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President's Report Jessica Tang

Welcome Back!

New Aspirations for a New School Year!



Jessica J. Tang
BTU President

Welcome back to a new school year! For those who are new to the Boston Teachers Union, welcome. It was great to meet so many new educators through the New Teacher Institute and reception, and as we shared that week — You are the union and it is through our collective power and advocacy that enables us to advocate, fight and win.

For those who are returning this year, we want to honor and acknowledge how hard the last few years have been for everyone. Every time we thought it would get easier or better, it seems that there was a new curveball or challenge thrown in our direction. Yet, you all persevered and kept going. Thank you all for keeping the ship afloat against such challenging odds.

As we return this fall, it seems that we are at an important crossroads. Last year was challenging not just because of pandemic recovery, but because of other major events as well: the search and transition of a new superintendent, new school committee members, the transition between new mayors, the threats from DESE regarding receivership, and all the while we were negotiating, organizing and advocating for a new contract.

There were a lot of silver linings throughout this time, however. First of all, despite the DESE report, the untold story is that despite all of the instability, disruption and unforeseen challenges, educators and school staff, school leaders, central office staff, students and families pulled together. Incredible work was done to keep this district going, despite all of the challenges and situations we found ourselves in that were out of our control.

It was also inspiring to see how we all came together against the threat of DESE receivership. BTU educators, parents, students, community members, city councilors, Mayor Wu and so many others came together and united under the belief that we are best positioned to realize the changes we need. The challenges weren't new to us, and many of the solutions were already in the works. The ideas were there and they were ours to implement together in a collaborative, democratic way, not through a top-down, bureaucratic power grab.

Standing together in this fight helped

us see once again how at the end of the day we have so much more in common than not and there are key learnings from those fights. Through our joint advocacy, we saw how we are all incentivized to work together. We were reminded, as Congresswoman **Ayanna Pressley** often says, that *“those closest to the pain, have to be closest to the power.”* We also were reminded that when we fight and win, we also create better conditions. DESE will likely think twice before recommending another receivership or state takeover scheme.

These key learnings were a key part of our ability to settle a contract in July which members will take a vote to ratify or not on September 8, 4:30 pm at the BTU Hall.

We won a number of policies that represent the respect our educators deserve and will hopefully continue to shield us from the more drastic nationwide teacher shortages as we continue to attract and retain our teaching force. This includes a 9.5% raise, paid parental leave for everyone

for the first time ever, a commitment to end student homelessness in five years, sustaining the increases of school counselors, social workers and school psychologists, and many other wins that were amongst our priorities.

Perhaps the most important part of the agreement, definitely the lengthiest, is the part dealing with special education and inclusion. The agreement does not prescribe specific models or class sizes or ratios because we realize that every classroom and school is different in regards to the individual needs, composition, and staffing. Instead, it relies on authentic collaboration at the school level to create plans for special education and inclusion that meet the unique needs of each school community and classroom.

What the agreement does prescribe is collaboration and the voices of BTU members at the table each and every step of the way. We believe that if we work together and are intentional about including educator voices we can solve

the longstanding challenges to ensure our students get the services they are entitled to, and the inclusive learning environments all of our students, those with disabilities and those without, deserve.

We know that the existing model of requiring educators to get multiple licenses has not worked and will not work. For years, our members have seen it happen over and over... when you get the new license, your students actually lose supports. We need to think bigger – and not limit ourselves to what can be done just within manufactured constraints, but what our students and educators actually need to fulfill a vision of a fully inclusive district. There is a commitment to create a new joint BTU-BPS position to support school level teams in the work and to provide guidance as we create what should exist in schools. There are guardrails along the

Again, we are at a crossroads. We have an opportunity to rise from this storm and create something better. We must do it together, and that does not mean it will always be easy or we will all agree all the time.

way to ensure what happened with the Schedule A planning, does not happen with inclusion planning.

We believe this new agreement paves the way for each school to create models that don't rely on this failed strategy of focusing on licenses and compliance, and which does include sufficient additional staffing to meet the needs of students with sustainable workloads for educators. Our voices can and must be heard to maximize the opportunities in this agreement. We are empowered at every level to inform the plan, create, and implement them. And we should not hold back.

Undoubtedly, this school year, just like others, will present challenges. Whether foreseeable, or unforeseeable – such as the MBTA orange line fiasco – we will need to continue to lean on each other. When times get tough, patience runs thin, we have to resist the urge to point fingers and lay blame, and remember that we are a family. Sometimes we fight, but we need to come together when facing collective challenges. When there are conflicts and disagreements, we have to make efforts to talk to each other, and solve problems together—even if it's hard

or uncomfortable. If we are to create the schools all of our students deserve, we also have to create the spaces to do so and each of us can lead by example – to listen, invite those hard conversations including those who disagree with you, to try not to be defensive or vindictive, give each other some grace and patience, and lead with love and humility. All of us have something to learn and something to give.

And when we make mistakes, it's okay to admit it, because modeling that we are not perfect is also part of creating a culture where we have the room to grow and be better.

Again, we are at a crossroads. We have an opportunity to rise from this storm and create something better. We must do it together, and that does not mean it will always be easy or we will all agree all the time. As **Frederick Douglass** shared: *“If there is no struggle there is no progress. Those who profess to favor freedom and yet deprecate agitation are men who want crops without plowing up the ground; they want rain without thunder and lightning. They want the ocean without the awful roar of its many waters.”*

We all benefit from embracing the struggle, as counterintuitive as that may feel, and see struggle as a sign of needed change because when we struggle together, when we have accountability coupled with support-internally and externally, when we have disagreements but can listen enough to understand each other better, we can find better solutions and a better way to be.

We have already shown that we can do this as a union, focus on our shared interests, find our common ground, struggle through adversity and find the solutions we need, together, to create the schools our students deserve.

As we enter a new school year, there will undoubtedly be challenges, but we will work through them together and we will continue to collectively organize, build power, advocate, fight and win.

Ratification Vote Rescheduled to Wed., Sept. 14 at 4:30 pm

The Boston Teachers Union - Who, What, When, Where...



The Boston Teachers Union is the exclusive collective bargaining agent for the school system's 7,000 teachers, other non-administrative, professional employees, paraprofessionals, and substitute teachers. We also represent 3,500+ retirees.

What Are the BTU's Primary Responsibilities?

- Negotiate and enforce the contract
 - Provide the best education we can for the system's 60,000 students
 - Work with the school community to insure our schools are as good as they can be
 - Represent the membership in all matters related to their professional work
 - Answer job-related questions and assist in any job-related matter, i.e., help our members navigate through the Bolling Building bureaucracy
 - Promote public education
 - Promote the growth and well-being of our profession
 - Work politically through COPE to elect pro-public education, pro-union candidates
- COPE or the Committee on Political Education is by federal and state law a separate entity within the BTU devoted to supporting candidates who support public education and who otherwise favor our positions on a variety of work-related issues.

The BTU is Affiliated With:

- American Federation of Teachers (AFT)
- AFL-CIO, Massachusetts AFL-CIO
- AFT-Massachusetts (formerly called the Massachusetts Federation of Teachers)
- Greater Boston Labor Council (GBLC)

How to Get in Contact With the BTU

- Visit office at 180 Mount Vernon Street, Dorchester, MA 02125
- Business Hours, 8 am-5 pm, all workdays, except legal holidays – School Year
- Business Hours, 8 am-4 pm, all workdays, except legal holidays – Summer
- Call 617-288-2000
- Log onto btu.org
- Email staff and officers; for an index, please see btu.org/about/contact-us/

How to Join the BTU's 15,000-Member Listserv

Go to btu.org, upper right is sign-up box.

The listserv is used only for the dissemination of the weekly BTU e-Bulletin. The list is not used for any other purpose including, business, political or personal. The list is fully protected and will not be used for **ANY** other purpose.

Check your status or sign up for membership at members.btu.org

What is the Leadership Structure of the BTU?

All policy is set by the **membership** at its regularly scheduled monthly membership meetings on the second Wednesday* of each month at 4:00 pm (refreshments and social) at union headquarters. The actual meeting starts at 4:30 pm. All members are welcome to attend. (Subject to change **with notice** because of scheduling problems.)

The BTU's policy board is its **Executive Board**, served by 12 members elected at large every two years. Executive Board members are listed below.

Serving as a direct link between the union office and the membership are elected BTU Building Representatives from every building and program in the city. BTU Building Rep's are elected each year to service the members at each school site and act as the liaisons between the union office and our membership in our schools.

BTU Executive Board

Robert P. Carroll	Cheryl L. Kelly	Nicole E. Mullen
Brenda B. Chaney	A. Vanessa LaRocque	James "Timo" Philip
Allison T. Doherty	Michael J. Maguire	Casandra Samuel
Caitlin Gaffny	Rosalinda Midence	Alice M. Yong

The BTU Officers and Staff

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Michael W. McLaughlin , Secretary-Treasurer.....	mmclaughlin@btu.org
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Jennifer Doe , City On A Hill Charter School, Field Rep.....	jdoe@aftma.net
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Erica Kouka , BTU Organizer	
Roberto Jiménez-Rivera , Political Organizer	
Carlos Fernandez , AFT National Rep.	

Executive Vice President's Report Erik R. Berg

Class Size FAQ

It's critical to file a class size grievance via the BTU website as soon as the violation occurs!

Class Size Violations are Down

We are pleased to say that due to our aggressive stance to ensure that our students are able to learn in reasonably sized classes, the district has violated our contract less and less. For example, in SY 2016-17, 289 teachers had class size violations, and this past year, the number was down to only 46. While that is still too many, we are making great strides towards reducing the number of violations. Since 2016, BTU members have received settlements totaling over \$2.5M for class size violations.

What are the class size limits?

In general, the class size limits are as follows:

Grades K1-2.....	22
Grades 3-5.....	25
Grades 6-8.....	28
Grades 9-12.....	31

In inclusion classes, there can be no more than 20 students at any grade level, with not more than 6 inclusion students.

In Bilingual, ESL, and SEI classes, there can be no more than 20 students at any grade level, or 25 if a paraprofessional is provided (though only 22 with a para in grades K1 and K2).

In elementary schools where there is only one regular education class in a grade level, the above maxima may be exceeded by one or two students. Similarly, in secondary schools where there is a singular regular education course offering, the maxima may be exceeded by one or two students.

Will these limits be changing in the new contract?

If the proposed tentative agreement is ratified by the BTU membership and approved by the school in committee, there will be some changes in the future. But for the 2022-23 school year, the above limits should remain in place.

Are these strict limits?

BTU members, and the students we serve, have among the strongest class size language in the state. While we might want the actual limits to be lower, the limits themselves are firm. The most important sentence in our contract around class size is this: "Ultimately, the classroom teacher may insist that the class size maximum be enforced." (p. 25) This right was reinforced by a settlement agreement reached in 2004 between the BTU and the BPS, and each year members insist on enforcement, which results in students being moved or staff being added.

When the Boston Public Schools assigns more students to a class than are allowed under our contract, they do a disservice to those students. It is our job to ensure that our kids get the differentiation and personalized attention that they deserve. We can do this by insisting that our class size limits are enforced.

What should I do if my class size is over the limit?

