

# WTEA

Washington Township Education Association

## Emergency Rep Council Minutes September 29, 2021

### **I.** **CALL TO ORDER: 5:40 pm**

### **II.** **WTEA Meeting with WTPS Superintendent Mr. Bollendorf Asst. Superintendent Annette Miller, and Gretchen Gerber:**

Mr. Bollendorf explains reason for sidebar MOA: the need for substitutes is significant. Attempting to overcome a staffing shortage, that is throughout the country. Administration wanted to come up with an idea to tap into the resources at their disposal to see if any certificated staff who are interested to volunteer their lunch or prep time to cover classes at the instructional rate of \$44 an hour. Appealing to all staff who are willing to volunteer their time afterschool and evening for contact tracing at the Category I rate of \$32 an hour.

#### **Question: Has the BOE considered raising the substitute rate to make the vacancies more attractive?**

Looking for ways to fill spots, in communication with retired staff, however they do not want to be long term subs. Want to “fast track them” in SIS to be paid additional extra moneys. Principals have been directed to reach out to their retirees to see if they are interested in filling the substitute positions.

#### **Elementary question: How does this MOA look at the elementary level since teachers do not have periods?**

The goal of the MOA is to NOT pull BSI or ICR teachers to cover other classes – this is due to dyer need/circumstances. It would be a rotation of multiple teachers covering during their prep period for the absent teacher. If any of volunteer’s coverage would take place during prep time, the volunteer would be paid for the coverage time (minute by minute).

#### **Retired staff members coming back would have the wait period of 20 days waived?**

What I want to do is create a pool so that we have the availability and the personnel. This has not been approved or the principals been notified

#### **You mentioned the sidebar agreement, where was this sent? What are the specifics? What specifics are in the MOA?**

This was sent to Gerry Taraschi.

The principals would have a list of volunteers to pull from. This is to ideally keep co-teachers together and not have to pull them from the classes they are assigned to. When co-teachers are pulled/split it is because there are dyer circumstances and not enough staff volunteers or substitutes.

Do you want assurances that principals will not split co-teachers and BSI teaching pairs? Not sure if this can be added to the MOA, but this process is to try and ensure to cover classes that need to be covered, but cannot state that ICS teachers or BSI could potentially be utilized in extreme circumstances. The first option is to pay people additional to cover and attempt to avoid utilizing ICS and BSI co-teachers. Will be willing to draft a letter, and share with WTEA, to the building principals so that they are aware that admin should not pull teachers from assigned classes unless in extreme circumstances.

[Shared screen with unsigned MOA]

**Could we amend this to add “ICS and BSI teachers will only be pulled if all volunteers have been utilized, and a class needs coverage”?**

Add “where possible, if all volunteers that are available for a specific time coverage are utilized, then an ICS or BSI teacher could be pulled for coverage.”

**Could the district run into legal ramifications if students are not being provided their services?**

A lot of it has to do with how the IEP is written. Similarly, to if the teacher is absent and a substitute teacher is present. The priority is that students are supervised and not left unattended. In the absence of this agreement, I

**Is payroll attempting to revamp the voucher system, so that this additional moneys be paid in a timely fashion?**

Yes, it is being revamped. Anette is still

**If I did not initially volunteer, but am pulled/volunteered to help can I still benefit from this MOA?**

Yes, because you will always be asked. It behooves everyone to be on the list upfront and you as teachers can always say no. If payroll gets a voucher, it will be paid out.

**The verbiage from the principals is varying from building to building, can you provide unified language for all the principals to send?**

Yes, but it will be specific to the three levels due to the different schedules/coverages needed.

**There is a great disparity between the payment for this coverage and the value of teaching a 6<sup>th</sup> period class.**

6<sup>th</sup> period stipend is lieu of duty not in lieu of prep or lunch. The 6<sup>th</sup> period teaching stipend is for in lieu of a 6<sup>th</sup> time during the day of teacher interaction

**I’m afraid this will be precedent setting, but you have already brought up that people are willing to volunteer their time. I’m concerned that this can casually be brought up during negotiations because of the illusion that “teachers do not need their prep.”**

That will not happen. The BOE, many of which are educators, understand the value and importance of prep time. Don’t even think about that.

**Last year we received verbal assurances that we would not be live teaching in person and remote instruction. This is not the case at all.**

This is a constant change from Executive Orders. Administration had to quickly scramble to provide instruction for students who are quarantined or home due to testing COVID positive. Am not looking for the same level of instruction to the students and this should have been explained during back-to-school night instructions by staff and or principals.

**Is it in writing that volunteers can refuse the request?**

The answer is yes.

**Can staff ask to have their names removed from the volunteer list?**

Yes, completely voluntary.

**You mentioned you were given the OK to raise the pay for...**

The plan has not been presented to the BOE yet, however, I do not see it being an issue for approval from the BOE. The rate would be the long-term sub rate, but the concern was the ability to reach out to retirees. Many retirees want to still have flexibility with their time and the ability to choose the buildings they work in – preferably

their former buildings. Would still have to go through ESS then processed as quickly as possible so their buildings can utilize them. I believe the advanced dollar amount is possibly \$120 a day as opposed to a certified sub about \$90-\$100 a day.

