Building Blocks: Together and United as One!

O ur greatest strength as a union is when each of us as individuals come together and unify around common values, beliefs and hopes. Our collective strength is where our power lies and this fall, we are coming back together to organize and put together the pieces that are needed to fight for the vision of schools we know our students, educators and families deserve. The most important building block of organizing is one to one conversations and relationship building, and that is why we kicked off this year’s new contract campaign with peer to peer conversations at our last membership meeting in June.

Over the summer, members of the Collective Bargaining Committee came together to analyze, organize and make sense of all of the information we collected during those one to one conversations. Then, members of the negotiating team and our staff came further sorted those themes and ideas to come up with our initial survey. We are asking all our members to fill out this survey at the start of the school year so that we can have as many voices as possible informing what will be our next contract proposals package.

This process will happen through September and November, with the goal of finalizing our initial proposals by the end of the calendar year. Our Collective Bargaining Committee members will help to analyze the data from the surveys, community forums and contract coffee hours. The Negotiating Team and staff will then further polish our proposals, ensuring that the proposals are written in contractual language and are consistent with our current contract, and then once approved by our membership, we then hope to begin negotiating regularly at the start of the new year.

In addition to working on our contract campaign this fall, we will also continue to advocate for the changes we need at the state and federal levels as well. We will continue to fight for the Thrive Act at the state legislature—a bill that we have jointly filed with our siblings at the MTA and AFT-MA as well as our coalition under the Massachusetts Education Justice Alliance. The bill has four main components:

- End state takeovers of schools and districts (and the statutory authority for future takeovers)
- Create a better process for supporting schools identified under federal law (support, not punishment)
- Replace the MCAS-based graduation requirement with one based on coursework certified by districts (similar process to what happened during COVID)
- Create a special commission to shape a future vision for student/school assessment and improvement

Together, on the federal level, our national president Randi Weingarten has laid out a new plan of priorities, called “Real Solutions for Kids and Communities” that we are unified around as well. The campaign zeroes in on:

- Unlocking the power and possibility that come from being a confident reader.
- Catalyzing a vast expansion of community schools that meaningfully partner with families. (NB: In Boston, we call them Boston Community Hub Schools)
- Ensuring that all children have opportunities to learn by doing—engaging in experiential learning, including career and technical education.
- Caring for young people’s mental health and well-being, including by demanding that social media companies protect, not prey on, children.
- Fighting for the teaching and support staff and the resources students need to thrive. Together, united with educators across our city, state and nation, we are leading the charge to fight for a common vision for our students and schools. Undoubtedly there will be challenges, roadblocks and threats not just to public education but to democracy itself, but so long as we continue to return to our building blocks – organizing and relationship building one person at a time — we can continue to build the unity we need to prevail.

Together, there are so many ways that we can do this, and we are counting on everyone to do their big and small parts. Throughout the year, whether it be at your school or work site, the BTU building, at a committee meeting or event, we hope you will take the time talk to your colleagues, students families and allies that are just one conversation away from joining with us in fighting for our collective vision of the schools and communities all of us deserve. We look forward to another school year with all of you and continuing to be BTU All In!
Executive Vice President's Report  

Erik R. Berg  

Class Size FAQ  

Class size limits at most grades are lower this school year. It’s critical to file a class size grievance via the BTU website as soon as the violation occurs!

Bilingual, ESL, and SEI classes can have no more than 20 students at any grade level, or the lower of the limit in the above table 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 (for instance, only a single section of French 4, or AP Physics, etc.), the maxima may be exceeded by one or two students.

What are the class size limits?  

The recent contract settlement reduced class sizes at most grade levels and in most schools. The newly negotiated limits may be found in the table below. It is important to note that class sizes in schools with fewer than 6.5% of students on IEPs are somewhat larger.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>Column 1: Class size for schools with an overall student population as of October 1 with 6.5% or fewer students on IEPs</th>
<th>Column 2: Class size for schools with an overall student population as of October 1 with more than 6.5% of students on IEPs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K0</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K1</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K2, Grade 1 and 2</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grade 3-5</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grade 6-8</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades 9-12</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource Room/Teacher Caseload</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.

When the Boston Public Schools assign 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. You can do this from the BTU website. At the same time, please download and print the form at the same website 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. While the district may

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 Reps are elected each year to serve the members at each school site and act as the liaison between the union office and our membership in our schools.

