

# **Lakeland Joint School District #272**

Rusty Taylor, Superintendent of Schools

15506 N Washington St., Rathdrum, Idaho 83858

208/687-0431

[rusty.taylor@lakeland272.org](mailto:rusty.taylor@lakeland272.org) ~ [web.sd272.org](http://web.sd272.org)



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## **Board Agenda Item**

### **Request**

**AGENDA ITEM:** [Lakeland Joint School District Interest-Based Negotiation Guidelines](#)

**PURPOSE:** With the approval of the 2025–2026 school year, the Board has requested that I begin negotiations with the Local Education Association (LEA) as soon as possible. In response, I have developed an Interest-Based Bargaining (IBB) Guideline to help define how the District and the LEA will proceed with future Negotiated Agreements.

My goal with these guidelines is to simplify and clarify the process while ensuring that both parties are represented fairly and equally.

**MEETING DATE:** September 17, 2025

**PREPARED BY:** Rusty Taylor

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**INFORMATIONAL SUMMARY:** The guidelines will clearly outline how we will approach both the current and future Negotiated Agreements.

**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATION:** The final implications could be significant for both parties if we do not find ways to work through our differences. These guidelines are intended to assist both parties in finding common ground and reaching fair, collaborative agreements in negotiations.

**SUPERINTENDENT RECOMMENDATION:** I recommend approval of the Interest-Based Negotiation Guidelines as presented.

# Lakeland Joint School District

## Interest-Based(IBB) Negotiation

### Guideline

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#### Introduction

The purpose of this handbook is to provide staff and association members with a clear guide to Interest-Based Bargaining (IBB). IBB is a collaborative and structured approach to negotiations that emphasizes mutual respect, problem-solving, and shared responsibility. This process ensures that decisions are based on the best interests of students, staff, and the district as a whole.

The District Office will establish a **Problem-Solution Session Team (PSST)** as a subcommittee of the Interest-Based Bargaining (IBB) team. The PSST will meet once a month throughout the school year to address concerns raised by district administrators and/or the Local Education Association regarding the current Negotiated Agreement (NA).

The purpose of the PSST is to begin early discussions on issues and collaboratively explore possible solutions, with the goal of addressing concerns proactively before the full IBB team convenes to negotiate next year's agreement.

#### The PSST Framework

The PSST provides a foundation for the Interest-Based Bargaining (IBB) process by enabling teams to share data, review budgets with transparency, and research potential solutions in advance of formal negotiations. By addressing concerns early, the PSST helps ensure that when the IBB team convenes, discussions can focus on the most critical remaining items—such as salary and benefits.

PSST Goals:

- Collect and share data openly.
- Review the budget with transparency.
- Research viable options for complex issues.
- Problem-solve collaboratively current negotiated agreement concerns.
- Problem-solve collaboratively on the future NG agreements items.

- Expedite the negotiation process through preparation.

### **PSST Team Members and Scheduled Meetings:**

- **Membership:** The PSST will consist of four members from the District Office (appointed by the Superintendent) and four members from the Local Education Association (selected by the LEA President).
- **Meeting Schedule:** One regular meeting will be scheduled each month during the school year.
- **Agenda Setting:** The LEA will submit items for discussion to the superintendent—both related to the current Negotiated Agreement (NA) and potential items for next year’s draft NA—at least one week prior to each meeting.
- **Meeting Schedule:** One regular meeting will be scheduled each month during the school year.

### **Principles of Interest-Based Bargaining (IBB)**

IBB is guided by the following principles:

- Focus on issues, not personalities.
- Advocate for interests, not positions.
- Create options to satisfy mutual and separate interests.
- Evaluate options based on values, not power.
- Share information openly to support effective problem-solving.
- Use principled communication.

### **IBB Team Members and Scheduled Meetings:**

#### **• IBB Team Membership**

- **Board/District Team:**  
The Board’s IBB team will consist of:
  - Two selected Board members
  - Superintendent
  - Assistant Superintendent

- Chief Finance Officer
- Human Resources Director
- Director of Federal Projects
- *Attendance and Substitutions:*
  - If a Board member cannot attend, they may select a replacement.
  - If a Board member cannot be replaced, the meeting will be rescheduled.
  - If a District Office member cannot attend, the Superintendent may appoint an alternate.
  - If the Superintendent cannot attend, the Assistant Superintendent will serve as their replacement.
- **Local Education Association (LEA) Team:**

The LEA will select five members to serve on the IBB team.

  - If a member cannot attend, the LEA President will appoint a replacement.

## **The IBB Process: Step-by-Step**

### **Step 1: Tell the Story**

Define the problem, describe the situation, and explain the issue in detail.

### **Step 2: Identify the Interests**

Clarify the needs, concerns, fears, and desires driving the issue.

### **Step 3: Brainstorm Options**

Develop potential solutions that may address one or more interests.

### **Step 4: Evaluate Options**

Review and refine options based on values and shared interests.

### **Step 5: Build Consensus**

Seek agreement through consensus or assign smaller groups to study specific questions.

### **Step 6: Implementation**

Create a clear plan for who will do what, how, and when; establish communication to all stakeholders.

## Ground Rules for Negotiations

To ensure productive discussions, the following ground rules apply:

- We ACT with TRUST
- Keep communication professional and solution-oriented.
- Focus on student-centered outcomes.
- Final decisions will be made by consensus. This means that if all members agree, the decision is adopted; however, if one or more members disagree, then the team has not reached consensus and the decision will not move forward.

## Common Topics in IBB

Examples of issues that may be addressed using IBB include:

- Student behavior and teacher safety
- Teacher workload and communication practices
- Hard-to-fill stipends and leadership opportunities
- Parental leave policies
- Class size recommendations
- Compensation for work outside the contract day

## Decision-Making Funnel

In IBB, decisions are made by starting with broad ideas and narrowing them down through collaboration. Options are refined, checked for clarity, and eliminated if they lack substantial support. The goal is to arrive at solutions that meet the interests of all parties while upholding district values.

## IBB Team Agreement– Draft Negotiated Agreement:

When the IBB team reaches consensus on a draft Negotiated Agreement, the following steps will occur:

1. **LEA Ratification:** The draft agreement will be presented by the Local Education Association (LEA) to its members for ratification.

2. **Board Consideration:** If the agreement is ratified by the LEA, it will then be submitted to the Board of Trustees for consideration and approval.
3. **Final Ratification:** Once approved by the Board, the Negotiated Agreement is officially ratified.

## Next Steps When Consensus Cannot Be Reached

If the IBB team cannot reach consensus on an item:

1. **Clarify Interests:** The team will revisit and restate the underlying interests to ensure understanding and alignment.
2. **Refine Options:** Members will attempt to adjust, combine, or reframe options to better meet shared interests.
3. **Table for Study:** If no solution emerges, the team may assign a subcommittee (such as the PSST) to research the issue and bring back possible alternatives.
4. **Return for Review:** The IBB team will revisit the item at a later meeting with additional data, perspectives, or options.
5. **Escalation:** If consensus still cannot be achieved, the item will be documented as unresolved and may move to formal negotiations or another agreed-upon dispute resolution process by the IBB team.

## Accountability and Follow-Through

Once agreements are reached, the district and association share responsibility for monitoring progress. Regular communication should be sent to staff to ensure transparency and build trust.