At Middle School level, because we are on team/community, we are obligated to attend community meetings, meetings with parents, etc., which makes it almost impossible for preps to be provided.

Seems to be troublesome at the middle level and will be in touch with Dr. Gregor and need to come up with a plan to be able to compensate.

Going to talk to BOE solicitor to see if an amendment can be added to side bar so that principals know what to do so that grievances/violations to this MOA are avoidable.

Would like to provide a letter to principals specifically as to what they need to do if this MOA is agreed to. This way we can continue to use this system to provide the coverage and compensate those that volunteer.

Will wait to hear from WTEA as to how to proceed. If you wait to hear from me after the solicitor.

Joe leaves at 6:35 pm

Are we going to vote tonight? What are we going to decide?

Do we need a simple majority or 2/3 majority?

Simple majority according to Robert's Rules.

Can we look at the minutes from last week's meeting to make sure all questions and concerns were addressed?

Yes, they will be posted on [www.wteagc.org](http://www.wteagc.org) by this evening (September 29<sup>th</sup>).

This is a personal choice. Can provide opportunity to make additional moneys for K-12 staff members including secretaries.

**Motion to: allow April and Gerry to proceed with MOA for coverage and contact tracing.**

MOTION MADE BY	2ND	MOTION
Shaun Giberson	Sara Simpson	

**Discussion:** in the language of it, does it say somewhere that Mr. Bollendorf provide written documentation to the principals? No, it does not, but Gerry and April can ask for the letter before they sign. Members want the letter in hand before agreeing to MOA.

Nothing has changed since Rep Council meeting held on 9/23/2021, many do not feel comfortable agreeing to this MOA. Resented implication that Rep Council is holding up the MOA.

This is a chance for colleagues to make additional money, if you do not want to do it, then do not volunteer, but do not deny others from opportunity to make money.

We can wait to see what is returned and then vote to decide since we are waiting to hear back from him.

Will be doing a roll call vote or survey monkey?

Will Shaun be willing to rescind his motion?

Yes, we were waiting to allow all people discuss their concerns.

Is this MOA still tied to the grievance? It was not mentioned tonight, and Joe did not mention anything tonight so is it still tied?

Point of order, this is does not have anything to do with the motion on the floor. Please keep discussion to motion on the floor.

Point of order, it is potential tied to the MOA thus connected to the motion on the floor.

Point of clarification, will staff members continue to be pulled and not paid? Yes.

Concern do not want it passed hastily, but want the proper language for the upper and lower levels to provide proper payment and coverage and that people can get paid for their coverage.

Joe did mention that people can still be pulled if there are not enough volunteers to cover. Understood.

This is in fact voluntary and there is nothing permanent about this, it is only until June of 2022. If at the negotiating table, this is something that has to be dealt with by the negotiating team and they will do their due diligence to bring this to the membership.

**Motion to amend motion to include the directive to the principals to not pull ICS and BSI teachers when possible.**

MOTION MADE BY	2ND	MOTION
Maryann Kwietkowski	Kristen Howell	Yes – 44 No – 2 Abstain – 3

This will potentially create a grievance nightmare. ICS and BSI teachers are more likely to be pulled first, it's not right, but will happen.

The letter can help the elementary level piecemeal the volunteer list to create a schedule so that if/when ICS and BSI teachers are pulled, they can be compensated when working through their prep and/or lunch for coverage.

This can even be brought up during Superintendent liaison to show which principals are abusing the ICS/BSI coverage and not the list of volunteers.

[vote was taken by roll call in the Zoom chat window by typing full name, building, vote decision – chat will be downloaded for matter of record – 49 participants in Zoom meeting]

**Motion to: allow April and Gerry to proceed with MOA for coverage and contact tracing including the directive to the principals to not pull ICS and BSI teachers when possible.**

MOTION MADE BY	2ND	MOTION
Shaun Giberson	Maryann Kwietkowski	Yes – 43 No – 4 Abstain – 1

**DISCUSSION:**

The directive to principals will be a separate item in writing and can still be grieved if need be – based on the directive by the Superintendent. The likelihood of the language being included in the MOA could be a reach.

Please know that my vote of no is not a reflection of not wanting my colleagues to make money, I just want items in writing so that we are protected with things in writing.

State law and executive orders do supersede contract language. And Executive Orders are always in writing.

[vote was taken by roll call in the Zoom chat window by typing full name, building, vote decision – chat will be downloaded for matter of record – 48 participants in Zoom meeting]

Matter of record – MS teachers can hold on to old devices for remainder of the 2021-22 school year.

Gerry will be contacting Joe this evening to send directive to principals and MOA.

Can we make sure this is tied to the grievance? Yes, will definitely make sure that occurs.

Make sure all members know this is nonresident setting and ends June of 2022 and is totally voluntary. If any violations do take place, need to alert level VP and grievance protocols will be followed.

As chair of negotiations, please know that not one member of the negotiations' team will not entertain the option of giving up prep lunch moving forward – even if payment is provided.

Can always say no whenever asked. Even if not on the volunteer list, can still complete a voucher to be paid for coverage.

**VIII. MOTION TO ADJOURN: 7:31 pm Maryann Kwietkowski 2<sup>nd</sup> by Rob Scardino**

