



# PEI

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATORS OF IOWA

February 8, 2017

## House Study Bill 84 What Changes?

Questions - Questions! For sure we are receiving them and in the article below are some answers. Did you know that with 43 years of collective bargaining there are still districts that do not have master contracts? Our office has a variety of experts on staff who have served in their local bargaining units, and those who taught prior to Chapter 20 becoming law under meet and confer. Rest assured, all districts need order, procedures, and guidelines. This will not go away with a change in Chapter 20. How decisions are arrived upon may change. As with any law, there will be trade-offs and we endeavor to explore these with you, without all of the scare tactics that other organizations may be promoting. At this writing PEI has not rejected or endorsed any legislation, but we are deeply involved. Ultimately we want what is best for our students, teachers, and Iowa education in general. The public hearing on this topic is scheduled for Monday, February 23 from 6 to 8 pm at the State Capitol. There is a bus leaving from Coralville at 1:00 pm on Monday, if you are interested in riding with them, please let PEI know at 515-221-2330. House Study Bill 84 is 68 pages worth of law changes to Chapter 20, Iowa Code 279, 284 and more. It significantly ends most of the reasons for collective bargaining. Here is what it looks like:

- Your bargaining unit will only be able to negotiate on base wage and "other matters mutually agreed upon". Struck from the list of negotiated items are: Dues check-off, grievance procedures, hours, vacations, insurance, holidays, leaves of absence, shift differentials, overtime compensation, supplemental pay, seniority, transfer procedures, job classification, health and safety matters, evaluation procedures, procedures for staff reduction, and in-service training.
- Employee organizations will be given the chance to recertify every year  
In order to recertify the bargaining unit, it will take a majority of those listed in the bargaining unit - NOT just those voting. In other words, if a district has 58 members, and 25 members vote for the bargaining unit and 14 members vote against the bargaining unit, the unit will be decertified because it did not reach the 50% plus 1 (30) needed to be a majority. ("Member" refers to all teachers within a district, not just those who are ISEA. Click on link below to find who is included and who is excluded in the bargaining unit within your district.)<https://iowaperb.iowa.gov/k-12-school>
- Payroll deduction will stop for associations that use the payroll monies for political action committees, political activities, or any political contributions. PEI believes if school districts stop payroll deduction for the union, they more than likely will discontinue payroll for PEI members, even though your dues are not used for political donations.
- If the bargaining unit does not agree on a contract with administrators, and it goes to an arbitrator, the arbitrator can award only a maximum of 3% or a cost of living raise, whichever is less.  
It will be much easier to terminate an employee if the administration believes the employee is unsuitable for employment.  
The bill can be read in its entirety by clicking on the link below:

<https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=hsb84>

If the bargaining unit cannot negotiate anything more than the base wage, is there a reason to keep them?

### *Meet and Confer Districts*

Prior to bargaining units being voted into place in 1974-1975, meet and confer was the avenue for teachers to "negotiate" with administration.

PEI recently met with a superintendent of a large district here in Iowa. It is one of a dozen schools that continued to implement meet and confer over the past 42 years. (There are currently 5 districts with meet and confer.) Below are excerpts from our conversation:

**If you do not have a Master Contract, what do you use to guide your decisions?**

An Employee Handbook

**What does the local teachers group ask for in the Employee Handbook?**

Language considerations, sick leave days, family illness days, personal days

**Have you ever served as a superintendent in a union district here in Iowa?**

Yes

## What are the differences between having a Master Contract and having an Employee Handbook?

Flexibility - if a teacher is given 5 days for bereavement under the employee handbook but needs additional time, the administration can allow for the additional time

Employment issues are not limited to a particular time of year, but can be discussed throughout the year

A meet and confer situation brings in the human element and is much more than just a piece of paper

When considering the language and the working conditions, the administration and board are continually asking, "Will this erode the trust level for our staff?"

The district has never had a reason for even a mediator. The teachers and administrators have found the common ground necessary for the district to work effectively and the teachers to be pleased.

Teacher Quality Committee is made up of TEACHERS WITHIN THE DISTRICT, NOT JUST THOSE WITH UNION MEMBERSHIP.

We have listed all the "nice-ities" of a meet and confer district. What happens to your district should you have an administration that removes the human element? The first course of action will be to meet with the administration and board. The community should desire teachers who are paid well, have the resources needed to properly teach their students, enjoy similar benefits as those in private business, and have a working environment where every teacher has the same rights to serve in the district. Every administrator and teacher is still protected under the Department of Education law and the Board of Educational Examiners guidelines.

PEI agrees that every teacher should have the right to vote for the association that best represents their needs.

PEI also believes that every teacher should be treated equally within a district, including Teacher Quality Committees, mentoring and evaluating committees, TSS committees, etc.

PEI believes collective bargaining can be very effective in non-adversarial methods. We have concerns with the bill and have met with those who formulated the bill. We have expressed our apprehension within districts where we believe the human element will not be applied effectively!

Your representatives and senators need to hear from you! To find your legislator, click on the link below:

<https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislators/find>

Please keep in mind, your words will produce effectual results if you give rational arguments for the reasons you believe your legislator should vote for or against this bill. So far this year there have been mobs of people at the capitol who are chanting, spitting on legislators, and being arrested. This type of behavior is uncalled for!

We've been asked why this legislation is being proposed. Here are several reasons given to us:

- Teachers who are not members of the local union are not receiving identical treatment within a school district
- The state payroll system collects government employee union dues and these dues are then used to purchase politicians for political gain at taxpayer expense
- Rising healthcare costs which are out of step with the private sector

Restore more control and discretion to the local districts

This legislation is an attempt to create a level playing field for all teachers regardless of affiliation. At the very least, we applaud the intent and effort to do that.

We want to hear from you! If you have questions let us know. You can write us at [info@peiowa.org](mailto:info@peiowa.org) or call us at 515-221-2330

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<http://bit.ly/2d9VSu4>

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