

Draft Minutes of
The East Aurora Council of the AFT Local 604
February 10, 2022

Agenda

Building Representatives In Attendance: Arlette Gomez, Aviva Pollack Paradise, Airen Freese, Amy Van Cura, Alan Scott, Beth Cotter, Cin Citro, Carrie Snyder, Elaine Halleran, Fatima Ballesteros, Francisco Zafra, Gloria Salinas, Gerry Mestek, Henry Johnson, Tim Snyder, Jeff Hansford, Janel Jaros, Jessica Fisher, Jessica Joyce, Judy Durham, Jennifer Gentile, Jeffrey Mleczko, Joyce Ladewig, Karen Mueller, Lisha Pauli, Melinda Thomas, Michelle Taylor, Matt Harding, Rhonda Bass, Stephanie Paul,

Building Representatives Not Present: Brittany Peterson, Beth Eadens, Christy Harding, Dulce Jonsson, Dawn Stanfa, Eileen Pasturczak, Elaine Halleran, Geoffrey Adler, Henry Johnson, John Burkhalter, Julie Melendez, Jon Kuehl, Jan Kolodziejek, Julie Schmale, Lorraine Garciascano, Mary Carol Smith, Mara Clucas, Kaliegh Soumar, Kevin Thacker, Mary Taylor, Nicole Connolly, Pamela Miller, Stacey Martin, Sandra Williams, Tim Snyder, Victoria Haier

General Members in Attendance: Carolyn Frer, Sarah Felgenhauser, Brian Liska, Robin Savino, Viri Bermudez, Dianne Thomas, John Damore

Secretary's Report:

- Reviewed union meeting minutes from [10/21/21](#)

Motion to Postpone Voting Until Next Meeting: Gerry Mestek, Fatima Ballesteros
- Approved. Pass: All. Nays, 0. Abstains: 0.

- Reviewed union meeting minutes from [11/17/21](#)

Motion to Postpone Voting Until Next Meeting: Gerry Mestek, Fatima Ballesteros
- Approved. Pass: All. Nays, 0. Abstains: 0.

- Union meeting minutes from [01/23/22](#)

Motion to Postpone Voting Until Next Meeting: Gerry Mestek, Fatima Ballesteros
- Approved. Pass: All. Nays, 0. Abstains: 0.

Treasurer's Report:

- February budget report

Motion to approve: Francisco Zafra, Judy Durham - Approved. Pass: All. Nays: 0. Abstains: 0.

Senator Report: (5 minutes)

- Scholarship deadline on or before 3/16/22

Jeffrey Mleczo: In the near future, senators will need to be elected. They can only be appointed when a standing senator steps down.

Carrie Snyder

- Convention Calls

AFT s July 14 - 17, and IFT is October in 2022. If you want to attend, call office before 3 PM before March 15th.

- Scholarships

Members who have children are eligible to apply for a scholarship.

- House Bill 1134

If this passes in Indiana, teachers must post lessons on their district websites, as well as materials and activities so parents can access and see for an entire year. Parent committee will review the lessons and have influence on what teachers teach.

- House Bill 5149

State board of ed, one evaluation per year.

Tim Snyder

- Food Drive

Thank you for participating.

- Richard Manley Support Staff Scholarship

Look into this if you are interested.

President Report: (40 minutes)

- New member sign ups

We have had several additions. We need to get them signed up before they decide, *why bother*. Five office staff have not signed up. Three who do not want to join. Seventeen support staff who have not yet joined. Ten licensed staff have not joined.

Also, ask them if they want to join the sick bank because at sign up is a good time to do it.

- Board Statement 02/07/2022

A letter was shared regarding the situation of when a snow day was not taken on Wednesday February 2, 2022.

- Discuss Incentives and Actions Going Forward

Met with Dr. Norrell on Tuesday 02/08/2022 and had discussion and revised incentives for Year 2 and Year 3 to be equal across all grade levels. The Executive Committee will meet with Dr. Norrell on Monday 02/14/2022 to finalize the incentives and hope to have something to show to House of Delegates soon.

Jeffrey Mleczo read a report detailing the changes to the ESSER

Michelle Taylor: Upon reviewing the updated stipulations, ESSER funds should include public participation, clear documentation, and there is nothing in ESSER that it should be tied to incentives, but should be for programs. We have programs which need funds, it is supposed to be new funds for learning loss. I believe that asking union members to endorse these incentives was divisive and hurt people. Her rebuttal did not answer my questions. She said that ESSER 3 funds should be used but haven't been awarded yet, but we already have it. We need to advocate that the funds be used for learning loss.