First, file a grievance immediately. Do not wait. You can do this from the BTU website. At the same time,



Erik R. Berg
BTU Executive Vice President

please download and print the form at the same web address and record your class size each day throughout the year. We will need this at the end of the year to process your grievance and ensure proper payment if compensation is required.

Second, you should insist that the class size issue is addressed. This could involve moving a student or students to a different class or section, opening a new class, or adding a teacher. The district may offer a paraprofessional or other educational solution to you, and you should engage in a good faith discussion about it. But under no circumstances should you agree to anything without the knowledge and advice of your field rep, and our advice is to "insist that the class size maximum be enforced." This follows our contract, and ensures that our students get the education they deserve.

My principal gave me a form to waive the grievance and accept some other solution. Should I sign it?

Do not sign any form without consulting with your building representative, field representative, or

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Health Insurance – when do new teachers sign up, when can we change our plans, what if someone gets rehired or returns from an unpaid leave?



Caren Carew
BTU Secondary
Field Representative

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 30 calendar days from the time they are hired in order to sign up for health insurance. Provisional or permanent teachers, who were laid off and then recalled/rehired, must contact Group Insurance within 30 days of being rehired from lay off in order to re-enroll to obtain insurance if needed.

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 two weeks in the spring (April/May).

Some people assume that because they have their job back, the insurance is automatically reinstated – this is not often the case. These deadlines are hard and fast. Those wanting to partake in open re-enrollment must contact Group Health Insurance 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. They will have to pay premiums out of pocket beginning on July 1st through September 1st, after which time deductions will be taken from their paychecks. Their insurance will take effect July 1st 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 triggering a loss of coverage, 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.

Must elections be held for BTU Building Reps and/or School Site Council Members if the # of candidates running is equal to/less than that allocated?

Yes, according to the BTU by-laws, elections must be held. Running elections allows for write in candidates promoting increased participation and capacity building within our union. Many times in buildings with long time BTU Reps, people assume it's pointless to run, even if interested, because it is unlikely they'd win. Even if that likelihood is the case, getting their name out there allows for increased interest in the positions on the ballot as well as for future elections, committees, etc. It is in the membership's best interest to have more people being mentored to familiarize themselves with a variety of roles for teacher leadership in schools and within the BTU. Without active participation, rights and benefits we have long fought for will steadily erode. We cannot sit back and rely on someone else to stand up in our stead. We all must do our collective part in order to remain strong. We can only be divided and conquered or isolated and bullied if we don't support each other. If each one of us decides to take on a small piece of what needs to be done, there'd be a more empowered membership, stronger communities in our schools, and a better educational environment for our kids. While it is

sometimes difficult to stand up for what we know is right, it is far more difficult in the long run not to have done so.

Why is filing a class size grievance important and how is it done?

Data shows that the lower the class sizes the better when it comes to meeting student's needs. As soon as class size maxima have been exceeded in your class, file the information immediately with the BTU directly on the btu.org website. Refer to the grade and type of class you teach (elementary, middle, high, regular ed., SPED, PE, SEI, etc.) in the BTU/BPS (blue or burgundy version) contract book on pages 24, 25, 27 to determine the appropriate number for your respective class. You should file a class size grievance once the number of children reporting to your class is in excess of the contractual maxima - it can't just be the number on your class list, students must have physically attended school at least once and then not have been officially discharged.

Only in special cases are additional students able to remain in the class thus exceeding the maxima as negotiated. The contract states; "In elementary schools where there is only one regular education class in a grade level, the School Department may exceed the class size maxima by one or two students. For one student over the class size maxima the teacher will receive \$1,500 and for two students \$3,000." The contract continues; "In secondary schools where there is a singular regular education course offering, the School Department may exceed the class size maxima by one or two students. For one student in excess, the teacher will receive \$300 per class and for two students, \$600 per class." For example, in a secondary school if there is only one physics class offered, this portion of the contract could kick in. This cannot be employed where and when it suits the administration except within the narrow parameters outlined above. Under no circumstances can this passage of the contract be implemented with special education classes. As it states in the collective bargaining agreement; "Class size for program prototypes 502.2, 502.3, and 502.4 shall conform with Regulations published by the State Department of Education." It is illegal to increase SPED class sizes. There is an arbitration award that the BTU obtained which states that even if these narrow parameters exist, **the teacher thus affected has a right to decline said stipend and instead may insist on the standard class size being enforced.**

Filing the class size grievance puts pressure on the BPS to deal with the issue as quickly as possible or compensate the teacher for this contract violation. Money is a motivator for them to solve the problem. The teacher only gets credit

from the day they file the grievance until the day it is resolved if it exceeds 15 school days. Let's focus on children with the smallest class size possible. We fought for it – let's maintain it.

What are the primary responsibilities of the BTU and with which groups are we affiliated?

The BTU is the exclusive collective bargaining agent for approximately 7,000 active teachers, other non-administrative/management related service providers, paraprofessionals and substitute teachers. There is also a retired teachers chapter of over 3,000 retired teachers. The BTU promotes public school education, its importance in a democracy, and the continued improvement of its quality as well as the growth and quality of our profession.

The Boston Teachers Union negotiates and enforces the BTU/BPS collective bargaining agreement [CBA/ contract]. The Union assists in providing the best education we are able for the approximate 57,000 students in the BPS while working with the greater school community to help insure the same.

The BTU represents our membership in issues related to their professional work, including answering job-related questions and assisting in job-related matters.

The Union works politically through the Committee on Political Education [COPE] to assist in electing pro-public education, pro-labor, pro-kid, pro-social justice candidates. Due to federal and state law, COPE is a separate entity within the BTU devoted to supporting candidates and initiatives that are pro-public education and pro-labor generally through a specific process set out in our bylaws.

The organizations with which the BTU is affiliated and pays dues to are: the American Federation of Teachers [AFT] – our national federation – as well as with the AFT Massachusetts AFTMA – which is our state federation; the national and state AFL-CIO; and the Greater Boston Labor Council [GBLC] – a group of state federations or 'state

feds' of various labor unions within the greater Boston area that form an alliance primarily related to political and social justice issues. We are all connected working for working people, their families, community, and our collective futures!

As an itinerant teacher, do I get a desk?

Yes. The contract language mandates, "All teachers shall have an exclusive working desk in one of the rooms that they use." If you are a teacher who must travel between rooms, in at least one of the rooms you teach in, you must be provided with a desk that is yours alone in good repair for your exclusive use. If this is not the case, please grieve it immediately.

Who determines when Parent Open-Houses are held?

The BTU contract states, "teachers will be available to attend two evening parent-teacher meetings during the school year. Such meetings shall be planned by the building administrator in cooperation with the faculty senate and the parent council with one month's advance notice. Such meetings shall not be scheduled to exceed two hours each. Adequate security will be provided by the School Department."

Each school is strongly encouraged to have an active faculty senate. However, if that is not the case, the faculty must still have a month's advance notice of the meetings.

Do I have to accept an intern or student teacher?

No. The contract clearly states, "Any teacher requested to accept a trainee shall have at least one week's advance notice, and may refuse."

If a teacher does become a cooperating teacher, the contract outlines the following:

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BTU Phone Numbers	
Office.....	617-288-2000
Health & Welfare.....	617-288-0500
AFT Massachusetts.....	617-423-3342
Function Office.....	617-288-3322
Lounge Office.....	617-288-3322
Vision Center.....	617-288-5540
Tremont Credit Union.....	781-843-5626

Boston Union Teacher

**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 September 14th.
All copy should be e-mailed to mmaguire@btu.org and aslater@btu.org
This deadline will be strictly adhered to.

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The Boston Teachers Union hosted a reception for new educators on August 17, 2022.



Campaigning with the BTU

The Boston Teachers Union endorses candidates for numerous elected offices including: Boston City Councilor (elections take place every two years), Massachusetts Legislative offices (every two years) and Mayoral races (every four years). Candidates for all offices can either be an incumbent, those who currently hold office and are seeking reelection, or a new candidate who is challenging an incumbent or campaigning for an open seat. Members often ask about the process the BTU uses to endorse these candidates. This year due to data collected through the Census there was a realignment of some voting districts. Here are the different steps during the process:

During the election cycle, candidates will reach out to the Boston Teachers Union to request an endorsement. If there are at least 25 BTU members who reside within the district, the BTU will respond by sending a questionnaire for responses referencing issues that are important to our members. Once the candidate returns a completed questionnaire, the **BTU COPE Committee (Committee on Political Education)** will review the answers and decide if the candidate should be invited to the next step in the process, an endorsement interview. If an interview is conducted, COPE will next take a vote on whether the candidate should be recommended

to the E-Board. A 2/3's vote is required for this recommendation to be made. Next, the E-Board receives the recommendation and is presented with information about the candidate. A vote is then held by E-Board members to decide if the candidate should be recommended to the membership. Again a 2/3's vote is required. Lastly, a vote is held at the BTU monthly membership meeting during which members have the chance to ask questions then approve or oppose a candidate. A 2/3's vote is also required at this step, but once approved by the membership, the candidate officially receives the BTU endorsement.

Once the candidate receives the BTU endorsement, the true work begins. The Political Director contacts the candidates to discuss their campaign. The BTU holds member-to-member phone banks on behalf of the candidate, which encourages members to get involved with the campaigns. A stipend is provided to members who participate in phone banking. All members who are interested in assisting are encouraged to contact the Political Director. Members can also volunteer to support a campaign by door knocking, handing out flyers, or participating with other needs of the campaign.

BEAT (BTU Electoral Action Team) is the group of BTU members used to engage other members in the election

process. It is ideal to have at least five members volunteer from each school on this team. These members will have an opportunity to participate with how the BTU interacts with candidates both during and after elections (even after a candidate is elected, it is still important to make sure they are supporting what matters). When participating with any political action, members are requested to do so only outside of school hours. If you are interested in joining or participating with the **BEAT** or supporting any of our endorsed candidates, please contact the BTU Political team.

The September Primary is an opportunity to **Get Out To Vote!** There were three ways to vote: Mail in ballot, Early voting or In-person voting. The same methods will be available for the November General election. If you choose to vote by mail, an application can be found on the Secretary of State website, 2022 Vote by Mail Application (state.ma.us). Once received, BTU members are encouraged to mail it back as soon as possible. If your ballot is not received prior to election day it will not be counted. Early voting occurs at designated locations around the city within your municipal district.

#BTUvotes began to encourage BTU members to vote in every election. Primary Elections are very important when multiple candidates of the same party are campaigning for the same elected posi-



Johnny McInnis
BTU Political Director

tion. After the Primary, the candidate or candidates move forward to the General Election in November. This November we will vote for state and statewide candidates including a new Governor. All elections are important including those that do not occur during the regular election cycle. Those elections are referred to as Special Elections. Special Elections are held when a seat is vacated in between a regular election cycle. BTU members are encouraged to take pictures and post on social media using the **#BTUvotes** whenever voting or supporting a BTU endorsed candidate. No matter which method you choose to vote, be sure to upload your photo to support the importance of voting.

If you would like more information or to participate in anything mentioned in this article, please contact Political Director, **Johnny McInnis** at jmcinnis@btu.org or Political Organizer, **Roberto Jimenez** at rjimenez@btu.org.