The BTU is Affiliated With:  

- American Federation of Teachers (AFT)
- AFL-CIO, Massachusetts AFL-CIO
- AFT Massachusetts (formerly called the Massachusetts Federation of Teachers)

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 weekdays, except legal holidays - School Year
- Business Hours, 8 am-4 pm, all weekdays, 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 sign-in box.

The list is used only for the dissemination of the weekly BTU e-Bulletin. The list is fully protected and will not be used for ANY other purpose.

Check your status or sign up for membership at btu.org/about/contact-us/

Executive Vice President  

Erik R. Berg
T he BYU and the BPS have negotiated a tuition reimbursement agreement that is not located in our contract but can be found on the public-facing BPS website which is not located in our contract but can be found on the public-facing BPS website. Professional teachers who’ve completed at least one year of service in the BPS are eligible for a tuition reimbursement payment not to exceed $500 per school year. All paraprofessionals who’ve completed more than five years of full-time service as of the end of the prior school year will be eligible for tuition reimbursement of up to $1,000 a year for approved college courses. The eligibility for BTU teacher bargaining unit members includes teachers who aren’t eligible for a contract award and who commit to three years of continuous employment in the BPS who also meet the reimbursement tuition expenses accrued in a given school year up to $1,000 per school year. Provisional teachers who’ve completed at least one year of service in the BPS are eligible for a tuition reimbursement payment not to exceed $500 per school year. What is the new ‘contractual hourly rate’ for teacher unit members for this school year? The new contractual hourly rate for teachers is currently $56.81. Document the standard school day, individual teaching days are paid at their own rate (pro rate) based on the amount of years teaching (step level) and the amount of educational degrees obtained and graduate credit earned (salary lanes) and then Portion is approved, and on file at BPS Office of Human Capital. Must elections be held for BTU Building Reps and/or School Council Members if the number of candidates running is equal to/less than that allocated? Yes, according to the BTU by-laws, elections must be held. Winning elections allows for write in candidates promoting increased participation and capacity building within our union. Many times in buildings with long BTU Reps, people assume it’s pointless to run even if interested because it is unlikely to succeed. It’s likely that the building administration will not get their name out there all for increased interest in the positions on the ballot as well as for future elections. It’s important to keep in the membership’s best interest to have more people be 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 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, thereby be a more empowered membership, stronger communities in our schools, and a better educational environment for our kids. What 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. Health Insurance – when do new teachers sign up, when can we change our plans, what if someone gets rehired or falls from an unpaid leave? City of Boston Employees join health plans by contacting the Health Benefits and Insurance Division (Group Insurance) located on the 8th floor of Boston City Hall, telephone 617-635-4570. New hires have 60 calendar days from the time they are hired in order to sign up for health insurance. Provisional or permanent teachers, who were laid off and then rehired, must contact Group Insurance within 60 days of being rehired from lay off in order to re-enroll to obtain insurance benefits. 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 have missed an open enrollment deadline. This period is held annually for 2 weeks in the spring (April/May). Some people assume that because they have their health insurance, the insurance is automatically reinstated – this is not often the case. These deadlines are hard and fast. Those wishing to partial in open re-enrollment must contact Group Health Insurance at City Hall. 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. 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 proclaimed by the building administrator in cooperation with the faculty senate and the parent council with one month 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. If that is the case, the faculty must still have a month advance notice of the meetings. BTU BCP should ensure contact with the BTU Organizer assigned to their school for assistance in forming one. 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 teach.” 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. Do I have to accept an interim 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, “Each cooperating teacher shall be given two weeks’ leaves without loss, without loss of benefits. Such days shall be taken as mutually agreed upon by the teacher and the administration in the spring of the following school year. If the cooperating teacher loses the benefit. In cases of conflict, seniority shall prevail in the selection of days.”

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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: The name of the Boston Teachers Union 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: This issue is for submitting articles for the next issue of the Boston Union Teacher is September 15th. All copy should be e-mailed to creative@btu.org and updates@btu.org

This deadline may be strictly adhered to.
COPE is the BTU’s Committee on Political Education. This program supports political action for the Boston Teachers Union. The COPE committee members are appointed by the BTU President for a two-year term. The BTU uses COPE to endorse candidates in state, local, and national elections.

