



Tools for Effective Collaborative Conferencing

educating our children, engaging our parents, empowering our schools

Initiating the PECCA Process



Change in the Status of Building Administrators

Management Team members are professional employees certified by the local board of education to represent the board in the collaborative conferencing process.

Management personnel are employees who devote a majority of their time to the system-wide area or areas of professional personnel management, fiscal affairs or general management, and shall specifically include principals, assistant principals, supervisors and others whose principal responsibilities are administration rather than teaching.



Between **October 1 and November 1 of any year**, 15 percent or more of the professional employees can submit a written request to conduct collaborative conferencing with a board. The board shall appoint an equal number of its professional employees and board members to serve on a ***special question committee*** for the purpose of conducting a confidential poll of all eligible professional employees.

2400 employees 15% = 160 signatures

300 employees 15% = 45 signatures

Remember that the management team is now excluded from the “bargaining unit.”



The secret ballot shall require the employee to respond to two questions.

First, the employee responds "YES" or "NO" to the question:

Shall the professional employees of this LEA undertake collaborative conferencing with the board of education?

Second, the employee indicates which organization he/she prefers to represent him/her in collaborative conferencing by checking the box related to one of the professional employees' organizations having a presence in the LEA. The second question shall also include a box for the response of "unaffiliated."



If a majority of those eligible to vote respond "YES" to the first question, the board shall appoint at least seven, but no more than 11 people, to serve on the board team.

Professional educators are entitled to the same number of representatives as the number of management personnel on the board team.

Employee representatives are selected by each organization's proportional share of votes on the second question. Only those professional employees' organizations receiving 15 percent or more of the votes to the second question are entitled to representation.



The category of "unaffiliated" as a response to the second question, but not the category of "none of the above," shall be considered a professional employees' organization.

If 15 percent or more indicate a preference for an unaffiliated representative, then the ***special question committee*** shall appoint a person(s) to serve as an unaffiliated representative(s) according to the proportional share.



Each professional employees' organization receiving 15 percent or more votes shall appoint the representatives.

The board shall select and appoint its representatives.

Representatives shall be appointed no later than December 1.

Pay to Play

Those initiating the poll shall be assessed the reasonable costs necessitated in conducting the poll by the chair of the *special question committee*.



PECCA eliminates majority recognition except for blocks of 15% representation.

Management now includes our members, including those who do not directly teach a majority of the day.

October 1-November 1: submit 15% of unit signatures requesting special question polling.

A Special Question Committee is appointed and election held every three years at minimum.

Appointments to the conferencing team are made from each group obtaining a 15% block.

Teams are jointly trained prior to conferencing.

Board teams are not bound to reach agreement and no remedy is provided.



Who is at the Table?

A **facilitator** serves in a neutral role to honor the process.

Seven to 11 members from the board team and the teachers' team

The board team may be comprised of board members, directors of schools, central office supervisors or principals.

The teachers' team may be comprised of teachers from groups that have a presence in the system. These might include:

1. The Association (TEA Affiliates)
2. PET (Professional Educators of Tennessee)
3. Unaffiliated Teachers

- All of these groups will have to reach consensus if MOU's are to be achieved.



Consensus is a decision in which all parties can agree on the result because...

- I believe that you understand my point of view.
- I believe that I understand your point of view.
- Whether or not I prefer this decision, I support it because...
 - It was reached openly and fairly.
 - It is the best solution for us at this time.

Working as a Team

- **Teamwork is essential for success.**
- **We must be organized at the table.**

Team Roles

1. Team Leader

Organizes team and assigns roles
Sets dates and times for strategy sessions
Primary spokesperson for team on procedural matters
Keeps team focused and on task

2. Recorder

Takes notes at each session
Tapes sessions if allowable
Provides a record of all proceedings



Working as a Team

3. Research Coordinator

- Provides data on salary and benefits
- Coordinates with UniServ and TEA Research
- Leads in survey development

4. Communications Coordinator

- Develops communications to members
- Maintains message discipline
- Coordinates media relations

5. Process Observers

- Observe all participants on both teams
- Observe the facilitators
- Ensure that the group is honoring the process and that everyone is functioning in their role



Interest-Based Decision Making

- **Identify the Issues:** Tell the story in detail. Explain the problem. Clarify, analyze, tell the *WHAT*
- **Identify Interests:** *WHY* are you motivated to solve this problem?
- **Generate Options:** Brainstorm possible solutions to the problem – answers *HOW?*
- **Establish Criteria:** Develop objective measures of the option's value – answers *HOW WELL?*
- **Judge the Options:** Analyze options against interests and criteria.
- **Develop and Capture the livable solution in writing:** Consensus agreement to support selected options – answers *WILL WE?*
- **Apply the livable solution:** Action plan (**who/what/where/when**) to solve the problem

What Can We Conference About?