Build Power through Shared Decision-Making in School Site Councils

By **Caren Carew, BTU Secondary Field Representative**

Stand up, speak out - building our collective agency and power through being an active stakeholder holding our School Site Council space! Let's continue to be out front in the area of school reform initiatives at each one of our schools through shared decision making as a part of our School Site Councils.

Being an active part of shared decision making enables us to be part of the solution. Many initiatives that a school community wishes to implement in order to effect change at their school can be modified or 'waived' through our collective bargaining agreement. Much of what people seek to accomplish when proposing to become pilot, innovation or in-district charter school can largely be achieved through the SSC waiver process. Let's become more a part of the active solution of these concerns now facing us, rather than allowing, by tacit agreement, educational reforms be done **to us not with us**.

Shared decision making utilizing the School Site Council model works better with increased BTU members active involvement. The time is now for all of us to believe, to stand up, be counted, and to become involved along with parent and community partners to reclaim our schools and collective futures!

Becoming an active member of the community is hard. It is harder still to not act and to suffer the consequences of our voices, expertise, and concerns not being heard and included in the mix. Our everyday work requires us to focus on children - let's make sure the decisions made through the School Site Council (SSC) do just that through our active BTU involvement.

While all schools in Massachusetts are mandated to have School Site Councils (SSC) composed of parents, teachers, and the principal - it is only an advisory body to the principal. In contrast, the Boston Public Schools defines SCC as a

shared decision-making body with actual authority and responsibility for their schools. School Based Management/Shared Decision Making (SBM/SDM) is the process that School Site Councils use to engage the school community in the planning and implementation of school improvement/decision-making efforts.

In each school, first there is an election to choose Building Representatives run each year in May/June. Once BTU Building Reps are in place, they run elections prior to October 15th for BTU members to serve on the School Site Council - Shared Decision-Making Team. The BTU Building Representatives also run an election to select Faculty Senate members. The faculty elects representatives to these positions and the elected representatives, be they to the BTU, SSC, or Faculty Senate need to be supported by the faculty that elected them as they in turn, support their colleagues. We are all connected.

The role of the SSC, as established in the contract between the Boston School Committee and the BTU, is to manage all matters that relate to the operation of the school, including: priority and objective setting; development of a QISP; design and scheduling of instructional program and curriculum; budgeting and fund raising aligned with schools' academic goals; purchasing and disbursement of discretionary funds; space utilization; hiring of new staff and 2nd and 3rd year provisionals; staff assignment including teaching and non-teaching duties; parent-teacher relations and functions; solicitation and use of outside professionals and social service resources; setting reasonable dress codes; any other matter relating to the operation of the school; on high school level review of student handbook.

School Site Council members are elected to bring forth and vote representing their constituency, not only themselves. In order to be able to do this effectively, they can often gain knowl-

edge of the overall staff's perspective through Faculty Senate meetings, as well as cluster/academy/unit/pod/SLC/PLC meetings. Anyone from the school community is encouraged to attend SSC meetings. Only those who are elected SSC members may cast a vote, but up until the vote, all parties are encouraged to participate fully. Please refer to the BTU Collective Bargaining Agreement, - 'The Contract' 2016-2018 (blue) pages 9-16 for specific information pertaining to School Site Councils.

It is expected that SSC will function by consensus or general agreement of its members. Consensus does not require that there be unanimous agreement but rather insures each group member has an opportunity to comment on, understands, and can live with and is willing to implement the decision. Building consensus involves everyone having the opportunity to be heard. Members of the SSC are expected to operate as a single decision-making team to work together to fashion effective solutions to the school's educational challenges.

Monthly SSC meetings must be held and are subject to the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law requiring all meetings be posted and open to the entire school community - not held behind closed doors. Shared decision making requires give and take. Decisions should be reached by consensus whenever possible. A quorum must be present at the SSC meeting in order to take a vote or make a decision. A quorum includes the principal, 2 teachers and 2 parents for an SSC of 9 - 12 members. For an SSC with 13 or more members, a quorum includes the principal, 3 parents and 3 teachers. If a quorum is not present, no decisions may be made.

Shared decision-making is a process in which all members of the education community at the school level collaborate in identifying challenges, defining goals, formulating policy, implementing programs, and learn from experience.

In BPS the SSC is an elected group of parents, teachers/BTU members, and students at the high school level, including the principal - that has the authority to make many of the decisions about the school. There can also be Associate members as well as the general public who are non-voting that can participate fully in SSC meetings. Elections for new BTU members to the SSC should be held by each school's BTU Reps for openings on the SSC prior to the Council's first meeting which contractually must be held no later than October 31st. The parent members to represent on the SSC are elected by each school's parent council.

Minutes of the meetings must be made available within five school days following said meetings. If this does not occur, there is not adequate communication within the school community of what is occurring in the decision-making body of the school which often results in a feeling of disenfranchisement. Any SSC member can put items on the agenda of an SSC meeting as long as they fall under the authority of the SSC. SSC meetings are to be co-chaired by the principal and one other member elected by the SSC. This is to ensure that one person and their agenda do not dominate the meetings. The concept is shared decision making - not having one person make the decisions and then share them with the rest of the committee!

This structure is a potentially powerful tool enabling the SSC to effectively 'waive' certain components of the BTU Contract. The Union has provided a means for individual schools to have more autonomy as it relates to our contract - if the procedure is followed properly. The BTU is part of the solution to school improvement efforts. Our Contract reads in part, "*The purpose of shared decision making is to create a climate in the schools where the faculty, parents, administrators, ... working together share the responsibility and accountability for*

continued on page 14

Contractual Benefit Package for All Teachers*



All BPS teachers (*) are eligible to take advantage of a range of contractual benefits and provisions that have resulted from years of collective bargaining between the School Department and the Boston Teachers Union. A summary of many of the more important benefits and provisions follows.

Where mentioned, the BTU office can forward more detailed information. The BTU Field Reps., **Caren Carew** and **Lea Serena** can provide more information. Or please feel free to call or email me (jtang@btu.org). Also, please note that each school has BTU Building Representatives, elected at each school, who can provide more detailed information. Further, we now have BTU Regional Leaders, just one more way we are trying to meet your needs by bringing better service.

(*) includes nurses, psychologists, SLPs, OTs, PTs, etc., and all other covered professional members in our bargaining unit. There is another article in this newspaper that relates to paraprofessionals.

Copies of the BTU Contract are available through BTU Building Representatives or by calling the BTU office. The contract is also available on line. For more detailed information on any of the below, please call the BTU office. All references to the BTU Contract are to the burgundy contract booklet.

If you need a booklet, please call the BTU office. References to the school department's web page are accurate as of mid-August, though they will change as the department updates its yearly circular offerings. A complete listing of department circulars can be found at <http://www.bostonpublicschools.org/domain/1884> as of mid-summer, 2017. All web pages referred to are accurate as of early August 2017 but all locations may have

changed when newspaper appears in print. The postings are yearly staples and are easy to track down. If you have any questions, please call the union office.

Incidentally, all of the below applies generally to all teachers, etc. However, some schools are in state receivership (Holland and Dever) and certain 'benefits' – like the right to file a grievance – may not apply. Similarly, we have dozens of other schools (Innovations, Pilots, Horace Mann in-district charters, Turnarounds) whose members are subject to an election-to-work agreement (EWA) that in some cases trumps the Collective Bargaining Agreement. Given that there are 40+ schools with some autonomy, it is impossible to give a complete listing here of what benefit does or does not apply. However, we are working on getting all of these agreements on the new BTU website under "Contracts." It is reasonably safe to assume that all financial benefits – salary, career awards, lanes, maternity leave, retirement savings' plans, flexible spending plans, health insurance, tuition reimbursement, and so on – do apply to all. The only exception here is that the schools in receivership have developed some of their own rules and should you work there, you are advised to call the BTU office and speak to Michael.

Please remember that the links on the BPS webpage below are subject to change (**but they won't go far!**).

All references to the BTU contract refer to the red contract booklet, which goes from 9/1/2018 through 8/31/2021, and continues until a successor agreement is reached and ratified.

Booklets can be obtained through your BTU School Building Rep., or by calling the office at 617-288-2000. You may also access the information online here: <https://btu.org/contracts/>

