

Dear Members,

This week our K-1 Return to School bargaining teams have been meeting with the district. Each team – Instructional Model, Health and Safety, and Staffing - has identified a set of problems for which they are negotiating solutions, and this week each team shared initial proposals for some of their topics.

We appreciate every member who has reached out to share insights, concerns, and questions related to the return to school. We share this information with our bargaining teams, and it continues to reflect that our members' interests center on a safe and healthy workplace and a manageable workload.

This week we wanted to share information about negotiations and how our bargaining process works.

What does negotiating really mean for members?

LWEA is the exclusive bargaining representative for certificated educators in LWSD. Our negotiations take three related forms: CBAs, LOUs, and DLM.

CBA

Collective Bargaining Agreement (a.k.a., our contract): LWEA negotiates a contract on behalf of members with respect to wages, benefits, and working conditions. CBAs are in effect only for the specified duration and are renegotiated every few years.

LOU

Letter of Understanding: At times, our contract needs to be modified. LOUs modify our contract language in response to changes in law or situations in our district.

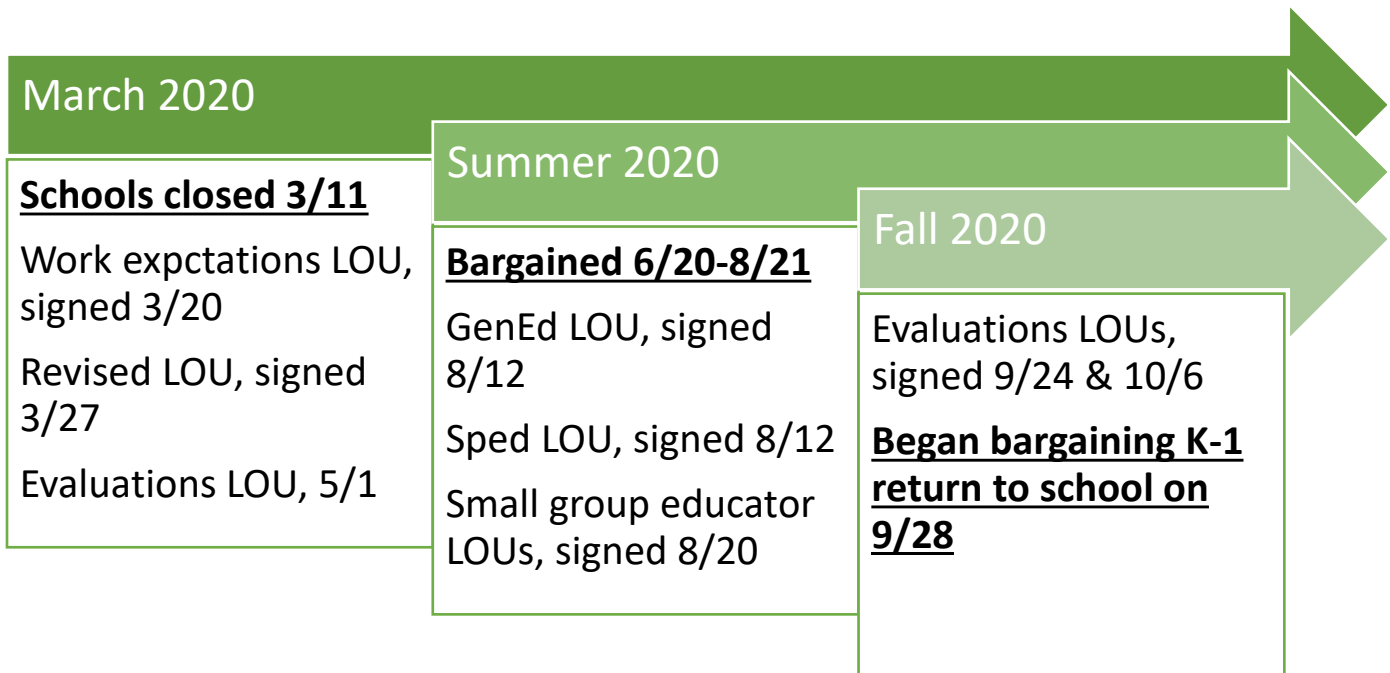
DLM

District Labor Management: When there's a dispute about if and how contract language is being applied, LWEA and LWSD meet to discuss possible solutions.

How does LWEA negotiate for members?

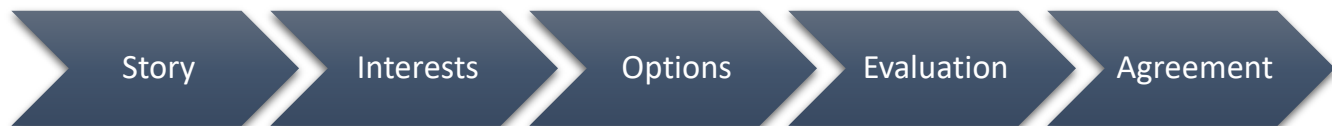
LWSD and LWEA use a process called Interest-Based Bargaining (IBB). This process, when conducted with fidelity, yields solutions that meet LWEA member interests. LWEA and LWSD agree that the IBB process is especially helpful in challenging times.

Because of COVID, we have bargained more over the last eight months than we normally would for the duration of a CBA. Each LOU was negotiated under different time constraints and with different understandings and impacts of COVID. These factors impacted our ability to fully engage with the IBB process as we bargained each LOU.



What is the IBB process?

In our regular IBB process, LWEA and LWSD work together to implement agreements that meet the interests and needs of both parties. We start with understanding the problem we are trying to solve by telling the story (history of the situation and relevant facts). Then we identify our interests (underlying motivations) and explore options (various ways to address the situation). Together we evaluate the options and draft proposed solutions that we revise and build up so that they meet our interests and address the problem we are trying to solve. Upon agreement, we both commit to implement the solution.



Can you share detailed updates about negotiations with members?

When we bargain, we seek out the story and interests from our members through surveys and conversations. When we share bargaining updates with our members, we are able to share our interests and where we are in the process, but we are unable to share the content of bargaining (proposed options or draft solutions).

In Solidarity,

Howard Mawhinney and Katie Badger