1. Salaries and Wages
2. Grievance Procedure
3. Insurance
4. Fringe Benefits (not including TCRS or local early retirement incentives)
5. Working Conditions (not including those prescribed by federal or state law, private act, municipal charter or state regulations)
6. Leave
7. Payroll Deductions (except for political activities)

What is Prohibited?

No other terms or conditions of employment shall be the subject of collaborative conferencing and no collaborative conferencing shall be conducted on the following subjects:

1. Differentiated pay plans, incentive compensation programs, stipends, benefits based on performance, or that aid hiring and retaining highly qualified teachers
2. Expenditure of grants or awards



What is Prohibited?

3. Evaluation of professional employees

4. Staffing decisions relating to innovative educational programs; innovative high school programs; virtual education programs

5. Assignment of employees, filling of vacancies, assignments to specific schools, positions, professional duties, transfers within the system, layoffs, reductions in force, and recall. No agreement shall include provisions that require personnel decisions to be determined on the basis of tenure, seniority or length of service.

What is Prohibited?

6. Payroll deductions for political activities.

"Political activity" includes, but is not limited to:

- (A) Lobbying;
- (B) Communications which mention the name of a political candidate;
- (C) Public opinion polling;
- (D) Any type of political advertising in any medium;
- (E) Telephone communication for any political purpose;
- (F) Distributing political literature of any type; or
- (G) Any type of in-kind help for a political candidate.



How Do We Begin?

- Determine the roles of team members.
- Survey
- Create a calendar to meet again as a team.
- Decide where you want to go as a team.
- Once issues are decided, practice brainstorming solutions.
- Get the research necessary to present the issues.
- Own the process.
- Remember who you are.

Get and Maintain the Support of Teachers By Involving Everyone

Surveys

Focus Groups

The all important Representative
Assembly

Email

Text

Association Newsletter



Conducting a Focus Group

A focus group is a small-group discussion guided by a trained leader. It is used to learn more about opinions on a designated topic, and then to guide future action.

Focus groups help people learn more about group or community opinions and needs. They are similar to needs assessment surveys.

Go in prepared. Write out in advance a list questions you want to ask. If needed, ask follow-up questions.

A focus group is designed to educate those who have asked for the focus group, not to educate the participants.



What is a message?

It's a set of simple, readily understood arguments that:

- ▶ Presents how we want to talk about an issue.
- ▶ Reflects our values and our priorities.
- ▶ Makes a point that is true and believable.
- ▶ Is relevant to the concerns of the target audience.



A message has three basic characteristics

Simplicity
Relevance
Repetition



The question isn't so much about
what you want to tell them.

Rather,
what do you want them to **believe**,
and then what do you want them to **do**?



- ▶ **STAY** on message.
- ▶ **Keep it simple and repeat it often.**
- ▶ **If you're not sick of it, you're not saying it enough.**



- ▶ Pick 3 or 4 points from your message that you want to stress.
- ▶ For each, write a brief support statement with facts/stories.
- ▶ OK to have brief notes . . . but nothing you can read!
- ▶ Practice moving from point to point, connecting them.
- ▶ Speak conversationally in your own words. Smile!
“Eyes!”
- ▶ Use your credibility as an educator. Tell YOUR stories.
- ▶ Be careful about jargon: NCLB, RTTT, AYP, etc.
- ▶ Preparation and practice = confidence



- ▶ Use bridging and pivoting to get back to YOUR points.

The best part about this issue is...

I don't want to speculate about that. What I DO know is . . .

The three key points are . . .

What I really want your viewers to remember is...

The bottom line is...

We really need to stay focused on the main point, which is...

Never wrestle with a pig.

You will both get dirty.

Only the pig will enjoy it!