SALARY & BENEFITS

	BENEFIT	HOW IT TAKES EFFECT?	HOW TO LEARN MORE?	WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR?
Salary Step Placement	Up to 3 years' credit for both inside and outside the system, (6 total) if service meets certain criteria.	You must apply with app and documentation. Not necessarily retroactive , so do not delay in filing.	See https://btu.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Salary-Grids.pdf also contract pp. 99-100 or call the BTU office at 617-288-2000 and ask for a field representative.	'Inside' or prior Boston service includes substitute teaching time under certain conditions. Outside service does not.
Salary Lane Placement	B+15, Masters, M15, 30, 45, 60, 75, Doctorate	You must apply and supply documentation. Not necessarily retroactive ; do not delay in filing either PS O3 form or supporting credentials	See BTU contract pp. 101-102.	Maintain date-stamped records of all transmissions to the Bolling Building. It is suggested that these documents be hand delivered as the lane change maybe time sensitive.
Salary Lane: In-Service Credits	Limit of in-service credits increased to 30	Upon application to HR; make sure you follow instructions and keep a copy of documents transmitted, with date stamp	See procedure found here: Go to http://www.bostonpublicschools.org/page/7959	The 20 in-service limit was in place for at least 25 years, so you may have long forgotten about surplus credits earned. These credits you may have squirreled away are now valuable.
Health Insurance	3 different plans, PPO, 2 HMOs	You must apply w/i 60 days of date of hire. Deadline is FIRM . New dependents must be added within 30 days.	See BTU or call Group Insurance Office @ 617-635-4570 or see https://www.bostonpublicschools.org/Page/3180 Each spring there is an Open Enrollment period to change plans. Group Insurance hosts for your convenience an insurance fair at the BTU, also in the spring. All changes elected during Open Enrollment take place on July 1.	This is a most important benefit. Talk to a few colleagues before making a decision. Health coverage takes a month or so to start, depending on when you sign up at City Hall. If you take a leave of absence and drop your coverage, you must re-enroll during the open enrollment period. The plans are under an agreement with all city unions.
Health and Welfare	Includes Dental, Eye Care, and Legal benefit. City pays plan premium, but some benefits have small co-pays.	Apply at BTU H&W office or at 288-0500. Benefit effective retro. to start of prov. contract, but implementation can be delayed.	Call BTU H&W @ 617-288-0500 or see http://www.btuwhf.org	H&W Dental coverage is different from city's health plan. And 2) The H&W dental plan has two options, one through Delta Dental and one through Harvard Dental. Take your time to make an informed decision.
Salary Item: Tuition Reimbursement	All permanent teachers on 'steps' 1-9 (9 for the 1st time) get up \$1,000/yr. Provs. get \$500. Paras with three or more years of service are covered with similar benefit	This took effect 9/1/04, and is paid as tax-free reimbursement for tuition. Paras are added as of 9/1/07.	See: https://www.bostonpublicschools.org/cms/lib07/MA01906464/Centricity/Domain/293/Circulars/Tuition%20Reimbursement.pdf	If you were eligible for this benefit last year but did not submit documentation in time, call the union office. Pay attention to reporting deadlines.
Salary Item: NBPTS Teachers	Members certified under the standards of the NBPTS now get a 4% raise. Members also get reimbursed for the cost of application fees upon successful attainment of certification.	This salary differential took effect 9/1/03	See the National Board (NBPTS) website at http://www.nbpts.org/ for eligibility rules, subject areas covered, etc., and the BTU contract, pp 85-86.	The NBPTS regrettably does not grant certification in all subject areas and in all job categories, though categories are expanding regularly.
Performing Arts Teachers	Performing Arts, theater, music, drama drama, and choral group teachers can get \$1600 stipend.	If one of the aforementioned teachers conducts after school rehearsals and practices which culminate in final precautions and/or festivals.	BTU contract, P. 47	This is a relatively new benefit, a long time in coming. Please call one of the field reps if you have any questions.
Flexible Spending Program – Dependent Care	Use up to \$5,000 in pre-tax dollars for dependent care; excellent tax benefit. This is an IRS-approved program that is quite beneficial when used properly.	Apply within 30 days of hire or during Open Enrollment usually beginning mid-October; announcement will be made in BTU e-Bulletin. To sign up for e-Bulletin, go to: https://btu.org/bulletin/	Call the BTU office @ 617-288-2000. For more detailed information, call CPA, Inc. @ 1-800-544-2340 or Group Insurance at 617-635-4570 or see http://www.cpa125.com/	Be careful when creating a deduction as you cannot change the deduction for the entire calendar year once you agree to it. Your dependent care reimbursements CANNOT outpace your deduction schedule.
Flexible Spending Program – Medical	Use up to \$2,550 (new cap this year) in pre-tax dollars for out-of-pocket medical expenses; excellent tax benefit	Same as dependent care (above).	Same as dependent care see http://www.cpa125.com/ or http://www.bostonpublicschools.org/domain/1884 and search for flexible.	Again, be careful when setting up your deduction. Your medical reimbursements CAN outpace your deduction schedule.
Flexible Spending Program – Transportation and Parking	As with the above programs, though subject to different dollar limitations, this program allows the use of pre-tax dollars to be spent on mass transit and parking activities.	No eligibility requirement.	See http://www.cpa125.com/ or same as above.	Make sure you will need this benefit for the entire calendar year when you sign up, as deductions cannot generally be stopped once started. All of these programs are extremely beneficial when properly used, but caution is advised.
Life Insurance	City sponsors standard \$5,000 term insurance plan for BPS employees and city vendor sells additional coverage. See here: http://www.cityofboston.gov/ohr/benefits/life.asp	First \$5,000 of term coverage comes with purchase of health insurance. 1/2 of premium for first \$5,000 coverage paid by the city; rest paid by employee.	Call 617-635-4570 for more information. You are strongly advised to shop around to private vendors for best cost before purchasing additional insurance beyond the standard \$5,000.	Beware of insurance salespeople 'popping in' to the teachers' room to sell you insurance. Salespeople in the building often pretend to have some exclusive approval or license to sell insurance. They do not. You are advised strongly to shop around before making a purchase of any additional life insurance product.
Disability Coverage	Public Pension Law grants limited coverage for total disability, none for short-term disability.	Public coverage is inadequate & eligibility is restrictive. If you desire adequate coverage, you'll need to purchase it privately.	See the Mass State Teacher Retirement Board Web Page for understanding the law at http://www.mass.gov/mtrs/ . The state and the city have different but essentially parallel retirement and disability plans in all respects. The state's web page is excellent.	There is a sick leave bank for teachers and paras, which eligible members can obtain days from, after an application process. The bank plus use of your own days (see below), which must be exhausted first, amounts to a quasi-short term disability plan.
Debt Forgiveness	The AFT now has a resource for those who need to learn the landscape of free and underused federal programs that help many student loan borrowers lower their monthly payments and, in some cases, even have their debt forgiven.	If you work in the public service, a little-known government program, called "Public Service Loan Forgiveness" could allow you to have all of your direct federal student loans forgiven, tax-free.	Visit http://www.forgivemystudentdebt.org .	The BTU will be offering a Student Debt Clinic. Please watch for more information in the BTU's weekly e-bulletins. A date and time will be set when this is finalized.

MAJOR (BUT NON-INCLUSIVE) LIST OF CONTRACTUAL WORKING CONDITIONS

	HOW DOES THE BENEFIT WORK?	SUMMARY DETAILS	HOW TO LEARN MORE?	WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR?
Class Size Maxima; Caseloads	Enforces class size maxima and caseloads. Important benefit.	Too lengthy to list here; ask building rep at school for class size fact sheet. See Erik Berg's article on page 2 of this newspaper.	Contract pp. 25-27, speak with BTU Building Rep.; call BTU at 617-288-2000 or visit here at http://www.btu.org/member-resources/csg/ .	Do not procrastinate! File a class size grievance on the BTU website as soon as your class is over the limit.
Sick Days	Grants paid leave when ill, up to time accumulated.	15 days granted per year; unused days accumulate & have cash value at separation after 10 years of service.	Talk to Building Rep. or call BTU at 617-288-2000.	Will need a doctor's note if absent for six or more consecutive school days.
Personal Leave	Grants paid leave for personal reasons with one day's notice.	4 days per year; unused days accumulate.	Contract pp. 113-117; see building rep at school, call BTU office at 617-288-2000.	Your reason for taking a personal day is personal and need not be shared, but you do have to give notice. Unused days are automatically converted to accumulated 'sick' days at the end of year.
Professional Leave	Grants limited paid leave to attend educational conferences.	Limited system-wide allotment of 2,000 days distributed to individual staff on a pro-rata basis.	Talk to building rep or call BTU at 617-288-2000 or email ptritter@btu.org .	
Bereavement Leave	Grants paid leave under limited circumstances.	Depends on family relationship to the decedent.	See contract p.115 or talk with Building Rep. or call BTU office at 617-288-2000.	
Religious Holy Days	Grants paid leave under limited circumstances.	Depends on holiday specifics.	See contract p.115 or talk with Building Rep. or call BTU office at 617-288-2000.	
Maternity Leave	Grants paid as well as unpaid leave & city continues to pay its share of health coverage.	Paid maternity time limited by number of sick days accrued.	See contract p.116 or talk with Building Rep. or call BTU office at 617-288-2000.	Complicated procedure; it is suggested you call one of field rep.'s for more information. This procedure becomes particularly more complicated when the birth is scheduled for the summer months. Again, please contact the BTU office.
Leave for Adoption	Grants paid as well as unpaid leave.	Limited to 40 days per school year if you have 'accumulated' days in your bank; used to be 30 days.	Contract, p. 117.	
Leave for Family Illness	Grants paid leave for family member's illness	Limited to 30 days per school year if accumulated, though more can be granted.	Contract, p. 114.	May need a note from family member's doctor; those who need more than 30 such days are advised to contact the BTU office.
Planning and Development Time	Grants staff unassigned time when one is not given a programmed duty or responsibility. P&D periods are 'teacher directed,' i.e., teacher alone decides what he/she does during that period.	Middle and High Teachers – 5 full-length periods (48+ minutes per) per week. Elementary Teachers get four 48-minute P&D periods per week, plus one CPT period that is administratively directed. N.B. Specialists and Itinerant Specialists get identical benefit of individual grade levels	Contract pp. 230-31; or see Building Rep. or call BTU office at 617-288-2000.	You do not have to complete ISSP's or any other administrative work on this time. It is your time and you cannot be assigned a specified duty or meeting. If you 'lose' a P&D, you are eligible for pay for the lost time unless it is made up. Call the BTU office.
Schedule A ELT Schools	In addition to the above, all teachers receive two more blocks of time – see right hand box.	Teachers receive an additional 40-minute block of time that is P&D time for elementary teachers and may be incorporated into CPT time in middle grades. In addition, teachers receive a weekly 35-minute block of time (either as one block or as 7-minute daily sessions added on to the typical P & D). This 75-minute, in the aggregate, time is not PD time – it's a combination of P&D and teacher-directed planning time.		
Duty-Free Lunch	Grants daily duty-free time to all for lunch, in addition to daily P&D time.	Middle and High Teachers – no less than 25 minutes per day; Elementary Teachers – no less than 40.	Contract p. 31; or see Building Rep. or call BTU office at 617-288-2000.	This is your time and you cannot be assigned any duty during this time.
Job-Sharing	1/2 salary, 1/2 position	Two people share one job; each gets 1/2 salary and full benefits	See here: https://www.bostonpublicschools.org/cms/lib07/MA01906464/Centricity/Domain/293/Circulars/hrs-hs-2.pdf	Start early in the year if looking for a partner; this is most difficult for many, as good 'matches' are hard to find.
Educator Support Program	Experienced teachers in need of assistance can volunteer for a peer assistant.	Peer assistant can provide assistance to one who needs help.	Call BTU office at 617-288-2000 or email Mike McLaughlin at mmclaughlin@btu.org	This is a good, useful program for those who are having difficulty with the performance evaluation process.
Accepting a student-teacher	If you accept a student teacher, you receive two days' leave with pay.		Contract pp. 31, 108 or see Building Rep. or call BTU office at 617-288-2000.	Days are to be taken during last two weeks of teacher trainee's tenure.
Mileage	Traveling between two or more schools on a given day.	If you travel between two or more schools in a given day as part of your duties, you are generally entitled to a mileage payment.	Contract pp. 46, 108-109, 142, 175, or see Building Rep. or call the BTU office at 617-288-2000.	Mileage is generally not for travel to and from your assignment each day, but for all other miles mandated within; call the BTU for more info.

RETIREMENT, TAX-DEFERRED SAVINGS PLANS

	PARTICIPATION	DETAILS	MORE INFORMATION	WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR?
Public Pension	Participation is mandatory under state law; vested employees obtain a pension at retirement.	Call the BTU for more information.	See MTRS at http://www.mass.gov/mtrs/ for more information, or see the city webpage at http://www.cityofboston.gov/retirement/ . The former is superior and provides all you need to know. Or call Michael McLaughlin at the BTU for more information.	If you leave the system prior to retirement, consult the BTU before withdrawing your funds out.
Participation in a 403(b) or a Tax-Sheltered Annuity (TSA) plan	See accompanying article.	Pre-tax salary contributions grow tax-deferred until withdrawn.	See accompanying article in this newspaper.	Vendors walking the halls at your school or visiting you in the teachers' lounge have no special license from the city. Their plans do not operate with any special imprimatur from the city. The vendors are by and large salesman and saleswomen selling a product. Before agreeing to any salary reduction, you are advised to consult with a licensed independent financial planner. Otherwise you may be purchasing what may be a life-time product that will carry with it a heavy lifetime penalty for withdrawal.
Participation in the State's Deferred Compensation or 457 Program	Participation is voluntary; state-chosen vendor Great West. See accompanying article.	Pre-tax salary contributions grow tax-deferred until withdrawn.	Call the BTU for more information and/or Great West at 1-877-457-1900. See www.mass-smart.com or email lisa.cardinal@gwrs.com .	Very good plan, with slightly less flexibility than a 403.b, but worth investigating, as the state has done much of the 'homework' for you. Fees are minimal, much lower than in typical 403.b plans. Plan is monitored by state, which is a real plus. 403.b plans are not monitored. Terrific option with many similarities to a 403.b.
Social Security	Mass. public employees do NOT pay into SS; employees can, however, accrue SS credits at any time in non-public employment.	Those with SS credits can combine SS pension with teacher (public) pension, but some restrictions and offsets generally apply.	Call the BTU for detailed, written explanation or go to http://www.ssa.gov/pubs/10045.html or http://www.ssa.gov/pubs/10007.html for a discussion of the restrictions and offsets. These are most important topics for those who expect to get some benefit from SS credits.	Log onto http://www.mass.gov/mtrs/benefit-recipients-retirees-and-survivors/social-security/ for news pertaining to public employees.