Jeffrey Mleczo: If Dr. Norrell wanted to give everyone the same thing, it wouldn't require negotiation. But since she wanted to give it away unequally, she had to negotiate it.

Michelle Taylor: I feel like we were bullied in voting on something that our staff did not know the details about, putting it on our membership to decide.

Melinda Thomas: The question is: what do we do now?

Jeffrey Mleczo: We voted to accept Year 1, with the idea that we would continue to negotiate Year 2 and Year 3. When I talked with our Local, they said it was not illegal to hand it out this way.

Melinda Thomas: I agree with you (Michelle), but...

Matt Harding: We didn't have enough time to decide.

Michelle Taylor: Are we still negotiating it? Do we have ESSER 2 money? ESSER 3 money?

Judy Durham: We have ESSER 2 but not ESSER 3. Different stipulations.

Arlette Gomez: Custodial staff was not happy that different bonuses were being given out. Not happy about different levels.

Francisco Zafra: There was confusion between different unions about which union accepted first. I wouldn't trust what people say because of different agendas. We were the ones representing our buildings, we took our vote, and we need to accept the majority vote.

Jeffrey Mleczo: Thanks to the people at the board meeting we were able to get us back to the negotiation table.

Michelle Taylor: [Reads something on her phone - OESE.ed.gov. ISBE website.] Where will the money go if it doesn't go to the staff?

Judy Durham: There is no stipulation on ESSER 2 funds.

Fatima Ballesteros: We are looking bad with our union membership. We need to hold Dr. Norrell accountable. She needs to play fair. We need to be active. We need to respond to the garbage she puts out there. What is the timeline?

Jeffrey Mleczo: She wants it settled by the next board meeting.

Denise (?): When Dr. Norrell spoke with the elementary, she said no-one complained who got that money, how rude and disrespectful. That is not okay.

Beth Connor: The taxes killed our money.

Gerry Mestek: If Dr. Norrell is really interested in what's going on, where is she? When it comes to programs, scores for our kids, how Covid has impacted our district, she ought to be in these buildings walking around. At this point, everyone is tired of false promises. This was a devised wedge to break the unity of the group. It is about getting us tearing each other down. We need to pull it together.

Jessica Joyce: Dr. Norrell doesn't care. Multiple people have spoken out and have been put in administrative leave. She doesn't care. Not parents. I propose, we can't strike, but we need to show some sign of unity. We need some kind of show of solidarity, to show we are still together.

Fatima Ballesteros: We can protest but in a respectful way. We need to go to board meetings.

Jessica and Fatima: [Both discuss strategies, pros and cons.]

Jeffrey Mleczo: We need to allow members to speak.

John Damore: I don't want to upset anyone. These feelings are valid. I don't hate the district right now, I don't hate Dr. Norrell, I think the district is in a better place than six years ago. I've heard complaints about 600 things, but I just don't hate everything. The deck is really stacked against East Aurora, but I don't think that Dr. Norrell is doing a terrible job. People are saying we need to show unity, but showing unity against Dr. Norrell is not my feelings. There is a lot that is messed up, a lot that is out of our control. I can have a conversation with her. I just needed to say that I don't think the sky is falling. And I don't hate Dr. Norrell. I understand that she has been giving a lot of attention to the high school, that my position is privileged because I've received the biggest bonus. The learning loss is greater than money can fix.

Michelle Taylor: [Argues that Dr. Norrell has responsibility for many problems in the district.]

Airen Freese: We have lost faith in our Executive Board.

Judy Durham: I don't want to hear this negativity.

Matt Harding: I have some PPAs that couldn't be here but they want to thank the Executive Board. Yes, it wasn't timely. Yes, it wasn't transparent. Now we are all divided but we have to move forward for Year 2 and Year 3.

Carrie Snyder: That leads us to the next agenda items.

- Election

We need a couple of candidates for the Nomination Committee

Jeffrey Mleczo: The Nomination-Election Committee shall consist of at least three (3) members who shall be appointed by the President no later than March 1st. The Committee shall also accept nominations from members wishing to be placed on the ballot. The Committee shall present the date and manner of secretary balloting, and certify the results of the election.

