



RESOURCES FOR BARGAINING

A wide range of resources are provided by the New Jersey School Boards Association to assist board members in their bargaining obligation. Your resources include: online resources such as the Labor Relations Page at www.njsba.org and subscription services as well as publications, statewide training programs and assistance from NJSBA's labor relations staff who are prepared to help you with your particular district concerns.

The Labor Relations Page at www.njsba.org

The Labor Relations page on the NJSBA web site contains a listing of all services available to board members and a variety of continuously updated labor relations information, including:

Negotiations Data: Teacher contract settlement information, including the most recent settlement rates, general board achievements, health insurance cost containments and increases in work time are posted on the web. Users can download specialized statewide teacher contract settlement reports and, using the searchable database, users can create their own customized reports based on selected demographic criteria.

Members also have access to the *Negotiations Data Sourcebook*. It provides extensive information on comparative data, including analyses of statewide bargaining trends, settlement rates, districts' insurance packages, contract provisions, and salaries on teachers' salary guides that can be viewed on the screen or printed for inclusion in a binder. It also contains district-by-district data pages that list individual districts' settlement rates, insurance plans, leave provisions, and achievements in negotiations that can also be printed for inclusion in the binder, if so desired. Both analysis and district data pages are updated several times annually to provide board negotiators with the latest settlement information.

Recent Case Law Developments Summaries of the most recent significant legal developments affecting negotiations, including: new legislation, decisions from the courts, the Public Employment Relations Commission (PERC) and the School Ethics Commission (SEC).

Emerging New Issues A focus on new topics affecting boards' negotiations, labor relations, and personnel

administration, including: continuing education, mentoring and staff recruitment. Each topical folder includes information, advice and links to other sources of information.

To access the above resources, look at the left hand column of the NJSBA's home page at www.njsba.org, scroll down to Department Sites, click on Labor Relations and select the topic of your choice.

On Line Subscription Services

In addition to the above information available to all members, the NJSBA offers a number of resources as subscriptions services.

The Negotiations Advisor, a subscription service providing the most comprehensive source of information available to board negotiators, includes information on all aspects of bargaining, including: the structure of the process; the structure of bargaining units; specific contractual clauses; special issues that can affect each district's negotiations, and salary guides. *The Advisor* also contains NJSBA's clause-by-clause analysis of the NJEA and PSA sample agreement.

Articles in the online *Advisor* are continuously updated to provide subscribers with access to the latest developments in New Jersey's volatile labor relations environment. The "What's New" feature offers subscribers access to a quick overview and summary of significant developments that affect school districts' negotiations and ongoing labor relationships.

Index and Analysis of PERC Decisions, a subscription service which provides quick and easy access to decisions of the Public Employment Relations Commission (PERC). This resource contains: summaries of all PERC's scope of negotiations and unfair practice determinations; listing of appeals history; and topical as well as case name indexes. An easy to use search capacity helps the user to locate relevant cases and rulings.

Information and costs of subscriptions services can be found on the Labor Relations page at the NJSBA web site at www.njsba.org

Publications

Every district has been provided with a complimentary copy of the following NJSBA publications.

Collective Negotiations, Volume 5 in the School Board Library Series, is the most comprehensive guide to school district labor relations. Completely updated and revised in the summer of 2001, this book addresses the entire bargaining process from start to finish with special chapters on preparation, tactics, mediation, factfinding, and strikes. It provides a fine introduction to the process for the new board negotiator and an excellent review for the experienced team member.

The Public Employment Relations Law, Volume 6 in the School Board Library Series, describes in layman's terms all of the powers of PERC and all the rights and obligations the bargaining law grants to school boards, unions, and school employees. Unfair practices, impasse procedures, injunctions and the scope of negotiations are explained in detail.

Administering the Negotiated Agreement, Volume 7 in the same series, is a comprehensive guide to grievance handling and contract administration. It is also very useful in negotiations because of its careful discussion of such topics as grievance procedures (with sample language), rules for contract language interpretation, and the legal framework for grievances and arbitration.