GRIEVANCE RIGHTS

As a covered member you have a right to an interpretation of any provision of the collective bargaining agreement. In the event of an uncertainty or dispute regarding any provision of the Contract cited above (or any other provision, for that matter), it is in your best interest to call the BTU at 617-288-2000 or speak with a building representative. Also, see [btu.org](http://www.btu.org). Most contractual disputes are resolved informally. However, in the event an issue cannot be resolved, you have a right to have the BTU proceed with a grievance on your behalf should the Contract support your claim.



SAVE THE DATE!
SEPTEMBER 24ST

9TH ANNUAL
BACK TO SCHOOL FAIR

40,000 FREE BOOKS AND ACTIVITIES FOR BOSTON PUBLIC SCHOOL FAMILIES!
Stop by between 1:00 and 4:00 PM on Saturday, September 24th, 2022
Boston Teachers Union & Carson Beach
180 Mt. Vernon St., Boston, MA 02125
(Entrance is off of Day Boulevard, before Carson Beach)

WE NEED VOLUNTEERS TO HELP US SORT BOOKS ON MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 19 FROM 3-7 PM, TUESDAY and WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 20 & 21, 9-7 PM. CAN YOU HELP OUT?
CLICK THE LINK: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLS0Hw-RtYtN2E_xPUs_ZYU8pPKx0L715Yz3LYPm8Tmz0A/viewform?usp=cf_link
ALL ARE WELCOME TO PITCH IN, INCLUDING STUDENTS FULFILLING COMMUNITY SERVICE.
Please contact Katina at kmcclain@btu.org or Brenda at bchaney@btu.org if you can volunteer any day!



CLOSEST MBTA T-STOP
JFK/UMASS
ON THE RED LINE

BTU.ORG/BACKTOSCHOOL

What are the BTU Organizing Committees?

by **Natalia Cuadra-Saez**,
BTU Organizer

From fundraising hundreds of thousands of dollars in scholarship funds for undocumented students to winning a full-time Ethnic Studies coach position to involving hundreds of educators and students in the Black Lives Matter at School week of action, our BTU organizing committees do incredible work! These committees bring BTU members and community members together to advance union priorities and win tangible improvements in our schools and our communities.

What makes an organizing committee effective and strong enough to accomplish its goals? It starts with recruiting a core group of members and leaders who can meet regularly to advance the work of the committee. Our strongest committees take the time for core members and leaders to get to know each other. Once a core group has been identified and brought together, the next step is to get clear on the committee's mission, vision, and goals for the year. These become the guiding light for the committee's work that help it move throughout the year with intention and purpose.

From there committees start to meet on a regular basis—many meet monthly and most elect co-chairs to set agendas and facilitate meetings. BTU staff organizers are available to assist in developing committee organizing skills like base-building (growing your base of committee members and allies), power-mapping (a visual tool for mapping out who has power and who can influence them), and campaign planning.

Whether you're a seasoned organizer or brand new to organizing, joining a BTU organizing committee can be a great way to meet like-minded people, gain a sense of community, and develop leadership skills. Are you passionate about one of the committee issues below? Want to get involved? Email **Natalia** at ncuadrasaez@btu.org to get plugged in.

List of active organizing committees:

Unafraid Educators

Educators working to build sanctuary schools from the ground up where immigrant and undocumented students feel supported. Their work includes an annual Unafraid Educators Week of Action as well as a scholarship fund for undocumented students in BPS.

Black Lives Matter at School

A planning committee for the annual Black Lives Matter Week of Action in February.

Haitian Educators

Haitian educators and allies working to support the needs of Haitian educators, students, and parents in our schools.

Ethnic Studies Now!

The goal of this committee is to build a popular movement of people to advocate for the funding, staffing and professional training needed to develop, implement, and sustain ethnic studies in all BPS schools. It also serves to recruit and support educators to teach Ethnic Studies through providing professional development and building solidarity.

New Educators

Arranges social events and connects early-career educators with each other and with resources to help them survive and thrive through their first few years in BPS. As a union committee it also strives to identify and develop potential leaders by introducing new members to union structures and opportunities for involvement.

Housing Justice Committee

We are organizing the BPS community and partnering with City Life/Vida Urbana to pursue safe and stable housing by empowering families and providing access to resources, training, education, political advocacy, and networking.

Inclusion Done Right

Fighting for fully supported and funded inclusion classrooms and for the services our students deserve.

Climate Justice

Advocates in solidarity with local climate justice movements.

To get involved with any of these committees email **Natalia** at ncuadrasaez@btu.org.

What if you prioritized your well-being this year?



Learn **concrete strategies** to help you avoid **the five personal pitfalls** of the educator experience.

Don't just survive. Thrive.

What	Educators Thriving, a research-based personal development program to help educators achieve well-being
Who	This program is open to all BTU members , including paraprofessionals, related services providers, ABAs, and nurses.
When & Where	The program will be fully online . Participants will engage in synchronous learning experiences alongside a small group of fellow educators .

Those who complete the program and all assignments can earn **3 Academic Ladder Credits**

Apply. Applications are due by **Monday, Sept. 26th**
Apply here: <https://tinyurl.com/22-23BTUApplication>

Want to learn more? Watch [this overview video](#) or come



Welcome Paraprofessionals/CFCs

Dear Paraprofessional:

Welcome to the Boston Teacher Union. This memo has been written to acquaint you with some of the major benefits as part of the paraprofessional unit. You will automatically receive union mail once you complete and return an application for union membership. To receive an application, visit www.btu.org/membership, call the BTU Office at 617-288-2000 or request one from your building representative. A bulletin is also sent from the BTU with pertinent information for each week. You can sign up to begin to receive these bulletins at www.btu.org/bulletin.

Salary Step Placement

If you have college credits, you must submit a transcript (official) to the Office of Human Capital in order to receive your correct pay rate. All transcripts must be filed with the Office of Human Capital directly.

Sick and Personal Days

Commencing with the first year of service (following a sixty-day probationary period) and annually thereafter, each September, fifteen (15) days of sick leave shall be granted to each paraprofessional in actual service on or before October 1st of that year. Two (2) personal days are also granted each year. Unused sick and personal days accumulate year to year. You may use personal day(s) for any reason with notice to the building administrator. You do not need to give a reason for requesting a personal day, and you may take the day(s) anytime you wish. (There are a few minor contractual restrictions regarding the use of personal leave, please consult your building representative for a full explanation.) In addition, days are given for bereavement, and for a complete list, please consult the contract. A 10-minute break and 30-minute lunch is part of the para workday.

Health and Welfare Benefits

Paras are eligible to partake in benefits provided by the union's Health and Welfare Fund. Major benefits include a dental insurance plan and an eye care benefit. For more details and to enroll, call the Health and Welfare Office (located at Union headquarters) at 617-288-0500.

Health Insurance

Health insurance is provided through the City's Group Insurance Office. They can be reached at 617-635-4570 or in person at Boston City Hall, Room 807. **You have only 60 calendar days from your first day of service to register!**

Joining the BTU

Joining with nearly 7,000 others makes us a stronger union, and better able to help each of us. We encourage you to join! As an exclusive bargaining agent, the BTU negotiates the contract, enforces the contract, and promotes the general welfare of the membership. All of the above benefits have come as a result of collective bargaining between the BTU and the Boston School Committee. Consult your building representative for a copy of the contract.

As a member of the BTU, you'll also belong to the American Federation of Teachers, Massachusetts (AFTMA), the Massachusetts AFL-CIO, and the American Federation of Teachers in Washington D.C. (AFT). You will begin to receive monthly mailings from the BTU, AFTMA and the AFT. To sign up for AFT benefits please visit: <https://www.aft.org/member-benefits>.

Credit Union

Paras are also eligible to join the Tremont Credit Union, with offices located at the BTU building and at other locations. Through the Credit Union you may authorize payroll deductions for savings and checking, arrange for a loan, and take care of many other banking needs. To join, bring \$30.00 and a paystub or a copy of your individual contract to either office and fill out an application. For more information, call 781-843-5626.

Union Operation

Our membership meetings are typically held the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 4:30 PM. Please keep an eye on the bulletin for more information and details.

Each school has Union Building Representatives, elected to serve the staff in the building in dealings with the administration. The building representative is also the first line of communications between the building staff and the Union office. Many questions can be easily and quickly answered at the building level by asking the building representative.

The Union employs seven full-time officers and staff to serve the membership. Office hours are 8 AM to 5 PM. The office is open all weekdays including school vacations, but is closed on state, local and national holidays, the day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve and Good Friday. The office phone number is 617-288-2000.

The Boston Teachers Union provides a variety of services; we encourage you to take advantage of them. If you have any questions, please feel free to call me or email me at chart@btu.org.



Colleen M. Hart
BTU Paraprofessional/ABA/
Substitute Field Representative

Welcome ABA Specialists



Dear ABA Specialist:

Welcome to the Boston Teachers Union. This memo has been written to acquaint you with some of the major benefits and rights that all members of the ABA bargaining unit enjoy!

Salary Step Placement

ABA Specialists shall advance one pay step per year. The ABA pay scales shall increase by the same percentage increases as the other BTU bargaining units and the effective date(s) of those percentage increases shall be the same as the effective dates applied in those other BTU bargaining units.

Sick and Personal Days

Commencing with the first year of service (following a sixty-day probationary period) and annually thereafter, each September, fifteen (15) days of sick leave shall be granted to each ABA Specialist in actual service on or before October 1st of that year. Sick leave not used in the year of service for which it was granted shall be accumulated for use in subsequent years. ABA specialists who have completed their probationary period will be allowed personal leave for personal needs not otherwise provided for, not more than four days per year without loss of pay. All personal days not used in the year for which they are granted shall be added to the employee's sick leave entitlement for use in subsequent years.

The work day for all ABA Specialists shall be seven and one half hours, inclusive of lunch. ABA Specialists shall have a paid duty-free lunch of at least thirty (30) minutes and not less than sixty (60) minutes of self-directed time per day without the presence of students. The supervisors of ABA Specialists shall review and approve ABA Specialists' work day schedules prior to September 1st of each year.

Health and Welfare Benefits

ABA Specialists are eligible to partake in benefits provided by the union's Health and Welfare Fund. Major benefits include a dental insurance plan and an eye care center. For enrollment in the plan, call the Health and Welfare Office (located at Union headquarters) at 617-288-0500. Ask for a brochure which gives a detailed explanation of all benefits.

