

Boston Teachers Union Election 2021

Election Results on page 4 & 5.



BOSTON TEACHERS UNION, LOCAL 66, AFT
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Report from the Executive Vice President Erik R. Berg

The Infusion of ESSER Funds Helps Support Our Students As We Come Out of the Pandemic

Throughout the past school year, BTU members have stepped up in incredible ways to support their students. You have delivered supplies, helped families navigate shortages of food and shelter, taught students simultaneously at great cost to time with your own families and work-life balance. You have learned new platforms on a moment's notice, changed your practice to meet changes in the public health conditions, and advocated for appropriate facilities and services in our aging school buildings.

In the midst of it all, and unnoticed by many, there were big changes afoot in terms of federal policy, and they can be summarized in five letters: **ESSER**. ESSER provides a much-needed infusion of federal funds to K-12 schools across the US, including \$430 million for

the Boston Public Schools. This presents a chance to support our students and our schools as we emerge from the pandemic, but is also a once-in-a-generation opportunity to address some of the issues that have long plagued our schools, and to begin to redress some historic inequities in society. Below are some thoughts on the best use of these funds, using feedback gleaned from discussions with members,

BTU surveys and forums with educators, families and community members. First of all, we believe in supporting Black, Indigenous, Latino, AAPI families and communities of color with

additional school investments to address historic inequities. Communities most impacted by the pandemic must be given priority in allocating resources.

A second basic principle is that educator voice is critical to making change work, and we encourage collaborative and transparent processes at the school and district level for students, families and communities to partner with educators and administrators to plan for the next school year.

Our educators are deeply committed to their schools and their students, and if we have heard anything from our members this school year, it is that people are worked to the bone. Relying on the same number of people and asking them to do significantly more work, even with stipends, is not an option. We need to staff schools with adequate special education teachers and staff, bilingual educators, reading specialists, nurses, counselors, social workers, restorative justice coordinators. We need to further reduce class sizes and caseloads so students can receive more individual attention and support.

There should be no prohibition against adding personnel. While there are legitimate concerns about not creating unsustainable staffing levels that drop off a cliff when funding ends, we believe that we can and should add staff where it is needed. If we combine this with a strong program evaluation component, it will allow us to determine after a couple of years what is working well, and we can continue new positions that are effective with the addi-



Erik R. Berg
BTU Executive Vice President

"Relying on the same people and asking them to do significantly more work is not an option."

tional state funding from the Student Opportunity Act.

We have long known that our school buildings and facilities are inadequate to meet the needs of our students today. Some of the funding should go to address the urgent and long standing facilities issues, including but not limited to retrofitting our buildings with high-quality HVAC systems to allow for better ventilation, and appropriate temperature control to allow our students to learn effectively.

Coming out of the pandemic, we have an opportunity to rethink some of how we do school. We should invest in educator-led professional development and curriculum creation, along with consulting with students and their families so our pedagogy and curriculum meets student and family needs in the current context.

Finally, we know that the pandemic has created a crisis of mental health issues for our students and their families. Now is the time to invest in more mental health and social emotional support for our students. Additionally, it is time to expand the Hub Community School model in more schools. Hub Community Schools provide wraparound services for kids and families, and create deep connections between schools and the communities they serve.

We have a great opportunity here -- let's make the most of it, and be sure that educator, family and student voices are a part of deciding how funds are expended. The resources need to get to our schools and our students immediately, because the needs are great, but so is our willingness and ability to do great things.

What is ESSER?

ESSER stands for the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund.

The **ESSER** program was designed by the U.S. Congress to address the impacts of COVID-19 on schools and students.

ESSER Funds are granted to states in the same proportion as each State received Title I funds.

ESSER funds are in three parts:

- **ESSER I - CARES Act** (March 2020) - \$193 Million to MA
- **ESSER II - Coronavirus Response Act** (December 2020) - \$739 Million to MA
- **ESSER III - American Rescue Plan** (March 2021) - \$1.65 Billion to MA

Boston Public Schools will receive a total of \$430 million in **ESSER** Funds.

Commentary Michael J. Maguire My Biggest Supporter

On May 24th, my father went to his eternal rest. It's never easy nor is it ever the right time or place to lose a parent. I do count myself fortunate to have had 50 years of his time in my life.

My father was my biggest supporter when I ran for union office, only I did not know it at the time. When I first ran for Executive Board, I stood outside the BTU Hall (remember those days?), talked to people, held a makeshift sign, and generally just tried to follow what was going on around me. To be honest, I got quite the sunburn on my forehead and ears.

When the polls had closed, someone told me that the results would be a while and that I should get some fluids in me. Upon hearing that news, my father insisted that the family go out to eat. Having stood out in the sun all day, I agreed. We had a nice meal, talked about the day a bit, but mostly enjoyed each other's company.

We were not gone all that long but upon our return most of the candidates had gone home as the results had already been announced. In a race where the top 12 are elected, I finished 13th.

Eddie Welch, then the BTU Secretary-Treasurer, approached me and in his unique baritone said, "Kid, you did great for a first timer, don't be too disappointed." I wasn't, well, maybe a little bit.

My father said to me, "Well, you gave it a shot." He didn't say anything else to me on the topic. But years later I learned that he talked to everyone about it. And I do mean everyone.

Over the years my father joined me at the polls as often as he could. Honestly it



June 3, 2009 – L-R, Michael, Meghan and Jack Maguire at the polls.

seemed that he chatted with other people more than he did with me. Again, it was not until years later that I learned he was "working the room" on my behalf.

When dad reached his late 70s it was hard for him to walk. If he could not make an election, he'd call me the night before to remind me that "Tomorrow is your vote." Afterward I'd either swing by my parents house on my way home or I'd call him from home. He'd ask me was so-and-so there, or did I see this person or that person. Most were fellow BTU candidates but some were names of teachers that I didn't know. He knew them either from being at the polls all those years or from a family connection to Ireland. I began to wonder if dad had missed his calling for politics.



Michael J. Maguire
Boston Union Teacher
Co-Editor

the polls. It just wasn't the same. I did come to the union hall at closing time to wait for the election results. That night I was thinking about my first election a lot. Sure I had lost, but that loss was nothing compared to the absence of my biggest supporter.

Please forgive me for any melancholy. My father had a good 85 years. I got to spend plenty of time with him during the pandemic and especially on the weekend when he passed. He worked hard to earn a living, and he lived for dancing.

This summer, I shall have a pleasant reminder about my father's dancing. My parents met at a dance hall in Roxbury. I'll be driving past that spot every day as I teach summer school at the O'Bryant. Life really does come full circle.

As is the Irish tradition, dad's wake was a celebration of his life. So many teachers, students, and BTU officers came to the wake that my brother remarked, "I've met so many of the BTU Executive Board that I feel like I'm a member." My brother's remark perfectly encapsulated how my dad felt about our union family.

This election I did not stand outside



BTU candidates and supporters vie for last minute votes at the BTU Hall on June 2, 2021. Thanks to all who ran and also to those who voted! See election results and more photos on pages 4 & 5.

– Photos by CasSandra Samuel



Twitter is a great way to stay engaged over the summer. Follow us @BTU66



Is Summer School Treated Like the Regular School Year Contractually?

No, it is not. Summer school is not governed by the collective bargaining agreement in the same way the standard school year is. Some time ago the BTU took the issue of summer school salary not being retirement worthy to court to demand that this earned income be retirement worthy. Unfortunately, the court ruled against the case. The BTU/BPS contract reports, *“The School Department shall determine the summer program curriculum, all aspects of operation and administration of the program, including employment in the program, salary, hours, and conditions of employment. Employee participation in the summer program shall be voluntary. Selection of employees shall be as determined by the [school] Department.”*

Where Does a City of Boston Employee Turn When Things Seem Unbearable?

The City of Boston provides a ‘free and confidential’ program for its employees and their immediate families called the Employees Assistance Program (EAP). This service is there to help said individuals with challenges they may be dealing with including substance abuse issues, job loss, depression, grief, being stressed out, and the like. To speak with an EAP clinician call 617-635-2200, Monday-Friday, 7:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. If in crisis mode, call 617-635-4500 to page an EAP clinician who is on call. EAP will continue to work with affected individuals as long as necessary.

When can a teacher collect Unemployment Compensation?

A teacher is eligible for Unemployment Compensation when they have been laid off or have not been rehired by the school system. If a teacher has been issued a letter of termination and has not been rehired as of the effective date of said termination, then they are eligible for Unemployment benefits.

When a terminated teacher is paid over the summer months due to being on a 26 paycheck schedule, they are still able to collect Unemployment. These ‘summer payments’ are based on a percentage of their pay that has been deducted from each paycheck throughout the school year added together to provide said teacher with ‘stretch’ payments over the summer based on work already done between September and June of that academic year.

If a provisional teacher has been granted a letter of Reasonable Assurance (RA), they are NOT eligible to collect Unemployment because they have been reasonably assured of a job in the upcoming academic year. If a provisional teacher has not been granted an RA, and has received a termination letter from the BPS, they ARE eligible to collect Unemployment Compensation.

If a teacher has been terminated due to just cause and has done so via a settle-

ment agreement drawn up with the BPS Labor Relations Department, then they must refer to the terms of said settlement in relation to filing for Unemployment Compensation when applicable.

To obtain more information, call the Massachusetts Division of Employment via the web www.detma.org/workers/howtofile.htm or by phone TeleClaims services at 1-877-626-6800 or 617-626-6800. Hours are Monday-Thursday 8:30 a.m.-6:30 p.m.; Friday 8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

What Does COBRA Mean?

COBRA stands for the Consolidated Omnibus Reconciliation Act of 1985. It is the law that requires employers who offer group health insurance plans to give their employees the opportunity to stay on their group health insurance plan if they are no longer employed by the employer and the former employee isn’t eligible for health insurance coverage through a spouse’s insurance.

