

Opening Statement checklist **(for School Board Level Hearings and** **Arbitrations)**

A GOOD OPENING STATEMENT:

- Gives description of the district and the bargaining unit
- Gives employment background of grievant and other pertinent information
- States the action which gave rise to the grievance
- States the issues to be decided
- Identifies the entitlements (contract provisions; laws; practices; etc.)
- Explains what you intend to prove and evidence you will introduce
- Summarizes
- States the remedy

A GOOD OPENING STATEMENT ALSO....

- Is honest
- Is interesting
- Is informative – spelling out each and every element of your case, explaining theory, and facts
- Is logically sequenced
- Is unaffected (simple words)
- Is persuasive
- Raises your weak points to minimize their impact
- Is addressed to the arbitrator
- Is written (and read – optional) with copies for the arbitrator and employer
- Does not attack the credibility of the district's witnesses
- Includes FACTS not OPINION
- Claims nothing that cannot be proved
- Does not distract the arbitrator (clothes; nail polish; jewelry)

*SERVES AS A ROADMAP FOR THE SUPERINTENDENT or
SCHOOL BOARD HEARING OFFICER AND CREATES
THAT IMPORTANT FIRST IMPRESSION*