Health Insurance

Health insurance is provided through the City's Group Insurance Office at 617-635-4570. Call that number for more information, or visit Boston City Hall, Room 807. **You have only 60 calendar days from your first day of service to register!**

Joining the BTU

All of the above benefits have come as a result of collective bargaining between the BTU and the Boston School Committee.

As an exclusive bargaining agent, the BTU negotiates the contract, enforces the contract and promotes the general welfare of the membership.

As a member of the BTU, you'll also belong to the American Federation of Teachers, Massachusetts (AFTMA), the Massachusetts AFL-CIO, and the American Federation of Teachers in Washington D.C. (AFT). You will begin to receive monthly mailing from the BTU, AFTMA and the AFT. To sign up for AFT benefits go to: <https://www.aft.org/member-benefits>.

Joining with nearly 7,000 others makes us a stronger union, better able to help each of us. (Consult your building representative for a copy of the contract.)

A weekly bulletin from the BTU is posted in your school with pertinent information for all. Look for it posted in the building, or you can read it on-line at www.btu.org. You can also have it emailed to you automatically by signing up for it on our website.

Credit Union

ABA Specialists are also eligible to join the Tremont Credit Union, with offices located at the BTU building and at other locations. Through the Credit Union you may authorize payroll deductions for savings and checking, arrange for a loan, and take care of many other banking needs. To join, bring \$30.00 and a paystub or a copy of your individual contract to either office and fill out an application. For more information, call 781-843-5626.

Union Operations

Our membership meetings are held the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 4:30 PM.

Each school has Union Building Representatives, elected to serve the staff in the buildings in dealings with the administration. The building representatives are also the first line of communication between the building staff and the Union office. Many questions can be easily and quickly answered at the building level by asking the building representative.

The Union employs seven full-time officers and staff to serve the membership. Office hours are 9 AM to 5 PM. The office is open all weekdays including school vacations, but is closed on state, local and national holidays, the day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve and Good Friday. The office number is 617-288-2000.

The Boston Teachers Union provides a variety of services; we encourage you to take advantage of them. If you have any questions, please feel free to call me or email me at chart@btu.org.

Contractual Package for Paraprofessionals



SALARY & BENEFITS

	BENEFIT	HOW IT TAKES EFFECT?	HOW TO LEARN MORE?
Salary Step Placement	Step 1 (first three years) Step 2 (after three years) Step 3 (after six years) Step 4 (after nine years) Step 5 (after twelve years)	Step increase takes place automatically through Payroll.	See contract, page 139
Salary Lane Placement	Basic Rate and then Rates with 30, or 60, or 90 or In-Service and/or College credits and Bachelors degree plus Bachelors + 15.	Provide O.H.C. with a transcript of college credits or certificate for in-service credits.	See contract, page 139
Career Awards	After completion of 9 years of service and increase every 5 years.	Provide Payroll with PS-03 form via the HUB to receive salary increase.	See contract, page 144
Substituting for a Teacher	Pay is \$13.00 in addition to regular pay for substituting in his/her regular classroom. The new rate is pending the ratification of the contract.	Para must be certified as a teacher or have 10 years' service.	See contract, page 134
Health Insurance	6 different plans, HMO and out-of-network individual and family plans.	You must apply within 60 days of the date of hire. Deadline is firm. New dependents must be added within 30 days.	Call Group Insurance office at 617-635-4570 or see contract pg. 142 or http://www.cityofboston.gov key word: Health Benefit
Medicare	Anyone entering public employment after 3/31/86 must pay Medicare tax and is eligible @ age 65 provided he/she has 10 years' service.	Employees pay 1.45% of gross wages. Deductions are mandatory and continue with employment.	http://www.medicare.gov
BTU Health and Welfare Fund	Includes Dental, Eye Care and Legal benefit. City pays plan premium, but some benefits have co-pays. Terrific benefit!	Apply at BTU H&W office at 617-288-5883 at start of employment	Call BTU H&W at 617-288-5883 or see http://www.btuhwf.org
Sick Days	Grants paid leave when ill, up to time accumulated.	15 days granted per year; unused days accumulate and have cash value at separation after 10 years of service.	See contract, page 146, or see building rep at school, or call BTU 617-288-2000.
Personal Leave	Grants paid leave for personal reasons.	2 days per year; unused days accumulate. Also, graduation days allowed.	See contract pg. 146. Graduation days for members of immediate family including niece or nephew.
Bereavement Leave	Grants paid leave under limited circumstances.	Depends of family relationship.	See contract, page 145
Religious Holy Days	Grants paid leave under limited circumstances	Depends of holiday specifics.	See contract, page 146, 116
Maternity Leave	Paid as well as unpaid leave & city continues to pay its share of health coverage.	The City of Boston paid Family leave policy offered 12 weeks of paid leave. Pending the ratification vote of the new contract.	See contract, page 146, 117
Leave for Adoption	Paid as well as unpaid leave.	Limited to 40 days per school year if you have accumulated days in your bank. (used to be 30 days)	See contract, page 146, 115
Leave for Family Illness	Paid leave for family members' illness.	Limited to 30 days per school year if accumulated, though more can be granted.	See contract, page 146
Duty-Free Lunch & Break	30 minutes for lunch plus a 10-minute break per day.	Duty-free time.	See contract, page 139
Dependent Care Program	Use pre-tax dollars for dependent care.	Apply within 30 days of hire or during open enrollment beginning mid October	For more info, call CPA Inc. @ 1-800-544-2340 or Group Insurance at 617-635-4570.
Flexible Spending Program	Use pre-tax dollars for out-of-pocket medical expenses.	Same as dependent care above, but additional eligibility requirement of one year's service.	Same as Dependent Care.
Life Insurance	City sponsors plan.	First \$5,000 of term coverage comes with purchase of health insurance. 1/2 of premium for first \$5,000 coverage paid by the city; rest paid by employee.	Call 617-635-4570 for more info. You are advised to shop around to private vendors for best cost before purchasing additional insurance beyond the standard \$5,000.

RETIREMENT, TAX-DEFERRED SAVINGS PLANS

	PARTICIPATION	DETAILS	NOTES
Public Pension	Participation is mandatory under state law; vested employees obtain a pension at retirement.		See contract, page 141.
Participation in a 403B or a Tax Sheltered Annuity (TSA) plan	Participation is voluntary; 40 plus vendors to choose from. The number of vendors is likely to change.	Pre-tax salary contributions grow tax-deferred until withdrawn.	See contract, page 141. Call City Treasurer's Office 617-635-4151.

MISCELLANEOUS

Job-Sharing	1/2 salary; 1/2 position.	Full benefits.	See contract page 135.
Tuition Reimbursement	\$500 per year/\$1,000 per year.	For paras with 3 or more years of service \$500 tuition reimbursement. 5 years, \$1000 tuition reimbursement.	See contract page 144. (Total BPS expenditure not to exceed \$20,000)-with new contract)
Paraprofessional/Teacher Preparation Grant Program	Legislative benefit, not contractual.	State provides financial assistance for a para to become a teacher by obtaining a B.S. degree at a Mass. College. Some restrictions apply.	http://www.osfa.mass.edu quick link at top right to "grants"

ADDITIONAL CONTRACTUAL CHANGES FOR 2010-2024

2010-2024

Effective 11/1/11 a 1% raise
Effective 11/1/12 a 2% raise
Effective 11/1/13 a 3% raise
Effective 11/1/14 a 3% raise
Effective 11/1/15 a 3% raise
Effective 9/1/16 a 2% raise
Effective 9/1/17 a 3% raise
Effective 9/1/18 a 2% raise
Effective 9/1/19 a 2% raise
Effective 9/1/20 a 2% raise

Pending Ratification Vote

Effective 9/1/21 a 3% raise
Effective 9/1/22 a 3.5% raise
Effective 9/1/23 a 3.3% raise
Paras with 3+ years eligible for \$500 yearly tuition reimbursement.
Paras with 5+ years eligible for \$1,000 yearly tuition reimbursement

GRIEVANCE RIGHTS

As a covered member you have a right to an interpretation of any provision of the collective bargaining agreement. In the event of an uncertainty or dispute regarding any provision of the Contract cited above (or any other provision, for that matter), it is in your best interest to call the BTU or to speak with a building representative.

Most contractual disputes are resolved informally. However, in the event an issue cannot be resolved, you have a right to have the BTU proceed with a grievance on your behalf should the Contract support your claim.

Contractual Package for ABA Specialists



SALARY & BENEFITS

	BENEFIT	HOW IT TAKES EFFECT?
Salary Step	Shall advance one step per year after completion of 120 days in previous SY.	Advance one step effect 9/1.
Career Award	Completion of 7 th year on anniversary date	Should be automatic. If there are any issue complete and submit PS03.
Health Insurance	6 different plans, HMO and out-of-network individual and family plans.	You must apply within 60 days of the date of hire. Deadline is firm. New dependents must be added within 30 days. Call Group Insurance office at 617-635-4570 http://www.cityofboston.gov key word: Health Benefit
Medicare	Anyone entering public employment after 3/31/86 must pay Medicare tax and is eligible @ age 65 provided he/she has 10 years' service.	Employees pay 1.45% of gross wages. Deductions are mandatory and continue with employment. http://www.medicare.gov
BTU Health and Welfare Fund	Includes Dental, Eye Care and Legal benefits. City pays plan premiums, note some benefits have co-pays Terrific benefit!	Apply at BTU H&W office at 617-288-0500 at start of employment. http://www.btuwhf.org
Sick Days	Grants paid leave when ill, up to time accumulated.	15 days granted per year; unused days accumulate.
Personal Leave	Grants paid leave for personal reasons.	4 days per year; unused days rollover to sick days. Graduation days including niece or nephew. Depends on family relationship.
Religious Holy Days	Grants paid leave under limited circumstances.	Depends of holiday specifics.
Maternity Leave	Paid as well as unpaid leave & city continues to pay its share of health coverage.	Pending ratification vote. The City of Boston paid family leave policy BTU members are offered 12 weeks of paid leave.
Leave for Adoption	Paid as well as unpaid leave.	Limited to 40 days per school year if you have accumulated days in your bank. (used to be 30 days)
Leave for Family Illness	Paid leave for family members' illness.	Limited to 30 days per school year if accumulated, though more can be granted.
Duty-Free Lunch	30 minutes for lunch.	Duty-free time.
Tuition Reimbursement	Pending ratification vote.	Starting 9/1/22, ABA Specialists who have completed at least one year of service shall be eligible for tuition reimbursement of up to \$500 per year for approved college or graduate courses. At three years of successful employment, ABA specialists will be eligible for tuition reimbursements of up to \$1,000 for approved college courses until they become eligible to receive their career award.
Flexible Spending Program	Use pre-tax dollars for out-of-pocket medical expenses.	
Life Insurance	City sponsors plan.	First \$5,000 of term coverage comes with purchase of health insurance. 1/2 of premium for first \$5,000 coverage paid by the city; rest paid by employee. You are advised to shop around to private vendors for best cost before purchasing additional insurance beyond the standard \$5,000.