If a teacher is terminated from the BPS/City of Boston, they will be mailed information about COBRA benefits. For further inquiries concerning COBRA continuation of coverage, get in touch with the Health Benefits and Insurance Office, Room 807, City Hall. Give them a call at 617-635-4570.

What is the Severance Pay Policy in the BPS for Teachers?

The BTU Contract details, *“Persons who retire, resign, or die after ten (10) years of teaching in the BPS shall be paid at the ratio of 40% of accumulated, unused sick days, without limitation. Payment shall be based on the annual rate of pay of the person at the time of death, retirement or resignation. In the event of death, payment shall be made to the estate.”* *“...severance shall be paid in two installments. One half of the payment shall be made on or before December 31st of the year of retirement, and the other half shall be paid on or before December 31st of the year after retirement.”* If a person has taught less than ten full years in the BPS, they lose their accumulated sick days if they leave the system.

Is There Any Life Insurance Through the BPS for Teachers?

The BTU/BPS labor management agreement details; *“The employer [City of Boston] contribution to the life insurance portion of the group insurance plan (\$5,000 policy) shall be 50% with a provision for teachers to purchase more life insurance at a low rate”* If you are inter-

ested in looking into this option, contact the City of Boston’s Group Health Insurance Office at 617-635-4570, located on the 8th floor of Boston City Hall.

What’s the Substitute Class Coverage Policy When I’m Out?

The BTU Collective Bargaining Agreement [contract] outlines: *“It is the policy of the [School] Committee that substitutes shall be hired to cover classes of regularly assigned teachers when they are absent.”*

“In the event that the Committee after a good faith effort is unable to hire a substitute for a classroom teacher who regularly works with a paraprofessional, that paraprofessional may be requested to serve as a substitute teacher under the following conditions: (1) The paraprofessional has a teaching certificate or ten or more years of service. (2) The paraprofessional is requested to substitute only in those classes in which he or she normally works. (3) The paraprofessional is paid \$6.00 per hour in addition to his or her regular salary.” This is not a list of either or. All three conditions must be met in order for a paraprofessional to be utilized as a substitute in their own class only. If these conditions have been met, the Para should check with the school secretary and administrator in charge of coverage to make sure the additional pay has been submitted to the BPS Payroll Department for their substitute work.

The contract continues; *“The [School] Department will make a good faith effort to hire a substitute when a regularly assigned nurse is absent for more than one day. In any event, a substitute will be provided whenever a nurse is absent for three or more days.”* *“When a qualified Vocational Education substitute is not available the shop is to be closed.”* *“When a qualified Industrial Arts or Home Economics teacher is not available, the shop is to be*



Caren Carew
BTU Secondary
Field Representative

closed.” In the latter case, one would be hard pressed to find a Home Economics teacher in the BPS in order to substitute for.

A Revisiting of Health Insurance – When Do New Teachers Sign Up, When Can We Change Our Plans, What Happens If Someone Gets Laid Off and Rehired or is Returning From an Unpaid Leave of Absence...?

City of Boston Employees join health plans by contacting the Health Benefits and Insurance Division (Group Insurance) located on the 8th floor of Boston City Hall, telephone 617-635-4570. New hires have 60 calendar days from the time they are hired in order to sign up for health insurance. If you are a provisional or permanent teacher who was laid off and then is recalled/rehired, you also must contact the Group Insurance Office within 60 days of being rehired from lay off in order to reenroll. Some people have assumed that because they have their job back, the insurance is just automatically reinstated – this is not the case. These deadlines are hard and fast.

Open enrollment is the window of time when you can change your type of health insurance plan, or sign up for the first time if you’ve missed another deadline. This period is held annually for

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Boston Union Teacher

EVERYONE IS WELCOME HERE!

¡TODOS SON BIENVENIDOS AQUÍ!

EVERYONE IS WELCOME HERE!

BLACK LIVES MATTER

**Boston Teachers Union,
AFT Local 66, AFL-CIO**

EDITORIAL NOTE:
The opinions expressed in the *Boston Union Teacher* do not necessarily represent the views of the Boston Teachers Union, or those of its members.

WHEN WRITING:
All correspondence to the *Boston Union Teacher* must be typewritten and include the author's name and school or department if not school-based.
All articles must be appropriate to the publication, and in good taste.
Letters to the Editor should be sent to letters@btu.org

DEADLINE:
The deadline for submitting articles for the next issue of the *Boston Union Teacher* is July 28th.
All copy should be e-mailed to mmaguire@btu.org and gvirchick@btu.org
This deadline will be strictly adhered to.

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Lounge Office.....	617-288-3322
Vision Center	617-288-5540
Tremont Credit Union.....	781-843-5626

Boston Teachers Union Election 2021



Election Results
Total Ballots Cast: 2,969

Bold/Red = Elected

BTU Officers

President

1. Jessica Tang (BTU Office/Young Achievers K-8).....	2,491
Write-in.....	33
Ilene Carver.....	1
Richard Stutman.....	1
[Blank].....	438
[Invalid].....	5

Executive Vice President

2. Erik Berg (Philbrick Elementary School).....	2,343
Write-in.....	23
Tom Gosnell.....	1
[Blank].....	597
[Invalid].....	5

Secretary-Treasurer

4. Michael W. McLaughlin (Murphy/BTU Office).....	1,544
3. Karen Cross (Richard J. Murphy School).....	1,032
Write-in.....	3
Lea Serena.....	1
[Blank].....	381
[Invalid].....	8

Political Director

5. Johnny R. McInnis (BTU School).....	2,303
Write-in.....	6
[Blank].....	658
[Invalid].....	2

Elementary Field Representative

6. Lea Serena (Mather).....	579
7. Colum A. Whyte (Lee K-8).....	534
Write-in.....	2
[Blank].....	190
[Invalid].....	0

Secondary Field Representative

8. Caren Carew (King/BTU).....	862
9. David Sims (Educator Supports Program).....	297
Write-in.....	3
[Blank].....	141
[Invalid].....	5

Paraprofessional/Substitute/ABA Field Representative

10. Colleen Hart (Murphy).....	322
Write-in.....	2
[Blank].....	31
[Invalid].....	1

Executive Board

25. Brenda Chaney (Retired).....	1,473
26. Alice M. Yong (Retired).....	1,346
12. James (Timo) Philip (Retired).....	1,331
24. Michael Maguire (Boston Latin Academy).....	1,313
16. Caitlin Gaffny (Tobin K-8 School).....	1,138
13. Nicole Mullen (Boston Arts Academy).....	1,070
23. Casandra Samuel (Curley K-8).....	1,054
14. Cheryl L. Kelly, RN (Edwards Middle School).....	1,051
19. Allison Doherty (Fenway High School).....	1,002
21. A. Vanessa LaRocque (Joseph Lee School).....	933
22. Robert P. Carroll (Retired).....	925
15. Rosalinda Midence (Boston Day and Evening).....	864
20. Nora Paul-Schultz (John D. O'Bryant School).....	859
18. Shakeeda Bartee (Up Academy Boston).....	819
17. Christine Choukas (Donald McKay K-8).....	707
27. Tarquinia Queena Townsend (Irving Middle).....	682
11. Savannah Lodge-Scharff (Madison Park Tech).....	632
Write-in.....	56
Denise Berkley.....	37
Mary Ann Urban.....	2
Abra Greene.....	1
Darren T. Wells.....	1
Natalia Quadra-Saez.....	1
Valerie Gumes.....	1
[Blank].....	169
[Invalid].....	3

Paraprofessional Council

33. Colleen Hart (Murphy).....	249
32. Casandra Samuel (Curley K-8 Library Para).....	171
28. Debra Brown (Kenney, Paraprofessional).....	135
37. Vanessa LaRocque (Joseph Lee School).....	108
36. Todd Kerr (Coverage Paraprofessional).....	102
35. Carla M. Johnson (P. A. Shaw Elementary).....	98
30. Awilda Concepcion (Blackstone Elementary).....	89
38. Sharon O'Dwyer (Condon K-8).....	89
29. Christina Buttiglieri (Retired).....	85
31. Cynthia Ferris (Perry K-8).....	79
41. Sheila Yetman (Condon K-8).....	78
34. Debra Irby (Mather Elementary).....	61
40. Matthew Tallent (Curley K-8).....	61
39. Donovan Richardson (Lee K-8).....	55
Write-in.....	2
Atrianne Jordan.....	1
[Blank].....	35
[Invalid].....	3

RTC Officers

RTC Chair

42. Marilyn Marion (Retired).....	1,128
Ed Doherty.....	1
[Blank].....	107
[Invalid].....	5

RTC Vice-Chair

43. Roslyn "Roz" Avant (Retired).....	1,099
Write-in.....	1
[Blank].....	141
[Invalid].....	0

RTC Treasurer

44. Anne Broder (Retired).....	1,080
Write-in.....	0
[Blank].....	160
[Invalid].....	1

RTC Secretary

45. Joan Devlin (Retired).....	1,092
Write-in.....	1
[Blank].....	148
[Invalid].....	0

Delegates

(Listed in order of voting results—cut offs for representation at affiliated bodies will be determined at a later date based on these results.)