Current members: Jan Kolodziejek - Waldo + Cynthia Citro - Cowherd

Michelle Taylor: Would it be possible to consider a Elementary VP, Middle VP, and a High School VP. We each have different issues at different levels.

Jeffrey Mleczo: It would involve a change to our constitution. Maybe at our next meeting we can debate and discuss it. There are repercussions. Would they get a stipend? Our contract stipulates how many people can attend Union-Superintendent meetings. Would we do the same for support staff and office staff? But we can have this discussion. Would we be able to get enough people to step up for these positions?

- Calendar Committee update

The 2022-2023 calendar was approved at the board meeting on 02/07/22. Should get posted on the district website soon. The committee has wanted a multi-year calendar for years but have not been able to achieve this due to construction projects. There is hope we maybe will achieve this goal next year although year two would be tentative.

- Union-Principal Meetings + Minutes

Alan Scott is working on setting a schedule that will satisfy our constitution.

The Executive Council will begin sharing Slides with the Building Representatives that are to be shared with the members at your faculty meeting. Slides for [03/10/22](#)

Carrie Snyder: Some people do not attend faculty meetings. Office and support. We need to make sure they get this information.

- MOU of COVID Mask Requirements

Jeffrey Mleczo: One of the options is to create an MOU for mitigation steps, which would make mitigation stronger in the event they are overturned. But there are lots of things to consider, pros and cons. We should see how the next few weeks play out and discuss a bit down the line.

VP I Report: (5 minutes)

- Retirement Committee

Jennifer Gentile: Does anyone want to volunteer for our retirees this year? We have a few. Hopefully we can do live this year? I've been sad about the past few years. This is important.

Francisco Zafra: A concern about retirement: some have not heard back...

Jennifer Gentile: The district has been very slow in responding back, in saying "got it." They claim to be understaffed.

Jeffrey Mleczko: About 20 - 30 people have applied to 6% but because of this they'd make less than if they had their regular step. We had a brief conversation. I'm not sure the district will hold them to it. I told Dr. Norrell, we aren't going to hold them to it. She said, let's have a meeting. I think basically all office and support, and you are going this year, you'd be getting more than 6%? This is only on the base salary.

Gerry Mestek: The clause is very confusing how it plays out. When do they get that 6%?

Jeffrey Mleczko: They are going to retro it but when you get it it will be retro-ed for the whole year. You have 6 more months to think about what you want to do.

- License Renewal

Jennifer Gentile: Talk to your members, they can put it in, the button opens in April, they can submit, it is 120 hours for five years. They have until June 30th to submit.

VP II Report: (5 minutes)

None

VP III Report: (5 minutes)

None

General Membership meeting: (45 minutes)

- Substitution

Francisco Zafra: A lot of teachers want their planning period and not sub. Is there any way to push back? It is really affecting their emotional state. They are adamant they won't distribute the classes, split them. They keep telling us that we have to do small group instruction (3 kids at a time). Are we going to do mitigation or small group instruction? The physical space just does not exist?

Jennifer Gentile: During negotiations this was a big thing. Everyone should still get the \$42 per hour. Per teacher that has a kid in the classroom.

Michelle Taylor: Sub pay and loss of prep pay is different.

Jeffrey Mleczko: If you are getting at least seven uninterrupted preps, you are okay.

- School Board

Melinda Thomas: There is a lot of anger and frustration and we need to harness this and get staff to the board meetings. They are every other Monday. There are lots of issues the school board does not know about. We can say, there was inequity but we were afraid to say no, but when people showed up, things started to change. But we need to be showing up to the board, wearing blue, and speaking. We should speak about grade changes. The board thinks everything is okay because 90% of the time, no-one is there. We need to hammer that.

Gerry Mestek: Our contract and school code says that it is our job to record what the student earns. They can't change the grade.

Melinda Thomas: People keep telling me they are afraid of retaliation. But we understand but if 20 or 30 or 50 people come, and many speak, they can't retaliate against all. Let's pick a topic for each meeting, then people from different schools show up to speak up on that issues. I'm so sick of people saying, *What is the union going to do about this?* You are the union. I can't be the only one. They are starting to notice it's me (lol).

Motion to adjourn. Fransico Zafra, Judy Durham - Approved. Pass: all. Nays: none. Abstains: none.