RETIREMENT, TAX-DEFERRED SAVINGS PLANS

	PARTICIPATION	DETAILS	NOTES
Public Pension	Participation is mandatory under state law; vested employees obtain a pension at retirement.		See contract, page 175.
Participation in a 403B or a Tax Sheltered Annuity (TSA) plan	Participation is voluntary; 40 plus vendors to choose from. The number of vendors is likely to change.	Pre-tax salary contributions grow tax-deferred until withdrawn.	See contract, page 175. Call City Treasurer's Office 617-635-4151.

ADDITIONAL CONTRACTUAL CHANGES FOR 2016-2024

2016-2024	Effective 9/1/16 a 2% raise Effective 9/1/17 a 3% raise Effective 9/1/18 a 2% raise Effective 9/1/19 a 2% raise Effective 9/1/20 a 2% raise	Pending Ratification Vote Effective 9/1/21 a 3% raise Effective 9/1/22 a 3.5% raise Effective 9/1/23 a 3.3% raise
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GRIEVANCE RIGHTS

As a covered member you have a right to an interpretation of any provision of the collective bargaining agreement. In the event of an uncertainty or dispute regarding any provision of the Contract cited above (or any other provision, for that matter,) it is in your best interest to call the BTU or to speak with a building representative.
Most contractual disputes are resolved informally. However, in the event an issue cannot be resolved, you have a right to have the BTU proceed with a grievance on your behalf should the Contract support your claim.

Welcome Parent Liaisons



Dear Family Liaisons:

Welcome to the Boston Teacher Union. This memo has been written to acquaint you with some of the major benefits as part of the paraprofessional unit.

You will automatically receive union mail if you complete and return an application for union membership. Call the BTU Office at 617-288-2000 for an application, or request one from your building representative.

Health and Welfare Benefits

You are eligible to partake in benefits provided by the union's Health and Welfare Fund. Major benefits include a dental insurance plan and an eye care center. For enrollment in the plan, call the Health and Welfare Office (located at Union headquarters) at 617-288-0500. Ask for the brochure which gives a detailed explanation of all benefits.

Health Insurance

Health insurance is provided through the City's Group Insurance Office at 635-4570. Call that number for more information, or visit Boston City Hall, Room 807. You have only 60 calendar days from your first day of service to register.

Joining the BTU

All of the above benefits have come as a result of collective bargaining between the BTU and the Boston School Committee.

As exclusive bargaining agent, the BTU negotiates the contract, enforces the contract, and promotes the general welfare of the membership.

As a member of the BTU, you'll also belong to the American Federation of Teachers, Massachusetts (AFTMA), the Massachusetts AFL-CIO, and the American Federation of Teachers in Washington D.C. (AFT). You will begin to receive monthly mailings from the BTU, AFTMA and the AFT. To sign up for AFT benefits go to: <https://www.aft.org/member-benefits>.

Joining with nearly 7,000 others makes us a stronger union, better able to help each of us. We encourage you to join. (Consult your building representative for a copy of the contract.)

A weekly bulletin from the BTU is posted in your school with pertinent information for all. Look for it posted in the building, or, you can read it on-line at www.btu.org. You can also have it emailed to you automatically by signing up for it on our website.

continued on page 16

Welcome Substitutes



by Colleen M. Hart
BTU Paraprofessional/Substitute/
ABA Field Representative

Dear Substitute Teacher:

Welcome to the Boston Teachers Union. This memo has been written to acquaint you with some of the benefits and rights that all members of the Substitutes bargaining unit enjoy.

Health Insurance

Substitute teachers and nurses who work a minimum of three days per week are eligible for health insurance, and this should be obtained within the first 60 days of employment by calling Group Insurance at City Hall 617-635-4570. Cluster substitutes are also eligible for BTU Health & Welfare benefits, including dental insurance, eye care and legal services, and should call 617-288-0500 to sign up.

As exclusive bargaining agent, the BTU negotiates the contract, enforces

the contract and promotes the general welfare of the membership.

As a member of the BTU, you'll also belong to the American Federation of Teachers, Massachusetts (AFTMA), the Massachusetts AFL-CIO, and the American Federation of Teachers in Washington D.C. (AFT). You will begin to receive monthly mailing

from the BTU, AFTMA and the AFT. To sign up for AFT benefits go to:

<https://www.aft.org/member-benefits>

Joining with nearly 7,000 others makes us a stronger union, better able to help each of us. (Consult your building representative for a copy of the contract.)

A weekly bulletin from the BTU is posted in your school with pertinent information for all. Look for it posted in the building, or, you can read it on-line at www.btu.org. You can also have it emailed to you automatically by signing up for it on our website.

Credit Union

Substitutes are also eligible to join the Tremont Credit Union, with offices located at BTU headquarters and at 2 Granite Avenue, Milton, MA

02186. Through the Credit Union you may authorize payroll deductions for savings and

checking, arrange for a loan, and take care of many other banking needs. To join, bring \$30.00 and a paystub or a copy of your individual contract to either office and fill out an application. For more information, call 781-843-5626.

Union Operations

Our membership meetings are held the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 4:30 PM.

Each school has Union Building Representatives, elected to serve the staff in

the buildings in dealings with the administration. The building representatives are also the first line of communication between the building staff and the Union office. Many questions can be easily and quickly answered at the building level by asking the building representative.

The Union employs seven full-time officers and staff to serve the membership. Office hours are 9 AM to 5 PM. The office is open all weekdays including school vacations, but is closed on state, local and national holidays, the day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve and Good Friday. The office number is 617-288-2000.

The Boston Teachers Union provides a variety of services; we encourage you to take advantage of them. If you have any questions, please feel free to call me or email me at chart@btu.org.

You are a member of the Boston Teachers Union with full voice and vote at all membership meetings.

Contractual Package for Substitutes



	BENEFIT	HOW IT TAKES EFFECT?
Per diem sub bonus	Per Diem substitute teachers are eligible. Long term & Cluster Subs are not eligible for the bonus.	\$1,250.00 annual bonus after working more than 120 days in a school year. \$1,750.00 annual bonus after working more than 150 days in a school year.
Licensed Differential	3% differential based on the per diem rate.	If the substitute is licensed by Dept. of Education.
Health Insurance	6 different plans, HMO and out-of-network individual and family plans.	You must work 20 hours per week during a 90 day period to be eligible for health insurance. Call Group Insurance office at 617-635-4570 http://www.cityofboston.gov key word: Health Benefit
Retirement	All Substitutes must contribute to the OBRA Retirement System.	As a part-time, seasonal, or temporary employee of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts or a Massachusetts local government employer, you are required to participate in the SMART Plan. The SMART Plan is an alternative to Social Security as permitted by the federal Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1990 (OBRA). OBRA, passed by the U.S. Congress, requires that beginning July 1, 1991, employees not eligible to participate in their employer's retirement program be placed in Social Security or another program meeting federal requirements. The SMART Plan meets those federal requirements.
BTU Health and Welfare Fund	Includes Dental, Eye Care and Legal benefits. City pays plan premiums, but some benefits have co-pays.	H&W office at 617-288-0500 at the start of employment. http://www.btuwhf.org This benefit is for Cluster Subs.
Sick Days	Grants paid leave when ill, up to time accumulated.	Pending ratification of the new contract. Starting 9/1/22, Long Term Substitutes shall receive prospectively one (1) day of sick leave for every twenty (20) days worked. Cluster/building substitutes shall begin each school year with 9 sick days deposited in their bank each September 1. Sick leave will be cumulative from year to year, provided that the substitute teacher remains a bargaining unit member. Accumulated sick leave cannot be used while serving as a per diem substitute.
Holidays/School Vacations	Grants paid leave.	Pending ratification of the new contract. Cluster/building substitutes will be paid for school holidays and vacation weeks. List the same holidays as in the other contracts.
Professional Development	Long term Cluster Per Diem	Long term/Cluster substitute teachers are required to participate in professional development days with regular teachers and are compensated for this time. In addition, long term substitute teachers are required to attend the 18 hours of professional development required of regular teachers. This professional development is scheduled beyond the school day and consequently long term substitute teachers are paid for this time. All New substitute teachers may also be required to attend up to three days of training to prepare them to teach in the Boston Public Schools.
Maternity Leave	Paid as well as unpaid leave & city continues to pay its share of health coverage.	Pending ratification of the new contract. The City of Boston paid family leave policy BTU members are offered 12 weeks of paid leave
Duty-Free Lunch	All Substitutes will receive a duty free lunch, consistent with school schedule.	Duty-free time.

ADDITIONAL CONTRACTUAL CHANGES FOR 2016-2024

2016-2024	Effective 9/1/16 a 2% raise	Pending Ratification Vote
	Effective 9/1/17 a 3% raise	
	Effective 9/1/18 a 2% raise	
	Effective 9/1/19 a 2% raise	
	Effective 9/1/20 a 2% raise	
	Effective 9/1/21 a 3% raise	
	Effective 9/1/22 a 3.5% raise	
	Effective 9/1/23 a 3.3% raise	

GRIEVANCE RIGHTS

As a covered member you have a right to an interpretation of any provision of the collective bargaining agreement. In the event of an uncertainty or dispute regarding any provision of the Contract cited above (or any other provision, for that matter), it is in your best interest to call the BTU or to speak with a building representative. Most contractual disputes are resolved informally. However, in the event an issue cannot be resolved, you have a right to have the BTU proceed with a grievance on your behalf should the Contract support your claim.

Let's Put Social Back Into Media

Being involved in educational matters can take many forms. Attending union meetings and school committee meeting are important, as those are the places where decisions are made and ratified. After all, democracy is not a spectator sport.

There are other meaningful ways to engage policy makers. Social media is an important tool in our modern method of communication. Regardless of which platform(s) you favor, there is a way to stay informed, be involved, and to promote policies to benefit our students.

Before we move on, allow me to gently remind everyone that you can catch more flies with honey than with vinegar. Too often social media posts become rants of frustration. While venting is a normal and necessary part of life, venting on social media leaves a lasting impression of a temporary state of mind. Let us be mindful that it's not only our supporters who read what we write.

Facebook

The BTU has a Facebook Page called [Boston Teachers Union](#). Please "like" the page to receive updates of union activities. Share with your own Facebook friends those items that are of interest to you. Engage in educational talk with your Facebook friends. Ask them to repost stories that are important to you. That way the union's message is delivered to non-union people.



Twitter

The BTU's Twitter handle is [@BTU66](#). All unions have a "local" number for their national affiliation. Our local number is 66, hence the handle. Please "follow" [@BTU66](#), like and/or retweet often. Good hashtags to employ are [#BTUProud](#) or [#BTUContractNow](#).



Twitter is very popular with news media. Follow a local reporter whose stories you like. Retweet their stories when they are promoting public education, and reply to their tweets when they are

off base. Soon you'll develop a relationship with that reporter who may ask you for a quote in an upcoming story.

Instagram

On Instagram, the BTU is [bostonteachersunion](#). If Instagram is your preferred method of social media, we could use a boost in this realm.



Blogs

The *Boston Globe*, the *Boston Herald*, and the *Bay State Banner* frequently run stories and editorials about the Boston Public Schools. Print media may be on the decline but the online versions are alive and well. Boston policy makers read these newspapers and they read the comment sections too. If you have the time please post a comment, drawn from your personal experience, in these blogs. If time is short or you don't quite know what to say, simply "like" the existing blog posts that speak to you.