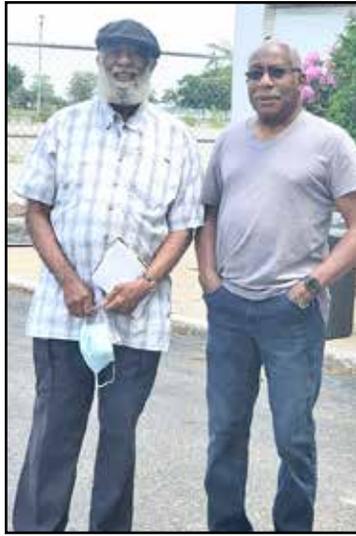
62. Jessica Tang (BTU Office/Young Achievers K-8).....	1,601
127. Caren Carew (King/BTU).....	1,196
82. Michael W. McLaughlin (Murphy/BTU Office).....	1,162
112. Ed Doherty (Retired).....	1,156
124. Brenda Chaney (Retired).....	1,110
135. Erik Berg (Philbrick Elementary School).....	1,087
47. Alice M. Yong (Retired).....	1,037
75. James (Timo) Philip (Retired).....	1,016
91. Michael Maguire (Boston Latin Academy).....	938
84. Johnny McInnis (BTU).....	935
106. Thomas Gosnell (Retired).....	867
56. Mary Ann Urban (Retired).....	856
111. Betsy Drinan (BTU).....	844
89. Marilyn Marion (Retired).....	777
58. Paul Trittter (Human Resource Team).....	717
50. Colum A. Whyte (Lee K-8).....	716
54. Garret Virchick (Retired).....	704
103. Charles R. Johnson (Retired).....	693
100. Cheryl L. Kelly, RN (Edwards).....	686
138. Roslyn "Roz" Avant (Retired).....	664
66. Casandra Samuel (Cutler K-8).....	655
105. Colleen Hart (Murphy).....	649
113. Allison Doherty (Fenway High School).....	645
65. Lea Serena (Mather).....	620
107. Caitlin Gaffny (Tobin K-8 School).....	616
94. Josefina Lascano (Retired).....	604
126. Robert P. Carroll (Retired).....	599
130. Joan Buckley Devlin (Retired).....	570

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Delegates

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80.	Nicole Mullen (Boston Arts Academy).....	569
117.	Karen Cross (Richard J. Murphy School).....	555
60.	Paul Tenney (Retired).....	543
140.	Maritza Agrait (OT Retired).....	533
125.	Ilene Carver (BTU Organizer).....	523
95.	Vanessa LaRocque (Joseph Lee School).....	492
55.	José Valenzuela (Boston Latin Academy).....	483
72.	Kristen Pinto (Retired).....	477
77.	Nora Paul-Schultz (John D. O'Bryant School).....	474
137.	Shakeeda Bartee (Up Academy Boston).....	469
133.	Anne Broder (Retired).....	463
115.	Natalia Cuadra-Saez (Snowden).....	456
52.	Darren Wells (Irving Middle).....	454
81.	Rosalinda Midence (Boston Day and Evening).....	438
48.	Karen Wood (Boston Latin Academy).....	426
76.	Sherry Pedone (Retired, Mildred Avenue).....	422
134.	Denise Berkley (Retired).....	421
116.	Marjie Crosby (OT Retired).....	413
61.	Regina Temple (Retired).....	408
68.	Matthew Ruggiero (Charlestown High School).....	406
88.	Gayle Marrow (Retired, Mildred Avenue).....	400
57.	Teresa Underwood (Retired).....	391
49.	Tatiana Williams-Rodriguez (Boston Latin).....	384
123.	Christine Choukas (Donald McKay K-8).....	377
78.	Catherine O'Flaherty (Boston Latin Academy).....	372
131.	Debra Brown (Kenney, Paraprofessional).....	360
129.	Christina Buttiglieri (Retired).....	359
118.	Michael Crain (Retired).....	346
98.	Afra Khan (Blackstone Elementary).....	346
71.	Declan Power (Counselling & Intervention Center).....	343
119.	Diane Crain (Retired).....	332
69.	Dana Royster-Buefort (Retired).....	314
110.	John Enright (Madison Park).....	312
70.	Teresa Reaves (Retired).....	291
104.	Carla M. Johnson (P. A. Shaw Elementary).....	283
73.	Bianca Pierre (Beethoven Elementary).....	279
79.	Sharon O'Dwyer (Condon K-8).....	276
128.	Layla Cable (Retired).....	274
108.	Maryclare Flores (Michael J. Perkins).....	271
64.	David Sims (Human Resource Team).....	268
120.	Quayisha Clarke (Grew Elementary).....	267
122.	Paul Christian (O'Bryant).....	267
121.	Michaela Chung (Guild Elementary).....	256
67.	David Russell Weiss-Irwin (S. Greenwood K-8).....	247
90.	Timothy Maher (Lyndon K-8).....	244
92.	Sylvaine Lestrade (Trotter K-8).....	244
132.	Maria Brooks (Mather Elementary).....	242
101.	Adrienne Jordan (Charles Sumner).....	231
86.	Katina McClain (English High School).....	227
114.	Gina Desir (Kenny Elementary).....	225
139.	Christine Arnold (Sumner Elementary).....	225
46.	Mikaela Zetley (Donald McKay).....	223
93.	Nina Lessin-Joseph (Fenway High School).....	219
96.	Heather King (Orchard Garden K-8).....	216
99.	Todd Kerr (Coverage Paraprofessional).....	203
85.	Ryan McGoff (East Boston High School).....	197
87.	Elaine Mascall (Murphy).....	196
83.	Molly McKay Bryson (Succeed Boston).....	191
51.	Danielle West (Curley K-8).....	187
102.	Marta Johnson-Faldasz (Roosevelt K-8 Lower).....	183
53.	Samantha Weintraub (Sumner Elementary).....	183
59.	Bernadette Thornton-Giles (Consulting Teacher).....	178
109.	Cynthia Ferris (Perry K-8).....	159
136.	Steven Benjamin (Dearborn STEM Academy).....	158
63.	Matthew Tallent (Curley K-8).....	157
97.	Karen Kilmain-Patriquin (Sumner).....	147
	Denise Berkeley.....	9
	Mary Gaughan.....	6
	Stephanie Wing.....	2
	Tarquina Townsend.....	2
	B. Vitarisi (OIIT).....	1
	Caren Carew.....	1
	Christopher Donnelly.....	1
	Cynthia Grant Carter.....	1
	Daniel Laurio.....	1
	Donna Robbins (McCormick).....	1
	Joan Devlin.....	1
	Joan Duane.....	1
	Joanne McCoy-Lawrence.....	1
	Joia Shrani.....	1
	Lindsay Thornquist.....	1
	Locinda Mills.....	1
	Neema Arashia (McCormack).....	1
	Nisa Harrison.....	1
	Paul Tenny.....	1
	Richard Stutman.....	1
	Ross Kochman.....	1
	Sheila Yetman.....	1
	Stephen Carney.....	1
	Steve Seto.....	1
	Thu Huong Mai.....	1
	Toni Robinson.....	1
	Tyron Francis.....	1
	Valerie Gumer.....	1
	[Blank].....	210
	[Invalid].....	0



Election Photos by CasSandra Samuel



McKinley South End Academy – Our Response to Edith Bazile

We are extremely dismayed and angry that the editors of the Boston Teachers Union newspaper could have allowed an article by **Edith Bazile** 30% plus space of the most recent publication to excoriate the staff, work and purpose of the McKinley Schools, which exist expressly to serve the Special Ed students enrolled in the Boston Public Schools. We agree with her statement that the purpose of McKinley Schools is to educate the students who failed both academically and emotionally in the Regular Ed. school system.

Ms. Bazile begins her ramble with a brief mention of chattel slavery and young Black men such as **Tamir Rice**. She refers to a child named Justin as an example of the general discriminatory practices of public schools. She states that McKinley Schools are disproportionately populated with Black students “primarily because they are erroneously viewed as more aggressive, more dangerous, and emotionally and behaviorally impaired.” Later she elides the history of racism in public schools with the purpose of the McKinley Schools, literally stating that a placement in the McKinley School is tantamount to a prison sentence! “Once they go in, they don’t get out, which makes a McKinley placement a sentence, not a service for Black students.”

This shockingly dramatic statement is bewildering in that nearly 50% of the current staff at (MSEA) are persons of color, as is the current principal. The previous Head of School for the past several years (through June, 2020) was an African American woman.

It is very important to note that students enrolled in the McKinley Schools are **NOT** chosen by the McKinley Program. These students are referred to the Sped Department by individual teachers in local school settings. Some students are assigned to more intensive and smaller classes called Lab Clusters located within neighborhood schools. It is not easy to become a student at the McKinley Schools because the student-teacher ratio is so much smaller and thus, the cost to educate students is much greater. The racial population of the McKinley Schools is decided by others. As Ms. Bazile was the director of professional development for Special Ed teachers for 10 years within the Boston Public Schools, she surely knows many of those people making student referrals! If there is a disproportionate population of Black students at the McKinley Schools, those referrals must be traced back to all the local schools and Lab Clusters making those referrals. McKinley Schools cannot be solely responsible for the “enslavement of Black boys”!

It is not known if Ms. Bazile has ever visited a McKinley School. Our staff has been working ‘on site’ since last October. We have to wonder from where the intense vitriol and racial accusations come. Her selected DESE statistics cannot be judged without a comparison to other schools and similar programs within the system.

If, as she explicitly states, that public schools were designed for white children, then this is the job of superintendents, program directors and politicians to confront. Additionally, we would like to chastise the editors for allowing Ms. Bazile’s article to be printed without any previous communication with the McKinley School personnel.



Respectfully,
Chana Green
James Molyneaux
Jennifer Berry
Sasia Doman
Karyssa Budd
Joshua Hupe
Christopher Busch
Robert Ruddy
Candace Gaeta
Matthew Trofatter
Patrick Anderton
Ashley Carnathan
Cara Bufalino
Cameron Williamson
David Ferrando
Roberto Figueroa

Lolita Filippone
Soltana Gulbinas
Shaon McCoy
Johnny Santiago
Grace Gehrenbeck-Shim
Rhonda Johnson
Lisa Stephens
Tracy Pomerence Regan
Shantell Maddrey
Dmitri Giannos
Clarence Stuppard
Douglas Schlehuber
Noah Kaufman
Claire Cassidy
Darrell Greene
David Russell

Struggle and Triumph at the McKinleys

by David Russell

“...to handicap a student by teaching him that his black face is a curse and that his struggle to change his condition is hopeless is the worst sort of lynching.”