Why is political action important for our Union?
The political action program makes decisions to endorse candidates. The program follows a process for endorsing candidates after completing a questionnaire, interviewed, then voted upon by the committee for recommendation to the executive board, then recommended for a vote to the membership for the final approval. Elected officials affect education through decisions they make which becomes policy or law. They vote on education initiatives, funding, and they set policies that affect our members and schools. These decisions can have an impact on our collective bargaining ability to negotiate issues such as salary, class size, transfer provisions, school building improvements, and many other factors that impact our students, members working conditions, and schools. Elected leaders can have a huge impact on our ability to do our job well and support our students!

The Union’s Committee on Political Education (COPE) has five main purposes as described in the BTU bylaws:

- To support and strengthen the commitment of the citizens and the government to excellence in public education at all levels.
- To promote and strive for the improvement of the public schools by encouraging and stimulating educators to take a more active part.
- To encourage educators to know and understand the nature and actions of their government and the important political issues, as they pertain to public education.
- To assist educators in organizing themselves for more effective political action, and in carrying out their civic responsibilities.
- To engage in any suitable activities to achieve the purposes stated above.

Political Education

Johnny McInnis

Why COPE is Important to You?

The BTU Political Director

The Boston Teachers Union

is proud to endorse

TANIA FERNANDES ANDERSON

for Boston City Council District 7

Please Vote for Tania Fernandes Anderson on Tuesday, September 12th • 7:00 am-8:00 pm

Jessica Tang, President, BTU

Johnny McInnis, Political Director, BTU

Learn more about Tania’s campaign at www.taniaford7.com.

If you would like to get involved in Tania’s or Liz’s campaign, please contact Johnny McInnis at jmcinnis@btu.org or by calling 617-288-2000.

Learn more about Liz’s campaign at www.lizforab.com.

The Boston Teachers Union

is proud to endorse

LIZ BREADON

for Boston City Council District 9

Please Vote for Liz Breadon on Tuesday, September 12th • 7:00 am-8:00 pm

Jessica Tang, President, BTU

Johnny McInnis, Political Director, BTU

The Union’s Committee on Political Education meets when needed to make decisions on whether or not to make a recommendation to endorse a political candidate running for office. First candidates are provided a questionnaire with a series of questions pertaining to issues that would support our members before being asked to come before the committee for an interview. Decisions are made via candidate voting records by incumbent candidates, responses to questionnaires, and in-person interviews. Decisions can also be made based on support for or against bills presented for upcoming legislation or City Council Motions that are voted on. That legislation could include COLA for retirees, support for English Language Learners, funding for education, educator licensure, MCAS moratorium, and other interests on education. The COPE committee then votes by a 2/3’s decision to recommend to the Executive Board. The Executive Board votes on the recommendations from COPE by a 2/3’s decision before sending it to a vote by the membership meeting. If the membership endorses the candidate, the candidate will be backed by our Union throughout their campaign.

Why are members asked to pay into COPE?

Based on state and federal laws there are restrictions on what Union dues are used for. A member can voluntarily decide how much is deducted for COPE. For example, members can contribute through payroll deduction by a suggested minimum of $2.00 for Teachers and $8.75 for Paraprofessionals on their COPE card which is attached to the Membership card. COPE reports public actions to members at membership meetings. As required by law there is a yearly audit to confirm that funds were documented for appropriate use.

Members’ help is always needed after endorsing a candidate. Please contact us to join our BEAT (BTU Electoral Action Team). This group volunteers with candidates during their election campaign, organizes support on legislative bills, and other political actions as needed. Volunteering can also include canvassing door-to-door, standing out with signs at an event, or phone banking on behalf of a candidate. Contact me if you would like to join our BEAT or if you would like to come to support a particular candidate we endorsed.

Johnny McInnis by email johnnymcinnis@btu.org, BTU office, 617-288-2000.

Contact Political Director, Johnny McInnis by email johnnymcinnis@btu.org, BTU office, 617-288-2000.
Welcome – A Newspaper is a Tool to Build Solidarity

By Careen Carey, Secondary Field Representative

It’s About Time to Reclaim Our Power Through School Site Councils

My name is Cecil Carey, a teacher at Charlestown High School and the President of the Boston Teachers Union (BTU). I would like to thank President McDonald and the BTU Executive Board for their support and words of wisdom as I acclimate to this new role.

I am so excited to help bring my favorite Boston-area newspaper to life. My goal as co-editor is to increase member engagement with our paper and a desire to use the paper as a strong agitational tool. So often we need to defend ourselves from attacks, whether they be real or contrived, hourly, daily, or elsewhere. I want us to increase our use of our newspaper as a tool to respond and present our perspective, our story, our issues. I want to continue the amazing work that Michael and Anne have done in highlighting all the great things that are happening across our district and disrupt the narrative of failure so often placed upon us.

