/remedies, remove #8 "tutors", remove #7 "other remedies"*)
- Move relief options under Admin meeting (must find a solution from this list)
- Add to Paragraph 1: Annually, building admin will schedule a meeting with any teacher exceeding the class cap within 5 workdays of the 10/1 deadline; in the event the teacher is not satisfied after the conclusion of that meeting, they may appear to the superintendent or designee within 10 workdays
- Keep October 1 deadline for semester 1, change deadline from February 1 to February 15 for semester 2
- Include exception for secondary Music and PE, in addition to Encore

Becky: Class sizes are not getting bigger. The big thing, there is no contractual obligation to give a remedy.

We will update the language to be more actionable for us. And it will say, mutually agreed-upon supports. It's big. I forgot how big this was. Actionable results when you are over your cap. Must find a solution from the list. Must.

Rep: Will there be any cap for PE?

Becky: It will be what it is now.

We'll bring that back tomorrow.

Rep: Will there be any kinda of cap? But we have been very reluctant. But sometimes they'll throw in a SPED group. We will bring back asking about caps for PE.

Becky: Do we agree to hold off on voting for this until we can bring this back?

REPS: YES, BRING IT BACK.

CA #19: Evaluations

- Issue: Employees are on three different evaluation timelines; some appendices are mislabeled and/or appendix references are inaccurate; the certified evaluation process is guided by the Joint PERA Committee, but the CBA current contains a lot of specifics about those procedures
- Solution:

- Move PERA specifics out of the CBA and into the Certified Evaluation Plan guided by the Joint PERA Committee
- Change office/support, similarly, to say (in just one paragraph):
 - The evaluation instruments can be found in Appendix ____
 - Administration must acquaint the employee with the tool
 - Employees have the ability to respond to their evaluation in writing
 - All else guided by the Joint Evaluation Committee and Evaluation Plan
- Smaller bargaining sub-groups will hammer out the language details
- Change support and office staff evaluation deadline to April 15

Becky: This is a huge win. Evaluation Committee will be for Office/Support. PERA is for-

"ANNOUNCEMENT, ANNOUNCEMENT: AT THIS TIME, PLEASE MOVE AWAY FROM WINDOWS AND SHUT YOUR CLASSROOM DOORS [...]"

Becky: A lockdown?

The reps and senators grabbed students and moved for cover.

Two minutes later...

"THE EMERGENCY HAS PASSED [...]"

Sandro: It was a false alarm.

CONVERSATION WAS HAD ABOUT THE WEIRD EVENT.

Becky: That was bracing.

ROLLCALL VOTE: ALL IN FAVOR.

CA # 20 New Educators/PD 1

Issue: While we appreciate the inclusiveness of all employee groups (not just certified), the orientation and PD for new hires needs to be customized by group and start date; there is also no data on the effectiveness of the current programming, and PD parameters are unclear

Solution:

- Outside of the CBA:
 - Oversight of New Educator Orientation and PD will shift to the Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Dept in coordination with HR, Learning Leadership, and NEST induction leads
 - Stipend Committee will address NEST stipends (distribution across district, roles, etc.)

Becky: We need to support our new staff. We do practically nothing to support them. There is a real cost to shuffling people out the door.

We want to make sure the programming is working. And it doesn't look like it is because we are firing people all the time.

Office has things they need to know.

- **In the CBA:**

- Certified new hires: up to 4 days of orientation before the start of the year (unpaid) and up to the equivalent of 2 workdays split among meetings/workshops/PD (unpaid) for the purpose of NEST meetings and workshops (not inclusive of mentor/mentee meetings)
- Office/support staff may be asked to attend training, paid at hourly rate
- Certified mentor receive payment of \$X for mentorship for the year, includes expectation to attend mentor orientation; prorated if midyear start/end
- Ad Hoc Joint Committee to convene in 2026-2027 school year to develop job shadow/mentor program for office and support staff, for implementation in 2027-2028; agree to pilot job shadowing in 2026-2027 (*note: updated the dates per group agreement on 4/10/26*)

Becky: We really felt the focus on growing people.

Can anyone not live with these?

ROLLCALL: ALL IN FAVOR.

Becky: I want to honor your time. We have three more items. I don't want to overdo it. Last time people were like, *Please stop*.

We'll make a time to meet again. It might be via Zoom. And that's it.

Oh, if you are retiring, please stand.

CLAPPING!

Becky: Thank you for your service. You made it!

And let's thank Jen Gentile, who has worked many years and given so much service.

CLAPPING!

Adjourned.