Amen. In this period of racial reckoning, we all need to have seared into our consciousness the devastating reality of racism, and these words of **Carter G. Woodson** are as penetrating today as they were when he wrote them around a hundred years ago.

But wait. These words appeared in the last issue of *Boston Union Teacher* in **Edith Bazile’s** article “Fix Boston’s McKinley Schools: Rename Them ‘Melvin H. King Schools’ and Reimagine

Their Vision and Purpose” to support her contention that placement in the McKinley Schools is “a sentence, not a service for Black students.”

What!?! Those words are supposed to apply to what goes on at the McKinleys?!

Before addressing that, I want to address points of unity with Ms. Bazile. First, while I didn’t know the story in the opening about the letter that was sent to President McKinley by Black Bostonians asking him to speak out against lynching and his nonresponse, the story demonstrates – as we have known – that McKinley is no hero. The idea of changing the name of the school is a good one (and it has been under discussion at the school before this article). Second, we agree that the continuing existence of “inadequate facilities and crumbling infrastructures” at the McKinley schools is outrageous. Superintendent **Brenda Cassellius** reportedly cried in her car after her first visit to McKinley South End Academy, but nothing has changed yet with conditions at our sites. Third, yes, “the racialized targeting of Black males is not new, and it begins early in schooling where Black students are more harshly disciplined, suspended, restrained, expelled, overpoliced, arrested, and more frequently sent to DYS detention facilities” is accurate.

But where do the McKinleys fit into this? Do we teach our students, disproportionately Black as Ms. Bazile wrote, that their black faces are “a curse” and that each student’s “struggle to change his [or her] condition is hopeless”?

No.

I could write a book about this (actually I did, recently self-publishing *To Change the World: Reflections of a Teacher* – see the piece about it

elsewhere in this paper), but for this article let me list seven of the many pieces of counter evidence that could be cited.

First, there are about 100 large framed color photos of our students (12x18, 16x20, and 20x30) on the walls of our hallways. Capturing a wide variety of activities, these beautiful photos communicate our purpose at the McKinleys: that our students are witnessed and cherished.

Second, each spring **Carolyn Burrell** puts on *My Inspiration*, an amazing event where her students each present an essay they’ve written about who has inspired them in their lives, usually a family or staff member. Most of the students have never stood on a stage and addressed a large crowd before, but with the support they are given by their classmates and teachers, these students bring tears to the eyes of those in attendance and let us all know how, with inspiration, they are moving forward in their lives.

Third, in the SEA middle school there is a quarterly Award Ceremony. Students cheer each other on as they receive certificates for particular accomplishments (Improved Homework Completion, etc.) and trophies for Honor Roll and Outstanding Attendance. This regular event spurs students on to greater effort and academic achievement.

Fourth, in the SEA middle school there is also an Oratory Contest each June. Students choose poems, practice, and present before their peers and a group of outside judges. Four students receive small cash prizes and all who participate are given medals to wear around their necks. The competition is spirited, and the event is another one that prompts students to perform at levels they had not previously reached.

Fifth, the Scholars Brigade, led by **Michael Scott**, creatively combines cooperative games, Black history, and martial arts. Students in the Brigade develop their discipline, expand their knowledge and understanding, and deepen their pride. According to the Brigade website, their activities, “are aimed at broadening their perspectives surrounding opportunity, and deepening their understanding of the obstacles that they will overcome to achieve their dreams.” The Brigade put on a spectacular birthday celebration for **Mel King** in our gym a few years ago.

Sixth, the high school ELA students of **Warren Pemsler** and **Chris Busch** have gone on over 130 field trips the past dozen years to plays at the Huntington (75+) and the ICA (55+), thereby increasing their cultural capital. Some of these same students compete in the annual **August Wilson** Monologue Contest, presenting passages – from the playwright who chronicled decades of African American life in his ten-volume *Century Cycle* –

Editor’s Notes:

As co-editor of the newspaper, I am sorry that many teachers who teach at the McKinley schools were upset at the inclusion of the article *Fix Boston’s McKinley Schools* by **Edith Bazile** in the May edition of the newspaper. It was not my intention to target the teachers at the McKinley nor do I believe it was the intention of the author. Rather the piece asked us to look at the structural racism she feels is inherent in the school’s model.

The piece does not ask for the school to be closed, but instead urges the system to rename the school after **Mel King**, a long-time civil rights leader in Boston and someone who mentored students at the school back when he was organizing Tent City and fighting the gentrification that excluded too many African Americans from the South End. Further, the article also urged the school system to invest in and reimagine a new model for both the school and the system’s approach to special education, that too often seeks to segregate young Black boys away from regular education programs as the end goal.

Structural racism in the Boston Public Schools, and too many school systems in America, is a problem that too often is ignored. As teachers we see this every day in so many ways, just as in so many ways we fight against it as individuals and at times as a union. I understand how difficult it is to acknowledge that it exists in the schools where we are employed, fearing that if we do, we are diminishing our own work. But that can never be the truth. It’s silence that is not an option. In the words of **Martin Luther King Jr.**, “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.”

Sincerely, Garret Virchick

When **Edith Basile’s** story about the McKinley was submitted to us, I took it as a critique aimed at the policy level of BPS administration, and therefore included it in the May 2021 *Boston Union Teacher*. Teachers and students of the McKinley did not receive the article the way I intended, as evidenced by letters we received after publication (those letters are published in this edition of the newspaper). Upon reflection, and after meeting with the McKinley community, I understand how this piece felt to them, and I apologize for the anger, frustration and disappointment this piece caused. I want to sincerely thank the McKinley community for working with us to discuss and hopefully resolve the conflict created, and I welcome the opportunity to work toward a new shared vision for our publication.

Sincerely, Michael J. Maguire

on our auditorium stage with poise, insight, and passion. The winners of the McKinley contests have then competed notably in the city-wide event.

Last, our high school graduation ceremonies are rousing events. The students' graduations are triumphs of those for whom reaching this stage was often uncertain. The apex of the events is the speeches of the valedictorians and salutariorians. Their full-throated testimonies of the transformative nature of their McKinley experiences elicit tears of joy and goosebumps of exhilaration among the assembled.

So is everything all wonderful and successful? Unfortunately hardly.

The struggle of McKinley students and their families is sharply uphill, and our influence, while profound, is limited and too often insufficient. Taking on the societal forces assembled against them, racism among the most prominent, is daunting.

This is not stated as an excuse. The data on our outcomes are not acceptable. Without hesitation we acknowledge the need to do better.

But it is mistaken, I believe, to see our relatively low graduation rate, etc. as a consequence of McKinley placement. More accurate, I assert, is that the numbers are **despite** the services that students receive at McKinley. Weekly therapy. A guidance professional and paraprofessional for each 24 students. Small classes with abundant individual attention. And much more.

Students who come to McKinley are at that point on a serious downward trajectory; their previous schools had not been able to be successful with them. And, yes, placement at McKinley can be seen as a stigma. Some years ago, during our protracted struggle for adequate heat (remember the "got heat?" sweatshirts?), a student counseled me: "What do you expect, Mr. Russell? We're the 'bad kids!'"

It is our mission, from when the students enter the front door in the morning until they exit through it in the afternoon, to impart a very different message: You are somebody! You are as precious as any! Your future is unwritten and let's work together to make it bright!

It is a rare student that we do not make progress with. The McKinley staff each day, in a spirited, skilled, and sustained way, do battle to prove that demography is not destiny.

Ms. Bazile quotes herself as having said about McKinley, "There are no students – zero – who go on to a four year college." Well, I know of two former McKinley students who have earned Master's Degrees and now work in the Boston Public Schools. Other McKinley grads, though not as large number as we'd like, have gone to four-year colleges and graduated. We need to recognize and celebrate the achievements of these students.

Let me give the final words to **Jeffrey Soivilien**, a former student who sent me this unsolicited message (which I also quoted in the op-ed submission to the *Globe* that was in the last issue of *Boston Union Teacher*):

"But know that you guys saved lives maybe hundreds if you think about the kids that you gave another chance or maybe thousands if you think about the lives we may have affected since."

(David Russell, a long-time BTU building representative, retired in September 2021 after 34 years of teaching, 32 of them at McKinley South End Academy.)

Misunderstood McKinley Thrives Despite Uninformed Attacks

By Mary Nee-Loftus

I have been a teacher at McKinley South End Academy for the past 22 years. I am writing to express my concerns over a recent BTU article by **Edith Bazile**, "Fix Boston's McKinley Schools: Rename them 'Melvin H. King Schools' and reimagine their vision and purpose." Not only was Ms. Bazile's description of McKinley ill-informed and painful to read, for me to find this very negative perspective unchallenged in my own union newspaper was extremely disheartening.

"Once they go in, they don't go out, which makes a McKinley placement a sentence, not a service for Black students." I just can't get these words of Ms. Bazile out of my head because they are actually the antithesis of what happens at McKinley. They totally dismiss the incredibly hard work and perseverance that students display along their journey at McKinley, and denigrates the dedicated efforts of the student's IEP team

including parents/guardians, teachers, guidance counselors, paraprofessionals, administrators, the school nurse, outside agencies, therapists and clinicians, and student advocates. Having been unable to succeed in any other BPS school, students are placed at McKinley because only there do they find the right staff and receive the necessary services in order for them to thrive.

