

## Best Practices, School Boards, and Bargaining

### Prior to the Bargain

- Familiarize yourself with district priorities, resources, and the bargaining process.
  - What are the district's priorities, goals, and strategic plan?
  - Understand fiscal resources of the district and where they are allocated.
  - Ensure bargaining ground rules and calendar are established prior to the bargain.
  - Know what is legal and what is not during the bargaining process.
  - Be aware of past topics that were contentious or difficult to resolve.
  - Recognize the current tone or climate of the district...are there issues?
  - Develop a strong team that understands the goals and priorities you have for stakeholders.
  - Develop a strong communication plan.

### During the Bargain

- Remember the general role of the board during negotiations.
  - Stay informed! Make sure the board, superintendent, and lead negotiator are all on the same page. Develop a communication plan and/or hold meetings to achieve this.
  - Stay above the fray! Often you will be targeted individually to influence decisions.
  - Stay united and focused on achieving a fair, sustainable agreement for students, staff, and stakeholders. Work out differences that may arise behind closed doors.
  - Make sure you provide solid, factual communication to the public to help them understand the process and bargaining points.
  - If the bargain becomes difficult, remember that people may treat you different than you are used to.
  - Remember the bargain will eventually end! Make sure actions during the bargain will not impact the district moving forward.

### The Bargain has Taken a Turn for the Worse

- A strike may be imminent.
  - Stay focused, united, positive, and informed.
  - Continue to utilize your communication plan to correct misinformation being shared.
  - Make sure all administration is well-informed and know their roles.
  - Seek advice from WSSDA, WASA, AWSP, and legal counsel as to what steps need to be taken should a strike occur.

### Strike is Called

- Remember to stay the course, this will pass.
  - Seek advice from WSSDA, WASA, AWSP, and legal counsel.
  - Be prepared for difficult situations and behaviors with teachers, and public.
  - Review meeting protocol for public comments, recess, adjournment etc.
  - Remember you are part of the healing process afterwards, do not diminish your power.