Letters to the Editor

If the spirit really moves you, taking a few minutes to write a letter to the newspaper will have a profound impact. Social media is nice for sharing news, but a letter to the newspaper tells the editor that you read, think, and care. A letter is far more impactful to the paper than



Michael J. Maguire
Boston Union Teacher
Co-Editor

a blog comment. Not all letters will be published, but if the paper receives many letters on the same topic it will print one or two to them. So even if your letter is not chosen, know that you helped get someone else's letter in print.

My advice in writing a letter to the editor is to pick one topic and make one solid point supported by evidence. Don't rebut every word in a story or editorial, letters are supposed to be short and to the point. Think one paragraph, not an essay.

Other Media

By now you get the idea. If I have omitted your preferred method of social media, I offer my apologies. The same general rules apply: be positive, focused and informed. But please don't be shy. Your opinion matters and your advocacy is important.

Class Size FAQ...

continued from page 2

BTU Vice President **Erik Berg**, at [eberg@btu.org](#). We believe that class size issues are most effectively addressed by adding personnel.

What payment is owed to teachers who taught oversubscribed classes and the grievance was not resolved?

There are two arbitration decisions governing this situation, if the violation is not resolved within 15 school days of filing the grievance. The calculations are different for elementary and secondary teachers, and in some cases are many thousands of dollars.

Know Your Rights...

continued from page 3

lowing. "Each cooperating teacher shall be given two days of leave with pay, without loss of benefits. Such days shall be taken as mutually agreed upon by the teacher and the administrative head during the last two weeks of the student-teacher training period. In cases of conflict, seniority shall prevail in the selection of days."

This coverage was designed to be given by having the student teacher cover for the days so that it is a no cost item for the BPS. If a cooperating teacher does not arrange for the coverage while the student teacher is still in the classroom, the cooperating teacher loses the benefit. It's a use it or lose it scenario.

Build Power through Shared Decision-Making in School Site Councils...

continued from page 5

school improvement, better student performance, increased satisfaction among professional educators, greater involvement by and with parents, and stronger support from the community."

The SSC is able to adopt waiver proposals which must then be brought to a vote and approved by a specified threshold of BTU staff which then must be approved by the district-wide SSC Steering Committee. These waivers can include decisions which are contrary to the contract rules, regulations and policies of the School Committee and the Superintendent. There are very specific things that may and may not be waived and there is a specified process listed in the contract in which things that are able to be waived may be waived. Please refer to the official BPS SSC Manual and the BTU contract for more info. The SSC has a very specific role with respect to the school's budget process as well. SSCs must adhere to all federal and state laws, regulations and court orders.

Well planned, well attended SSC meetings are at the heart of successful SBM-SDM. The SSC monthly meetings must be convened at times mutually agreed upon by the parent and teacher elected members with the established schedule then publicized for the entire school year. The SSC sets the agenda for meetings and items can be submitted by any SSC member. The School Administrator and the other SSC Co-Chair must solicit agenda items from all SSC members as well as from the greater school community prior to each meeting date. Minutes of each SSC meeting must be distributed within 5 school days of the meeting according to BTU contract and in the interest of keeping the school community fully informed.

There is a joint Union/Management Steering Committee co-chaired by the

BTU President and the BPS Superintendent to monitor SSC concerns such as "...to deal with Councils that do not operate in compliance with the terms of the collective bargaining agreement or where Councils are frequently unable to reach decisions by consensus, or where the principal repeatedly exercises a veto over the votes of a majority of council members." The contract explains that any SSC member may file a complaint with the Steering Committee concerning the operation of their SSC and that such complaints ... "should involve serious breaches of the established guidelines for the implementation of SBM/SDM [School Based Management/Shared Decision Making] and that there has been a good faith effort at the school level to resolve these problems prior to filing the complaint."

The BPS/BTU Joint Steering Committee through the Boston Teachers Union and BPS Office of Engagement (OE) coordinates training for SSC members. Please contact either Caren Carew at the BTU or the OE for further information.

It's time to step up and be a part of the solution! Each member of the school community is part of the team that either decides to be a part of the process or stay on the bench. All of us are accountable for our collective and individual participation, large and small, in the governance and decisions made in our schools affecting our classrooms, our kids, and ourselves.

We deserve to be heard and respected. The first step is to believe our voice can make a difference. I believe it does. We need to build power, stand up, speak up and work with parents to hold the educational space and our shared communities! We are all depending upon each other. We are all connected. Let's support one another and our kids. We can make it better. **Believe in BTU Unity!**

Save the Dates!



Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk
Sunday, September 25, 2022

BTU Back to School Party
Friday, September 30, 2022
3:00-8:00 pm

BTU Winter Party
Friday, December 9, 2022
3:00-8:00 pm

BTU End of the Year Cruise
Saturday, June 10, 2023
5:00-8:00 pm

RTC Welcomes New Members

We want to extend a warm welcome to our colleagues who have retired recently and joined the Retired Teacher Chapter. Thank you for the wonderful work you did educating students in our city. Now it is time to enjoy the pleasures of retirement.

If you or if you know someone who has retired recently and has yet to join, please encourage them to contact us at the BTU office every Wednesday and Thursday for an application and information about the RTC. Remember that you must join the RTC. Membership is not automatic. Dues are \$5 per month for teachers and \$2.50 for paraprofessionals. You can download an application from the RTC section on the BTU website; sign it; email it to mmarion@btu.org or mail it to the office, 180 Mt. Vernon Street, Dorchester, MA 02125. We also have a Facebook page that you can access at www.facebook.com/BTURTC or you can call the RTC office on Wednesday or Thursday and request an application.

New retirees should call the Health and Welfare Department of the BTU to apply for COBRA to continue your Delta Dental and eyeglass benefits for two years. After two years, you can apply for the RTC's Delta Dental plan or you can enroll in the City of Boston Metropolitan Life Delta Plan for all city retirees.

Joining the Retired Teachers Chapter (RTC) Of the Boston Teachers' Union means you are entitled to some interesting benefits. We offer RTC members the following benefits after two years of RTC: a free pair of eyeglasses from the Eye Care Center at the BTU Health and Welfare Fund, and apply for the RTC Delta Dental program for members and their spouse, or an individual plan. We offer a variety of travel opportunities. Members in the RTC can also take advantage of their continuing membership in the Boston Teachers Union to take advantage of the international travel opportunities offered to all BTU members.

For more information on the RTC's Delta Dental Program or the eyeglasses' benefit you can contact Roz Avant, RTC Vice-Chair at the RTC office on Thursday from 10 am to 2 pm.

The RTC holds two business meetings each year; one in the Fall and again in the Spring. We are excited to be holding our meetings in person again. We also hold a luncheon in the Fall for all RTC members. The social committee is working on the luncheon and more information will be provided as soon as the plans are finalized. In addition to the Fall Luncheon, we hold a holiday brunch in early December and a Spring Luncheon in May.

Please make sure that we have your up to date personal email. We cannot use the BPS email for our RTC communications, so if you want to receive the latest information from us, we need your email address. We do not share your information with anyone. You can also find the latest information on our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/BTURTC).

Our legislative committee worked very hard throughout the pandemic. We were able to secure an increase to our COLA base and continue to push for a higher COLA base. If you are interested in working on this committee, or any of our other committees you can contact the RTC office on Wednesday or Thursday from 10 am-2 pm.

Many RTC members joined the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) of the University of Massachusetts at Boston to take advantage of the wide variety of courses that range from language to film



to literature to Tai Chi to American history, American politics, art and food. Details of the Institute's offerings, newsletters and special events can be found at the following links:

- <https://www.umb.edu/olli> (main OLLI web page)
- <https://www.umb.edu/olli/courses> (information about courses)

- <https://www.umb.edu/olli/events> (upcoming events page)

AFT Women's Committee honors Union Activists at the Convention

The AFT Women's Committee honored Union Women that have been long-time activists in their locals. This

year, the AFT honored the following BTU activists:

Diamond Recognition for 50 Years of Service
MaryAnn Urban

Gold Recognition for 40 Years of Service
Roz Avant
Mae Bishop
Denise Henderson
Josefina Lascano
Kristen Pinto

Silver Recognition for 30 Years of Service
Maritza Agrait

We continue to explore additional benefits for our members and welcome your input. If you have an idea of activities the members would be interested in doing or benefits we should explore, please let us know. You can call the RTC office Wednesday or Thursday from 10 am- 2 pm or send an email to mmarion@btu.org.

BOSTON TEACHERS UNION INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL PROGRAM 2023-2025

Greece/Dubai
Oct 21- November 3, 2022
\$3999.00 pp sharing
Single Supplement \$950.00



Acropolis, Greece



The Museum of the Future
Dubai

Portugal/Spain/Barcelona
Feb 16 - 25, 2023

Program Dates: February 16-25, 2023.
LAND ONLY. INTERNATIONAL AIR NOT INCLUDED
Price: Early Bird Price, \$2199 per person sharing register by September 5, 2022:
Regular Price, register after September 5, 2022: \$2599 per person sharing
Single room is an additional \$550
For 4-day Barcelona extension is \$699 per person sharing February 25-28, 2023.
Deposit is \$500; first-come, first-served



Cais de Ribeira, Portugal



Madrid, Spain

Tentative Upcoming Travel Opportunities:

- Thailand (February 2023)
- Vietnam (April 13-23,2024)
- South Africa (April 13-23, 2022)
- Ghana (August 3-15, 2023)
- Hong Kong (November 2-11,2023)
- South Africa (April TBD 2025)

Boston Contacts:

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617-529-0519
magrait@comcast.net



THE BOSTON TEACHERS UNION PRESENTS
FALL CONFERENCE 2022

PEOPLE



POWER



POLICY

USING EDUCATOR VOICE TO CREATE THE SCHOOLS
OUR STUDENTS DESERVE

SAVE THE DATE

FRIDAY 10/21/22 - SUNDAY 10/23/22

SEACREST BEACH HOTEL, NORTH FALMOUTH MA

Welcome Parent Liaisons...

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Credit Union

Paras are also eligible to join the Tremont Credit Union, with offices located at BTU headquarters and at 2 Granite Avenue, Milton MA, 02186. Through the Credit Union you may authorize payroll deductions for savings and checking, arrange for a loan, and take care of many other banking needs. To join, bring \$30.00 and a paystub or a copy of your individual contract to either office and fill out an application. For more information, call 781-843-5626.

Union Operations

Our membership meetings are held the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 4:30 PM.

Each school has Union Building Representatives, elected to serve the staff in the building in dealings with the administration. The building representative is also the first line of communications between the building staff and the Union office. Many questions can be easily and quickly answered at the building level by asking the building representative.

The Union employs seven full-time officers and staff to serve the membership. Office hours are 9 AM to 5 PM.

The office is open all weekdays including school vacations, but is closed on state, local and national holidays, the day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve and Good Friday. The office number is 617-288-2000.

The Boston Teachers Union provides a variety of services; we encourage you to take advantage of them. If you have any questions, please feel free to call me or email me at chart@btu.org.

- Colleen M. Hart,
BTU Paraprofessional/ABA/Substitute
Field Representative