Over the past two decades, I have had the pleasure to listen to and watch many, many students' amazing success stories firsthand during their placement at the McKinley Schools. Given the difficult journey students experience prior to their placement at McKinley, it is no surprise that most students arrive a bit wary. This feeling is amplified by the voices of uniformed people who create an image that the McKinley schools, and the students who attend them, are bad. Quickly students realize this does not reflect their actual experiences, and then these students start to feel a sense of community because they finally see a staff who won't give up on them, who will always advocate for them, and most importantly, who believe that they have it in themselves to make a difference and be successful. For instance, just last week I had a junior tell me when he was in middle school he was transferred from McKinley to a less restrictive setting in BPS. Unfortunately, he continued to tell me that his new school wasn't able to meet his needs so he was very happy to make his way back to McKinley because there he knew he would have proper help, a staff who truly cares about him, and a real shot at success. Is his return a sentence or a service? You know both his, and Ms. Bazile's, answer to that question.

As a BTU Member, the BTU Newsletter has kept me informed with district and national news in education, member resources, and contract information to name a few. It has now been a few weeks since I first read Ms. Bazile's article, and I am still just as perplexed as to why something so hurtful and untrue was placed in BTU News? Yet, to be honest, upon reflection I am even more disappointed that it was considered in the first place.

McKinley Schools: Forever Attacked, Forever Misunderstood

By Warren Pemsler

As I wrap up my 31st year at McKinley, I am saddened to find our school under major attack (again) from forces in all directions. Sadly, we are used to it. We are called a "bad school" by many people in Boston, and many students are threatened before they are assigned here that if they do not "behave," etc. they will be sent to McKinley as a punishment.

Despite this reputation, the staff at McKinley are hard-working, committed, and passionate. There are many exciting and important things here for students that are always overlooked. For instance, prior to COVID, four classes went on over 130 field trips the past dozen years to plays at the Huntington Theatre (75+) and the ICA Boston (55+) at no cost to the students and virtually none to the school (countless thousands for the teachers, of course). This is just one of the many successes that remain hidden to the outside world because, as it has been for my entire career, McKinley is only mentioned in critical ways by basically everyone. Except for the BTU, until now that is...

For some reason, the BTU Newspaper editors felt like it was both appropriate and necessary to republish an article by **Edith Bazile** ("Fix Boston's McKinley Schools...") that connects our school to pernicious racism. Instead of being "serviced," apparently our students are "sentenced" to McKinley, making them prisoners and the staff jailors. Think about that! Like all McKinley staff, I have spent my life's work, my heart and soul, to what many believe is among the most challenging jobs in the BPS, only to have someone who has never been connected to McKinley call staff prison guards, conduits of racism, and claims our school has "no justification."

I get that criticism is the price for our public jobs, and understand that the School Yard News has the right to publish Ms. Bazile's thoughts. I've certainly read more than enough criticisms of the BTU that I disagreed with over the years. However, I never saw those criticisms reprinted in the BTU Newspaper! Nor did I ever read an article about a single school/program that was directly criticized in the BTU Newspaper. Ever!

The horrible decision to reprint this article

unfortunately amplifies a recent one-sided article in the *Boston Globe* that, like Ms. Bazile's article, completely ignores the thousands of students and families' positive experiences at McKinley. Somehow every article can only find the voices of critical parents and students as if positive voices do not exist.

It is no surprise that there have been some unhappy students and parents. Our school, like all others, has not been an unqualified success for every child. That should not be surprising, especially since each child comes to McKinley at the lowest point in their life. Yet find me a parent of a McKinley student, past or present, who was satisfied with the feeder school that sent their child to our school in the first place. Somehow Ms. Bazile was unable or unwilling to identify any of the feeder schools she alluded to, yet still felt compelled to call out McKinley by name as symbolic of a number of the failures of the entire BPS! She quotes BPS's CFO Nate Kuder saying, "McKinley is at the intersection of a number of failures."

After reading this highly critical article in my own union newspaper I quickly reached out to the editors. I asked them very specific questions about their process and boundaries concerning articles attacking specific schools. I asked if there has been a similar article in the past that may have been missed. I requested the guidelines the BTU Newspaper uses when weighing if an article is appropriate. I asked if facts (some of which I dispute) are checked when publishing articles that are inflammatory and very painful. I asked who else vetted this particular article, and who was part of the decision-making process going into its publication.

This is what I got back from the editors: First, I was told that the BTU Newspaper does not censor any article from a current or retired member out of principle. When pressed a second time, I was told that the article was printed due to the current racial reckoning (something that McKinley totally supports), not censorship issues. After reiterating the questions that were still unanswered in a third email I was told that the editors, "...Found her submission to be a critique on the local and district administration." In other words, the article was an attack on the district in general, not McKinley. Let's be real here, the article was named "Fix Boston's McKinley Schools..." not "Fix the District," or "Fix Special Education."

I appeal to the BTU Newspaper's editors to write about the process that led to the article's publication and print how and why this article was appropriate to lead the paper in a new editorial direction. I appeal to the editors to help the McKinley community to understand why we were betrayed by the very union that we respected and supported. I also appeal to the editors to explain the editorial policies that will be guiding the paper in the future so that all schools will know what to expect so they too do not find themselves in similar circumstances. I believe we are owed nothing less.

McKinley Schools Are Once Again Disrespected

By Victoria Downes, Ph.D.

My name is **Victoria Downes**. I am the school psychologist that serves ALL four McKinley Schools. I opened up the most recent copy of the BTU paper, to see a reprint of the original article Edith Bazile had written for the Boston Parents paper. I am appalled, dismayed, and quite frankly disrespected to see this article in print - yet again.

I, as a Black woman, can understand – more than most – the overrepresentation of Black and Brown boys in Special Education. Especially in our district – and definitely at the McKinley Schools. I would like to remind us all – the McKinleys are NOT a choice school. We do not advertise. Children are assigned to the McKinleys because their previous several schools have decided that the student cannot be serviced there. Our staff works extremely hard and articles such as Ms. Bazile's leaves many facts out.

In her article, there is no accountability to BPS, which speaks about the McKinley schools as though they are jails. BPS has been known to place children at the McKinleys who were not in need of that level of care. We are NOT substantially separate – we are a public day school. There are many clear and distinct differences.

There is no accountability, in Ms. Bazile's article, to the schools that these students attended beforehand. It doesn't address the previous school's

record of academic or behavioral interventions (of which there are FEW). It does not challenge the Special Education department on its programming - and it doesn't push back on Regular Education and its lack of interventions for all students.

What it does – is put yet another target on the McKinley Schools. None of you are there when families arrive for an intake and parents are crying because BPS and other misguided staff and BPS parents describe the McKinleys as prisons. It's not surprising because clearly those same people were missing from the conversation when these families were in need of help long before they arrived at McKinley. It is the McKinley staff who dry those tears and hold their hands because BPS has told them there is no other choice.

It's disrespectful to the families and to the BTU staff who work tirelessly to have promoted an article – from someone who offered no insight to her legacy as a former SPED Administrator and what SHE did to undo the injustices of systemic racism in BPS or Special Education department to prevent the overrepresentation of Black and Brown boys in Special Education.

As a dues-paying member of the BTU, a proud staff member of all the McKinley schools, I am infuriated that you would publish something that would continue to target the symbol of the problem and not the problem itself. And to be clear, publishing Mr. Russell's response to the *Globe* article, at the very end of the paper, does not balance it out.

In a pandemic year, when it is incredibly difficult to show up for our students and ourselves - this feels like the ultimate form of disrespect from the union whose mission is to protect all its members.

McKinley Schools' Purpose: A Student's Perspective

By Aberash Lennon

My name is **Aberash Lennon** and I have been a student at McKinley South End Academy for a year and a half. During my time here, a second home and family was built. As I walked into the doors of McKinley every day, I was always welcomed with warm smiles and hugs. In school, each day, I'm not only learning academics, but so many important lessons in life. At McKinley, I've learned to accept change and love myself. I also learned that one single person in the world can change a world. The amazing teachers at McKinley taught me to follow in the footsteps of great leaders and become a leader myself.

When I came to McKinley, everything changed for the better. By receiving the right therapy and academics, I am ready to move on from McKinley with so much confidence. One class that had helped me emotionally was S.E.L. (Social-Emotional Learning). We participated in a program called the Restorative Justice Circles. In the Circles, we had talked about anything that was on our mind and it would not leave the circle. Although I do not like talking about myself or what is bothering me, I now open up a little bit more and I'll take what I had learned from the circle to my new school.

Not only did the Circle teach me so much, but the books I had read with my amazing teachers did as well. I could relate my life to some of the amazing books we had read this year.

For example, *A Long Walk To Water* by Linda Sue Park and *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* by August Wilson. In *A Long Walk To Water* it reminded me of my home and family in Ethiopia. I started thinking about my family and how much I missed them when we were reading the story.

Although the main character went through so much trauma and loss, I did not have to worry about my family because I knew that they were safe and well. Then in *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*, I learned to not let others control me or use my voice. I learned to be my own boss and be in control. These are some examples on how McKinley teaching has impacted my life and how their academics and therapeutic education helps students like me.

Although I am sad to be leaving McKinley for a mainstream school, I can walk out the doors with my head up. I came to McKinley after leaving a program and having behavioral problems. I would get into fights with other students and household mates at my old school and program. But because of the amazing staff at McKinley, I have learned many coping strategies and skills. I am now ready for anything the world brings and challenges me with, all because of what was instilled in me at McKinley.