I want to use the paper as a forum to discuss the important issues in our union: burnout, school safety, anti-racist education and Ethnic Studies, inclusion, etc. I will help ensure diverse representation in the topics and writers we choose – but that’s not possible without all of you! I encourage all BTU members to take the upcoming contract campaign! The way we choose – but that’s not possible without all of us to believe, to stand up, be counted, with increased BTU & parent members.

Our Contract reads in part, “The purpose of the SSC includes the development of a QISP; design & implementation of school improvement plans required by the state…to effect changes at their school can be modified or waived through our collective bargaining agreement for specific information pertaining to 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 often can gain knowledge of the overall staff’s perspective through Faculty Senate meetings, as well as charette/academy/unit/ pod/SSC/PLC meetings. Anyone from the school community is encouraged to participate as they see fit. The SSC is not a closed body. Only those or one elected SSC members may cast a vote, but up until the vote, all participants are encouraged to participate fully. Please refer to the BTU Collective Bargaining Agreement and BW Union Contract for specific information pertaining to School Site Councils.

It’s about time to re-claim the SSC will function by consensus or general agreement of its members. Consent does not require that there be unanimous agreement but rather insures each group member has an opporto- nity 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 resolve conflict and make decisions about the school’s educational challenges.

During the school year, monthly SSC meetings must be held and are subject to the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law requirements. All meetings must 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 action. A quorum includes the principal, 2 teachers/BTU and 2 parents for an SSC of 9 – 12 members. For an SSC with 13 or more members, a quorum includes the principal, 1 parent, 3 teachers/BTU. If a quorum is not present, no decisions may be made.

Shared decision making is a process in which all members of the education commu-

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### SALARY & BENEFITS

**Salary Step Placement**
- Up to 3 years’ credit for both inside and outside the system. 8 total if service meets certain criteria.

**Salary Lane Placement**
- B15, Master’s, M1S, 30, 45, 65, 75, Doctorate
- You must apply and supply documentation. Not necessarily net worth, so do not delay in filing.

**Salary Lane-Income Credits**
- Length of service increases credited 30
- Upon application to HR, make sure you follow instructions and keep a copy of documents transmitted, with date stamp

**Health Insurance**
- 3 different plans, PPO, 2 HMOs
- You must apply by 6/10 days of date of hire. Deadline is FIRM. New dependents must be added within 30 days.

**Health and Welfare**
- Includes Dental, Eye Care, and Legal aid benefit.
- Apply at BTU H&W office or at 288-0200. Call BTU H&W @ 617-288-0500 or see H&W Dental coverage is different from city’s health insurance plan for BPS employees with purchase of health insurance.
- See procedure found here. Go to: http://www. bostonpublicschools.org/page/499/

**Salary Item:** Tuition Reimbursement
- All permanent teachers on, except 1st 9 for the first time get up to $5,000/yr. Proactive, get $500. Pass with three or more years of service are covered with similar benefit
- This tuition differential took effect 1/9/10 and is paid as a tax-free reimbursement for tuition. Passes are paid as of 1/1/07.

**Salary Item:** NBPTS Teachers
- Members certified under the standards of the NBPTS now get a PPO. Members also get reimbursed for the cost of application fees upon successful attainment of certification.
- 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.

**Flexible Spending Program – Dependent Care**
- Use up to $5,000 in pre-tax dollars for dependent care; excellently tax benefit. Prior to the IRS approved program that is quite beneficial when used properly.
- Applies to the current and following tax year. You may take up to $5,000 in pre-tax dollars. The remaining 100% is taxed on your federal and state income tax returns.
- For more detailed information, call CPA, Inc. @ 1-800-544-2340 or Group Insurance at 617-635-4570 once you agree to it. Your dependent care insurance plan for BPS employees with purchase of health insurance.

**Flexible Spending Program – Health Care**
- Use up to $2,250 in pre-tax dollars for out-of-pocket health care expenses; excellent tax benefit.
- Subject to IRS limitations.
- Apply within 30 days of hire or during Open Enrollment usually beginning mid-year. For more information, call 800-627-3677.
- For more detailed information, call CPA, Inc. @ 1-800-544-2340 or Group Insurance at 617-635-4570 or see http://www.cpa125.com/

**Flexible Spending Program – Transportation and Parking**
- As with the above programs, though subject to additional dollar limitations, this program allows the use of pre-tax dollars to pay for transit or parking activities.
- Make sure you need this benefit for the entire calendar year when you sign up, as deductions cannot generally be stopped once started. All of these plans are standard and do not vary substantially 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 term insurance. See http://www.lifeinsurance .boston.gov/ohr/benefits/life.asp

**Disability Coverage**
- Public Pension Law limits mandated coverage for disabilities, none for short-term disability.
- Public coverage is inadequate & eligibility is restrictive. If you desire adequate coverage, you're forced to purchase it privately.