Costing Out the Labor Agreement is a step-by-step guide to calculating the true cost of salary and benefit proposals during negotiations. This publication describes the "how to" of scattergrams, salary guides, percentage v. flat dollar increases, and costing multi-year settlements.

In addition to the above publications, board members' printed resources include:

"Labor Lookout," a column in *School Leader*, provides timely information and practical advice on a wide range of issues involving collective bargaining. Topics have included salary guide development, good faith bargaining, the full board's responsibility in negotiations as well as timely information on new statutes which affect negotiations.

Work Stoppage Preparation: Confidential Materials Available upon request, this binder assists districts to manage contingencies such as job actions and strikes. The binder contains detailed information for boards' preparation of their own local strike plan and includes sections on how to handle situations arising before, during and after a strike and examples of ways of communicating with the community, employees and the media.

Labor Relations Training Programs

The Association conducts a wide variety of training programs throughout the year which are specifically designed to develop the knowledge and skills required to manage boards' labor relationships. While additional topical programs may be added, the annual labor relations offerings are listed below.

Most notably, the Association conducts a wide variety of training programs throughout the year which are specifically tailored to different levels of experience and expertise. For example:

Preparing for Bargaining, held in the fall of each year, is designed to cover the basics of negotiations including an overview of the PERC Law, the structure and realities of negotiations, the role of the board's bargaining team and current issues in negotiations. This program provides an excellent introduction, or refresher, to the bargaining process.

Intermediate Bargaining, another annual fall seminar, builds on the basics presented at Preparing for Bargaining. Designed to develop bargaining skills, it introduces bargaining techniques such as the use of comparative data, developing proposals and counterproposals, at-the-table communication, and negotiations during mediation and factfinding. Hundreds of board members have reported significant benefits to their ability to negotiate as a result of attending both Preparing and Intermediate Bargaining.

Advanced Bargaining, held on a winter weekend, is a highly successful program designed for the experienced board member negotiator and administrator and for those who have attended the two introductory sessions. Bargaining skills, tactics, and strategies are further developed through discussions of bargaining psychology, timing of proposals, trade-offs, and packaging. A full-day bargaining simulation allows participants to apply bargaining tactics under the supervision of a professional negotiator. Many board members return to this highly acclaimed program to practice their skills in this unique, risk-free environment.

Analyzing and Constructing Salary Guides, a two-day program entirely devoted to the analysis, construction, and negotiations of salary guides. Lectures, application exercises, negotiation scenarios, and small group discussions are designed to help board members, business officials, and other administrators to understand and apply salary guide concepts.

Effective Grievance Handling, addresses the importance of knowledgeable contract administration. Designed for board members and district administrators, the program stresses contract language interpretation, grievance processing, and arbitration. The individual roles of the supervisor, principal, chief school administrator, and board member are examined in light of their contractual obligations to administer the negotiated agreement.

Annual NJSBA Workshop Programs include: the Labor Relations Mini-Workshop, which is devoted to recent trends and current issues affecting local negotiations; and hands-on labor relations experiences at Action Labs such as "Costing Out Your Labor Agreement" and "Understanding Salary Guides."

More information on these programs, and specific dates, can be obtained by consulting the annual NJSBA Board Member Academy Course catalogue and Workshop Program.

Direct Labor Relations Assistance

The Labor Relations Department staff is available to help you with your particular local negotiations concerns. In addition to phone advice, staff is ready to provide you

with a host of other information, including analyses of local contracts, assistance in selecting arbitrators and preparing for the arbitration process, and help in all other aspects of your ongoing labor relationship. Board members and their representatives can also request specific packets of information, such as materials to assist a district to prepare for factfinding or to develop its own local strike plan to manage (and avoid) the possibility of a work stoppage. Direct assistance is no further than 609-278-5219.

Good luck in negotiations.