My Black is Beautiful: An Interview with Lovely Hoffman-Wine

“The education for mind and body was also linked to education for the spirit. Therefore, in the African tradition, it is the role of the teacher to appeal to the intellect, the humanity, and the spirituality in [their] student.” —Lisa Delpit



Things have really been happening for **Lovely Hoffman-Wine**, music teacher at the Edison K-8 school! Not only did she publish an article in, *The Massachusetts Music Educators Journal Spring 2021*, but actress **Viola Davis** commented on Instagram about Lovely’s video, *My Black is Beautiful* (369,237 views on youtube) and Ms. Wine was featured in the March-April edition of this paper!

In the 2017 video that Ms. Wine wrote, (check it out on youtube or Vimeo), Wine sings about empowering young girls of color to embrace their beauty and shows middle school girls supporting each other in a classroom setting.

I met up with Lovely to find out more:

Anne: You had a brush with fame this month. Tell me about that:

Lovely Hoffman-Wine: The work has received a lot of attention. **Viola Davis** (whose picture is on one of the magazines featured in the video) said that someone sent the video to her. If you know anything about Viola Davis, she is always talking about being a dark skinned black woman. Viola has talked about the issue of colorism and about embracing her skin color. She connected with the video because of that.

Colorism is discrimination based on complexion or skin hue. It usually occurs when people with people of the same ethnic group and is based on Eurocentric beauty standards. That’s why the song, *My Black is Beautiful* emphasizes, “look at her hair, her skin, her nose.” That’s why I wrote the video. I would see my students saying negative comments to each other about their skin color. I wanted to address that. It’s important to connect students to their cultural roots. I wanted them to learn that

“When real learning takes place, the Standards are met. When we limit our teaching to teaching to the tests, we are training our kids, not educating our kids.”

we all come from Africa. An integral aspect of teaching for me is always asking, “how does what we are learning connect to the cultural roots of the students that I teach?”

For me, when attending school and college, I was never taught about my roots or where I came from. I didn’t reflect on



“When we examine our schools and educational institutions, we continue to see that the priority is “teaching to the test” and training our students to “pass” standardized assessments. But isn’t education more than this? Lisa Delpit says educators should “appeal to the intellect and humanity” of our children. In other words, we have the responsibility to educate the mind and nourish the whole child. Holistic education in the 21st century demands that our children see themselves reflected in the curriculum, that the curriculum is relevant, and that their social-emotional needs are met. Representation “Students bring [background knowledge] to the classroom every day, including their culture, language, and life experiences. When we acknowledge this background knowledge as assets and tap into it, we create an optimal environment for learning.” Incorporating a culturally responsive curriculum plays a vital role in shaping our students’ identity and aids in improving student confidence and achievement.”

**– From A Holistic Approach to Education in the General Music Classroom
By Lovely Hoffman-Wine, M.Ed. MMJ_vol69_3_Mar2021**

those things in any of my classes. One of the first things that changed the way I thought was **Carter G. Woodson’s**, *The Miseducation of the Negro*. In that book

he talks about our responsibility to pay it forward, to give back to our community. I studied a lot. This led me to teaching.

Earlier in my career, I taught history at a charter school where we focused on developing an African Centered Curriculum. I, along with other teachers, organized trips to Ghana, Senegal and

Uganda for students and community members. Many Black people have never gone back to Africa. **Malcolm X** said, “You can’t hate the roots of the tree without hating the tree.” We went to Ghana and saw the holding cells where enslaved Africans were held. We visited *The Door of No Return* in Senegal. That resonated with me and with the students.

My interest is ethnomusicology, understanding the world through music history. I believe in holistic education—that everything is connected. That’s something I bring to BPS.

I allow students to explore their identity through music and music history.

Identity, confidence, self esteem go hand in hand.

I think that the arts provide a way for students to express themselves. We need to elevate the arts and teachers need to be supported. Specifically, the curriculum needs to be more reflective of the students. I think that the curriculum needs to be based on what is happening in the real world.

People may have a limited understanding of urban children who are so called *at risk*. In the private schools they teach kids how to learn, not what to learn. I think that is the model that works. If real learning is happening in the classroom, the kids will get the Standards.

Comment from Lovely:

“This is work that I have been doing for many years. People are sharing that message. I hope that it is sustainable. This is the most rewarding and impactful part of being an educator. It is my hope that I can continue to teach students to aspire to be their greatest selves.

Check out Lovely’s new release to celebrate Juneteenth!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TjzmPrOrceo>

Lovely wrote the song, directed and edited the video along the Black Heritage Trail in Boston. These sites were instrumental in the Abolitionist Movement.

(Lovely Hoffman-Wine is an award-winning musical theatre performer, singer, songwriter, and music educator. In 2017, Lovely released her single, “My Black Is Beautiful,” a song about self-love, self-acceptance, and pride, which went viral and reached #45 on the Adult Contemporary Radio Charts. Lovely has been featured on CNN, BET, *The Boston Globe*, and *Essence* magazine. With over 15 years in the classroom, Lovely’s focus is culturally significant music and character development. Her songs, including “A Kwanzaa Song” and “Black Lives Matter,” have been used in classrooms across the country. To learn more about Lovely and her work, visit www.LovelyHoffman.com.)

The Peer-to-Peer column is written by Anne Slater (aslater@bostonpublicschools.org) and Lauren Clarke-Mason (lclarke-mason@bostonpublicschools.org). If you have a topic you’d like us to explore, please email us.



Call For Submissions!
Send us “Reasons I Won’t Quit!” to aslater@bostonpublicschools.org

From the youtube Comments about My Black Is Beautiful:

“This one of my old teachers, I really love her. She’s the reason I have so much confidence and part of the reason why I’m very confident in my dark skin.”

“This is my 5 year old daughter’s favorite song. She doesn’t go a day without requesting it. Thank you for reminding our girls just how beautiful and brilliant they are!”

“I only wish I had teacher’s like you when I was in school!”

continued from page 3

five weeks usually in April/May. Those wanting to partake in open reenrollment must contact the Group Health Insurance Office at City Hall.

If a teacher takes a leave of absence and decides to let their insurance lapse during their leave, they must sign up to reinstate their health insurance during the Spring open-enrollment period prior to their return in the Fall. The individual will have to pay premiums out of pocket beginning on July 1 through September

1 after which time; deductions will be taken from their paychecks. Their insurance will take effect July 1 as a result. During the year if a teacher gets married/divorced, has a baby, or the spouse who carried the health insurance for the BPS teacher loses their job, then the BPS teacher has 30 calendar days to notify and submit proof to Group Insurance of this event in order to qualify for the change to be made in their health insurance coverage.

To Change the World: Reflections of a teacher

By David Russell

What do you do after the end of school to process the day's events, to unwind?

There are many possibilities: Listening to music, talking with someone, exercising, taking a nap, etc.

Or maybe there is no time to process or unwind — just on to the next tasks. Cooking, childcare, classes, second jobs, etc.

One thing that I did intermittently on my train ride home after school was to write.

This fall, after retirement, I placed a tall stack of the notebooks I'd filled over my decades of teaching next to a chair in my living room, and I began to read.

And write.

Initially this was just for myself.

What it was like to be a beginning teacher? What did I learn about being a white teacher among black and brown students? What sense did I make of the possibilities and limitations of the job? How did I grow in my understanding and appreciation of my students? How did my teaching skills evolve? What impact did I have?

Along the way I'd written a number of

formal pieces: essays, presentations, re-writing song lyrics for colleagues' retirements, poems, and more.

What I ended up doing was compiling a volume of 30 such pieces from over my career and adding contextualization and commentary to them.

Some students I've kept in touch with, and four of them contributed words to my book. In the book are also photos of them from back in middle school and today as adults.

There are 16 QR codes that can be scanned to bring you to related material.

I've self-published the resultant book, *To Change the World: Reflections of a Teacher*.

If you are interested in obtaining a copy, or learning more about it, email me at russell.woodman@gmail.com and I will mail one to you. The cost is \$13 including shipping, and you can use Venmo, Cashapp, or a check.

This process was meaningful and of use to me, and I hope that the product may be meaningful and of use to some of you as well.

A friend of mine said recently, when I told him about this project, "Everyone should write their memoirs. If not for

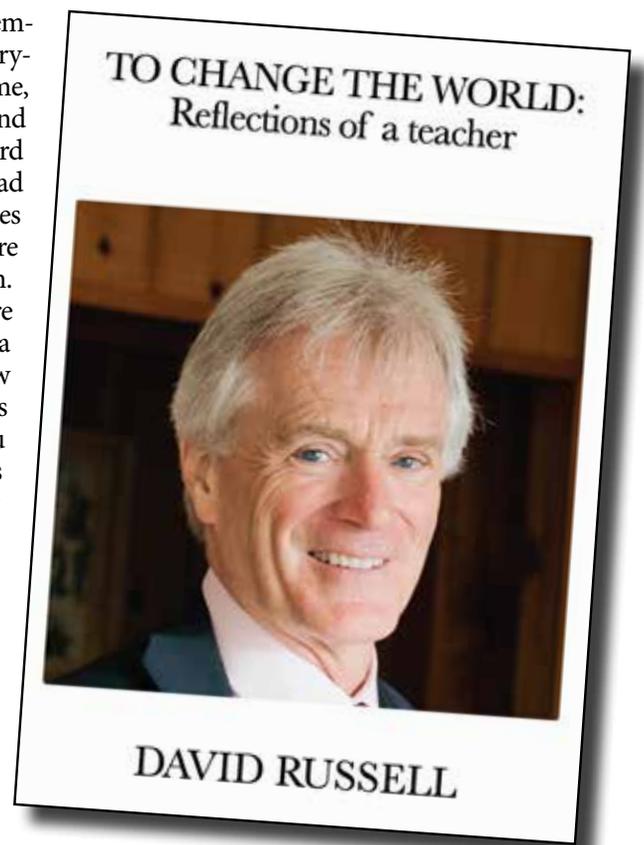
publishing, just for themselves." I encourage everyone to try to find the time, if only here and there and intermittently, to record your reflections. I'm glad that I did. Our memories fade, but our journeys are worthy of contemplation.