**Debt Forgiveness**
- The AFT now has a resource for those who want to work in teacher’s aide at a reasonable wage. Look for monthly payments and, in some cases, even have their debt forgiven.

### Contractual Benefit Package for All Teachers*

A ll 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 (leas@boston.gov). 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 newsletter 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/department/1884 as of mid-summer, 2017.

All web pages referred to are accurate as of early August 2017 but all locations may have changed as of this writing. 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 recognition agreements (Holocaust and Dever) and some have other agreements – like the right to file a grievance – may not apply. Similarly, we have dozens of other schools (Innovations, Pilots, Horace Mann in district charters, Turnaround schools) whose members are subject to an election-to-work agreement (EWA) in that some cases tumps the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Given that there are 40+ schools with some autonomy, it is impossible to give a complete listing of what benefit does or does not apply. However, we are working on getting all of these agreements updated to 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 when you have 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 BTU website 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 ratified and signed.

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/ contract/.

### WHAT TO LOOK FOR?

Inside your or prior Boston service includes substitute teaching time under certain conditions. Contract outside service does not.

Maintain date-stamped records of all transmissions to the Bolling Building. It is suggested that these documents be hand delivered as the law change maybe time sensitive.

The 20 service limit was in place for at least 25 years, you may now have surplus credits earned. These credits may you may have accumulated away if you were never valued.

This is an 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 or go on the city’s plan. It takes a little while to throw on a scarf and drop your coverage, you may re-enroll during the open enrollment period. The plan is under an agreement with all city unions.

The NBPTS-eligible benefits do not grant certification in all subject areas and all job categories, though categories are expanding regularly.

Be careful when making a decision as you cannot change the deduction for the entire calendar year once you agree to it. Your dependent care reimbursement is subject to your eligibility rules, subject areas in all subject areas and job categories.

The BTU contract, P. 47

This is a relatively new benefit, a long time in the making. If you call one of the field reps if you have any questions.

Filing your insurance premium will be retroactive, retroactive, Not necessarily. Please do not delay in filing. the BTU office at 617-288-2000 and ask for a field representative.

For more detailed information, call CPA, Inc. @ 1-800-544-2340 or Group Insurance at 617-635-4570 once you agree to it. Your dependent care insurance plan for BPS employees with purchase of health insurance.

Make sure you need this benefit for the entire calendar year when you sign up, as deductions cannot generally be stopped once started. All of these plans are standard and do not vary substantially when properly used, but caution is advised.

Make sure you need this benefit for the entire calendar year when you sign up, as deductions cannot generally be stopped once started. All of these plans are standard and do not vary substantially when properly used, but caution is advised.

 Beware of insurance salespeople ‘promoting’ it to the teachers’ room to sell you insurance. Salespeople in the building, on occasion, present an excellent sales plan and offer incentive-based compensation, none for short-term disability.


### HOW TO TALK TO YOUR?

For more detailed information, call CPA, Inc. @ 1-800-544-2340 or Group Insurance at 617-635-4570 or see http://www.cpa125.com/ or call the BTU office at 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/ or call the BTU office at 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/ or call the BTU office at 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/ or call the BTU office at 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/ or call the BTU office at 617-288-2000. For more detailed information, call CPA, Inc. @ 1-800-544-2340 or Group Insurance at 617-635-4570 or see
MAJOR (BUT NON-INCLUSIVE) LIST OF CONTRACTUAL WORKING CONDITIONS

HOW DOES THE BENEFIT WORK?

Enforces class size maxima and caseloads. Important benefit.

Sick Days
Grants paid leave when it's up, to time accumulated.
15 days granted per year; unused days accumulate & have value at separation after 10 years of service.

Personal Leave
Grants paid leave for personal reasons with one day’s notice.
4 days per year; unused days accumulate.

Professional Leave
Grants limited paid leave to attend educational conferences.
Limited system-wide allotment of 2,000 days distributed to individual staff(s) on pro-rata basis.