On the back cover are these words from Jeff, a former student: "Know that you guys saved lives maybe hundreds if you think about the kids that you gave another chance or maybe thousands if you think about the lives we may have effected since."

I expect Jeff's words apply to everyone who is reading this.

I'd love to some day read what you write!

(David Russell, a longtime BTU building representative, retired in September 2021 after 34 years of teaching, 32 of them at McKinley South End Academy.)



Teacher Leadership Fund Growing Great Results at the Greenwood

by Michael Maguire

WBUR's Max Larkin featured the Greenwood Elementary School's garden on its May 17, 2021 Edify segment. (wbur.fm/3vWL79y) The Gardening Education Project at the Greenwood was funded by the Teacher Leadership Fund," notes Paul Tritter, Director of Professional Learning. "The educators had the idea, wrote the grant, and are executing the project. One of many examples of the impact of this collaborative effort (between the BTU and BPS)."

Here are some excerpts from the 5 minute radio piece:

Crystal Alcalá brings her second-graders out into the garden at least twice a week, where they unearth and identify bugs, dig up weeds and talk in an energetic mix of English and Spanish — the Greenwood is a dual-language school — about deforestation, overfishing and healthy soil.

It's been a nice addition for all the school's students, Alcalá says: "Just taking a deep breath — that has been a blessing as well. We'll spread out and do a little 'mask break' ... and you can see it in their faces, the relief?"



Students in Crystal Alcalá's second grade look at what they've dug up in the garden at the Greenwood School in Dorchester. (Robin Lubbock/WBUR)



Teachers Rebekah Shyloski and Derik Quest gather with students around a raised bed outside the Greenwood School in Dorchester. (Robin Lubbock/WBUR)

"This can look awesome, this can be a great little landscape design if we put a little time into it — a little TLC," paraprofessional Derik Quest says. "Wake up, see something beautiful; it gives you a good feeling."

He tries to help a group of eighth-graders learn the trade. Quest says he fell in love with plants back as a student himself, and he's just glad the garden is there to help current Greenwood students catch the bug.

"Kids can grow up, learning how to plant, how to survive, learning how to eat properly," Quest said. "This is a life skill that, once you learn it, it never goes away. Never goes away. So we're just planting the seed — so to speak."

(This segment aired on May 17, 2021.)

BTU Secretary-Treasurer's Report - Betsy Drinan

Dear Union Member,

The CPA firm of Joseph B. Cohan and Associates has examined the balance sheet of the Boston Teachers Union and the related statement of revenues, expenses, and fund balances for the fiscal year ending August 31, 2020. The audit was conducted in accordance with the auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that the auditors plan and perform the audits to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatements. The audit gives a financial position of the Boston Teachers Union at August 31, 2020, the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the year. This statement is reprinted below to explain in detail your Union's financial status.

Respectfully submitted,
Betsy Drinan
Secretary-Treasurer, Boston Teachers Union

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Boston Teachers Union as of August 31, 2020 and 2019, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the years then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Other Matter

Our audit was conducted for the purpose of forming an opinion on the financial statements as a whole. The schedules of expenses on pages 11 and 12 are presented for purposes of additional analysis and are not a required part of the financial statements. Such information is the responsibility of management and was derived from and relates directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the financial statements. The information has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the financial statements and certain additional procedures, including comparing and reconciling such information directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the financial statements or to the financial statements themselves, and other additional procedures in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. In our opinion, the information is fairly stated in all material respects in relation to the financial statements as a whole.

- Joseph B. Cohan & Associates, Norwood, Massachusetts, June 3, 2021

Independent Auditor's Report

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of Boston Teachers Union (the Union) (a non-profit organization), which comprise the statements of financial position as of August 31, 2020 and 2019, and the related statements of activities and cash flows for the years then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America; this includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation of and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audits. We conducted our audits in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audits to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement.

BOSTON TEACHERS UNION STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION AUGUST 31, 2020 AND 2019			
	2020	2019	
ASSETS			
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash	\$ 6,155,573	\$ 6,758,308	
Investments (Notes 2, 3 and 4)	7,731,582	5,283,262	
Accounts Receivable	339,370	307,430	
Prepaid Expenses	160,697	14,178	
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	14,496,709	12,363,178	
PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT (NOTE 1)			
Furniture, Fixtures & Equipment	714,864	705,720	
Leasehold Improvements	300,470	300,470	
	1,015,334	1,006,190	
Less - Accumulated Depreciation and Amortization	925,847	892,925	
	<u>89,487</u>	<u>113,265</u>	
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 14,496,709	\$ 12,476,443	
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS			
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Accounts Payable	\$ 588,394	\$ 569,863	
TOTAL NET ASSETS (Note 1)			
Unrestricted	13,901,085	11,889,696	
Temporarily Restricted	7,230	16,884	
TOTAL NET ASSETS	\$ 13,908,315	\$ 10,626,434	
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$ 14,496,709	\$ 12,476,443	

BOSTON TEACHERS UNION STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEARS ENDED AUGUST 31, 2020 AND 2019			
	2020	2019	
UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS SUPPORT			
Union Dues	\$ 9,460,480	\$ 9,002,721	
Interest	5,592	5,659	
Dividend Income (Note 2)	121,499	104,966	
Long Term Capital Gain Distribution	15,302	130,248	
Unrealized Gain (Loss) on Investments (Note 2)	311,519	(37,180)	
AFT Salary Assistance Program	21,600	21,600	
	<u>9,935,992</u>	<u>9,226,568</u>	
EXPENSES (Schedule I)	7,924,603	7,963,306	
INCREASE IN UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS (Note 1)	2,011,389	1,263,262	
TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS SUPPORT			
AFT National Board Certification Grant (Note 9)	\$ -	\$ 20,865	
EXPENSES			
AFT National Board Certification Stipends (Note 9)	<u>9,654</u>	<u>3,981</u>	
INCREASE (DECREASE) IN TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS (Note 1)	(9,654)	16,884	
NET ASSETS AT BEGINNING OF YEAR	11,906,580	10,626,434	
NET ASSETS AT END OF YEAR	\$ 13,908,315	\$ 10,626,434	

BOSTON TEACHERS UNION STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE YEARS ENDED AUGUST 31, 2020 AND 2019			
	2020	2019	
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Increase in Net Assets	\$ 2,001,735	\$ 1,280,146	
Adjustments to Reconcile Increase in Net Assets to Net Cash Provided by Operating Activities			
Depreciation	32,922	35,982	
Unrealized (Gain) Loss on Investments	(311,519)	38,626	
(Increase) Decrease in Accounts Receivable	(31,940)	3,685	
Prepaid Expenses	(166,519)	(11,806)	
Increase (Decrease) in Accounts Payable	18,531	168,653	
AFT National Board Certification Grant	-	16,884	
Legal Settlement Payable	-	(70,699)	
NET CASH FLOWS PROVIDED BY OPERATING ACTIVITIES	1,543,210	1,461,471	
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES			
Acquisition of Investments	(2,136,801)	(235,314)	
Acquisition of Property and Equipment	(9,144)	-	
NET CASH FLOWS USED BY INVESTING ACTIVITIES	(2,145,945)	(235,214)	
NET INCREASE IN CASH	(602,735)	262,185	
CASH, BEGINNING	6,758,308	1,226,257	
CASH, ENDING	\$ 6,155,573	\$ 6,758,308	

SCHEDULE I BOSTON TEACHERS UNION STATEMENTS OF EXPENSES FOR THE YEARS ENDED AUGUST 31, 2020 AND 2019			
	2020	2019	
Advertising	\$ 3,200	\$ 5,119	
Arbitration Fees	77,922	61,080	
Audit	43,922	36,510	
Communications	84,656	87,669	
Computer	86,852	76,313	
Conferences, Conventions and Meetings	338,265	387,497	
Depreciation	32,922	35,982	
Donations	172,632	82,380	
Election	-	32,370	
Expense Reimbursements			
President	5,347	5,427	
Executive Vice-President	5,162	5,684	
Secretary/Treasurer	4,800	4,852	
Field Representatives & Director of Organization	33,600	28,800	
Political Analyst	4,800	4,800	
Committees and Others	3,111	6,174	
Insurance			
Group Health	319,899	276,405	
Teachers' Liability	36,418	34,306	
General	17,727	17,793	
Retired Teachers' Benefits	41,419	45,261	
Legal			
General Union Issues	271,704	879,030	
Teacher Assault Cases	5,400	5,700	
Mailing and Machine Room	55,661	51,369	
Office	29,623	44,569	
Payroll Service	37,316	27,272	
Payroll Taxes	152,734	148,315	
Per Capita Payments			
American Federation of Teachers	1,541,484	1,424,888	
AFT Massachusetts	1,379,543	1,297,991	
State Labor Council AFL-CIO	95,591	88,598	
Greater Boston Labor Council	25,619	24,260	
Postage and Delivery	45,526	64,210	
Printing and Bulletins	124,351	108,956	
Professional Fees	2,097	3,561	
Rent			
Conference Rooms and Meeting Hall	16,330	23,793	
Office	120,393	118,019	
Retirement Plan Contribution	171,647	158,325	
Salaries			
President	176,481	173,523	
Executive Vice President	167,857	164,847	
Secretary/Treasurer	158,833	156,171	
Director of Organization	113,791	65,268	
Director of Professional Learning	72,844	76,571	
Field Representative - Elementary	150,009	147,495	
Field Representative - Secondary	150,009	152,161	
Field Representative - Paraprofessionals	150,009	147,495	
Political Analyst	150,009	147,495	
Community Liaison Representative	11,965	12,000	
Retired Teachers Coordinator	16,919	14,749	
Assistant Retired Teachers Coordinator	19,369	11,062	
Facilitators	37,173	29,228	
Building Representatives	273,000	134,800	
Negotiations	14,181	49,435	
Editor	33,248	29,799	
Office	391,276	389,007	
Organizers	260,079	156,095	
Member Professional Development	980	438	
Resumé Consultation	-	135	
Homework Helpers	47,992	63,104	
Teacher Inquiry Project	-	362	
Telephone Workers	13,320	1,780	
Scholarships	80,000	66,000	
Staff Tuition Reimbursement	-	1,000	
Subscriptions	3,385	3,405	
Telephone	45,284	42,279	
	<u>\$ 7,924,603</u>	<u>\$ 7,963,306</u>	



**BOSTON TEACHERS UNION
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
AUGUST 31, 2020 AND 2019**

1. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

Organization and Nature of Activities

Boston Teachers Union (the Union) is a nonprofit labor union organized, funded and managed by current and retired school teachers and paraprofessionals working in the Boston area. Support is primarily derived from union member dues.

Method Of Accounting

The financial statements of Boston Teachers Union have been prepared on the accrual method of accounting.

Financial Statement Preparation

The Union has presented its financial statements in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles for nonprofit organizations. Under this guidance, the Union is required to report information regarding financial position and activities according to three classes of net assets: unrestricted net assets, temporarily restricted net assets, and permanently restricted net assets. In addition, the Union is required to present a statement of cash flows.

Contributions and Grants

Contributions and grants received are recorded as unrestricted, temporarily restricted, or permanently restricted support depending on the existence and/or nature of any donor restrictions. During the fiscal year ended August 31, 2019, the Union received a National Board Certification grant from the American Federation of Teachers in the amount of \$20,865 to provide professional facilitator training and support to the Union. Expenses related to this grant incurred in the fiscal year ended August 31, 2019 totaled \$3,981, resulting in temporarily restricted net assets of \$16,884 at August 31, 2019. Expenses related to this grant incurred in the fiscal year ended August 31, 2020 totaled \$9,654, resulting in temporarily restricted net assets of \$7,230 at August 31, 2020. For the fiscal year ended August 31, 2020, the Union did not receive any contributions with donor imposed restrictions that would result in temporarily or permanently restricted net assets.

Property and Equipment and Depreciation

The Union's policy is to capitalize tangible personal property with an estimated life of three or more years. Property and equipment are recorded at cost. Depreciation is provided on the straight-line method over the estimated useful lives of the assets.

Income Tax

The Union is a nonprofit organization that is exempt from both federal and state income taxes under Section 501(c)(5) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Accounting standards provide detailed guidance for the financial statement recognition, measurement and disclosure of uncertain tax positions recognized in an organization's financial statements. Under these accounting standards, the Union is required to recognize the financial statement impact of a tax position when it is more likely than not that the position will not be sustained upon examination. Management has evaluated its significant tax positions against the criteria established by these accounting standards and believes there are no such tax positions requiring accounting recognition.

The Union's Form 990, Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax, for the years ending August 31, 2018, 2019 and 2020 are subject to examination by the IRS, generally for three years after they were filed.

Use of Estimates

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

2. Investments

The Union held \$7,731,582 and \$5,283,262 at August 31, 2020 and 2019, respectively, in mutual funds invested in equities and bonds that have short to long term maturities and in money market funds through Putnam Investments. The fair market value of the investments at August 31, 2020 and 2019 was \$7,731,582 and \$5,283,262, respectively. The following schedule summarizes the investment return and their classification in the statement of activities for the years ended August 31, 2020 and 2019:

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
Dividend Income	\$ 121,499	\$ 104,966
Long Term Capital Gain Distribution	15,302	130,248
Net Unrealized Gain (Loss)	<u>311,519</u>	<u>(37,180)</u>
TOTAL INVESTMENT RETURN	<u>\$ 448,320</u>	<u>\$ 196,588</u>

3. Fair Value Measurements

Accounting standards define fair value as the price that the Union would receive upon selling an investment in a timely transaction to an independent buyer in the principal or most advantageous market of the investment and provides a framework for measuring fair value. That framework provides a fair value hierarchy that prioritizes the inputs to valuation techniques used to measure fair value. The hierarchy gives the highest priority to unadjusted quoted prices in active markets for identical assets or liabilities (level 1 measurements) and the lowest priority to unobservable inputs (level 3 measurements). Inputs may be observable or unobservable. Observable inputs are inputs that reflect the assumptions market participants would use in pricing the asset or liability developed based on market data obtained from sources independent of the reporting entity. Unobservable inputs are inputs that reflect the reporting entity's own assumptions about the assumptions market participants would use in pricing the assets or liability developed based on the best information available in the circumstances.

The three levels of the fair value hierarchy are described below:

Basis of Fair Value Measurement:

- Level 1 Unadjusted quoted market prices in active markets for identical assets or liabilities at the reporting date.
- Level 2 Observable inputs other than Level 1 unadjusted quoted market prices, such as quoted market prices for similar assets or liabilities in active markets, quoted prices for identical or similar assets or liabilities that are not active, and inputs other than quoted prices that are observable or corroborated by observable market data.

Level 3 Unobservable inputs that are supported by little or no market activity.

A financial instrument's level within the fair value hierarchy is based on the lowest level of any input that is significant to the fair value measurement.

Following is a description of the valuation methodologies used for assets measured at fair value. There have been no changes in the methodologies used at August 31, 2020 and 2019.

Putnam Mortgage Securities - A: Valued based on yields currently available on comparable securities of issuers with similar credit ratings.

Putnam Dynamic Asset Conservative Fund - A: Valued based on yields currently available on comparable securities of issuers with similar credit ratings.

The following tables present by level, within the fair value hierarchy, the Union's investment assets at fair value, as of August 31, 2020 and 2019. Investment assets are classified in their entirety based upon the lowest level of input that is significant to the fair value measurement.

Assets at Fair Value as of August 31, 2020

Description	Fair Value	Quoted Prices in Active Market for Identical Assets (Level 1)
Dynamic Asset Allocation Conservative Fund – A	\$ 5,283,262	\$ 5,283,262
Government Money Market Fund – A	\$ 2,010,745	\$ 2,010,745
	<u>\$ 7,731,582</u>	<u>\$ 7,731,582</u>

Assets at Fair Value as of August 31, 2019

Description	Fair Value	Quoted Prices in Active Market for Identical Assets (Level 1)
Dynamic Asset Allocation Conservative Fund – A	\$ 5,283,262	\$ 5,283,262

4. Risks and Uncertainties

The Union invests in various investment securities. Investment securities are exposed to various risks such as interest rate, market, and credit risks. Due to the level of risk associated with certain investment securities, it is at least reasonably possible that changes in the values of investment securities will occur in the near term and that such changes could materially affect the amounts reported in the statement of financial position.

5. Transactions with Related Entities

The Union rents office and conference room space from a related entity, B.T.U.H.W.F. Building Corp. on a tenant-at-will basis under the terms of a lease which ended September 1, 2005. The yearly base rent is adjusted annually on September 1st to correspond to the change in the "Consumer Price Index for all Urban Consumers for Boston, MA, All Items" during the twelve-month period which ended in the previous July. B.T.U.H.W.F. Building Corporation is responsible for all utilities, including water and sewer, and repairs to the rented space. Payments to B.T.U.H.W.F. Building Corporation totaled \$120,393 and \$118,019, respectively, for the years ended August 31, 2020 and 2019.

In addition, the Boston Teachers Union pays \$15 per day for conference room set-up fees to B.T.U.H.W.F. Building Corp under an agreement which ended June 30, 2007. As of February 11, 2019, the agreement has not been modified and continues under the initial terms. Fees paid under this agreement were \$0 and \$30, respectively, for the fiscal years ended August 31, 2020 and 2019.

6. Retired Teachers' Benefits

Effective July 31, 1987, dues paid to the Union by retired teachers and retired paraprofessionals for two consecutive years qualify them to participate in eye care benefits. Eyeglasses will be provided not more frequently than once in any 24-month period. Full details of benefits and limitations are described in "Guidelines for Retirees Eyeglass Benefit."

7. Retirement Plan Contribution

The employees of the Union participate in a defined contribution retirement plan. The Union's contributions are equal to 10% of the annual salary of participating employees plus administration fees. The Union's contributions to the plan totaled \$171,647 and \$158,325 respectively, for the years ended August 31, 2020 and 2019.

8. Advertising

Advertising costs are charged to expense when incurred. Advertising expense was \$3,200 and \$5,119 for the years ended August 31, 2020 and 2019, respectively.

9. AFT National Board Certification Grant

In July 2019, the Union received a National Board Certification grant from the American Federation of Teachers in the amount of \$20,865 to provide professional facilitator training and support to the Union. Expenses related to this grant incurred in the fiscal year ended August 31, 2019 totaled \$3,981. Expenses related to this grant incurred in the fiscal year ended August 31, 2020 totaled \$9,654.

10. Legal General Union Issues

For the fiscal years ended August 31, 2020 and 2019, the Union received \$356,653 and \$149,909, respectively, in defense fund grants from AFT and AFT Massachusetts to help defray legal costs incurred in defense of BTU members. General Union Issue legal fees incurred in the fiscal years ended August 31, 2020 and 2019, totaled \$628,357 and \$1,090,839, respectively. In addition, during the fiscal year ended August 31, 2019, the Union received insurance reimbursements of \$61,900 in connection with a legal settlement.

11. Evaluation of Subsequent Events

The Union has evaluated subsequent events through June 3, 2021, the date which the financial statements were available to be issued.

BTU Celebrates with an **END OF THE YEAR PARTY**



Photos by
CasSandra Samuel