Maternity Leave
Grants paid as well as unpaid leave & city continues to pay health coverage. Full maternity leave limited by number of sick days accrued.

Leaves for Adoption
Grants paid as well as unpaid leave.
Limited 40 days per school year if you have accumulated days in your bank, used to be 30 days.

Leaves for Family Illness
Grants leave paid as well as family member’s illness.
Limited 30 days per school year if accumulated, through more can be granted.

Planning and Development Time
Grants staff unscheduled 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.

Scholastic & EIT Schools
In addition to the above, all teachers receive two more blocks of time – see right hand box.

Duty-Free Lunch
Grants daily duty-free time to ask for lunch, in addition to daily P&D time.
Middle and High Teachers – 5 full-length periods (48+ minutes per) per week.

Job-Sharing
1/2 salary, 1/2 position
Two people share one job; each gets 1/2 salary and full benefits.

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.

Accepting a student-teacher
If you accept a student teacher, you receive two more days leave with pay.

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.

Class Size Maxima; Caseloads
Enforces class size maxima and caseloads. Important benefit.

SUMMARY DETAILS

Too lengthy to list here; ask building rep at school for class size fact sheet. See Eric Berg’s article on page 2 of this newspaper.

15 days granted per year; unused days accumulate & have value at separation after 10 years of service.

Contract p. 113-117; see building rep at school, call BTU office at 617-288-2000.

Talk to building rep or call BTU at 617-288-2000.

Grants leave paid under limited circumstances. Depends on family relationship to the decedent.

See contract p. 115 or talk with building rep. or call BTU at 617-288-2000.

See contract p 115 or talk with building rep. or call BTU at 617-288-2000.

Legal time is not PD time – it’s a combination of P&D (typically P) and personal (typically D). This 75-minute, in the aggregate, two more blocks of time – see right hand box.

In addition to the above, all teachers receive two more blocks of time – see right hand box.

Grants daily duty-free time to ask for lunch, in addition to daily P&D time.

Contract p. 31 or see Building Rep. or call BTU office at 617-288-2000.

Contract p. 31 or see Building Rep. or call BTU office at 617-288-2000.


See accompanying article. Pre-tax salary contributions grow tax-deferred until withdrawn.

Call BTU for more information.

See accompanying article in this newspaper.

Pre-tax salary contributions grow tax-deferred until withdrawn.

Call BTU for more information and/or Great West at 1-877-457-1900. See http://www.mass.gov/mtrs/ for more information, or see the city webpage at the BTU before withdrawing your funds out.

Call BTU for more detailed, written explanation or go to http://www.mass.gov/mtrs/10403.html or http://www.mass.gov/mtip/10403.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.

WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR?

Do not misinterpret! File a class size grievance on the BTU website as soon as your class is over the limit.

Will need a doctor’s note if absent for 2 or more consecutive school days.

Your reason for taking a personal day is professional and personal and need not be shared, but do you have to give notice? Unused days are automatically converted to accumulated ‘self’ days at the end of year.

Complicated procedure, it suggests 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.

May need a note from family member’s doctor; those who need more than 30 such days are advised to contact the BTU office.

You do not have to complete 1500’s or any other administrative work on this time. It’s your time and you cannot be assigned a specified duty or meeting. If you lose P&D, you are eligible for pay for the lost time unless it is made up. Call the BTU office.

Start early in the year (looking for a partner; this is most difficult for many, as good ‘match’ are hard to find).

It is this year’s time and you cannot assign any day during this time.

This is a good, useful program for those who are having difficulty with the performance evaluation process.

Days are to be determined during last two weeks of teacher’s tenure.

Mileage is generally not for travel and is your assignment each day, but all other miles mandated within; call the BTU for more info.

WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR?

If you leave this system prior to retirement, consult the BTU before withdrawing your funds out.

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.

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

RETIREMENT, TAX-DEFERRED SAVINGS PLANS

Public Pension
Participation in a 401(b) or a Tax-Deferred Annuity (TSA) plan
See accompanying article.

Participation
Participation is mandatory under state law; vested employees obtain a pension at retirement.

Participation in the State’s Deferred Compensation or 457 Program
Participation in voluntary, state-chosen vendor Great West. See accompanying article.

Participation in a 403(b) or a Tax-Deferred Annuity (TSA) plan
See accompanying article.

Pre-tax salary contributions grow tax-deferred until withdrawn.

Participation in the State’s Deferred Compensation or 457 Program
See accompanying article.

Pre-tax salary contributions grow tax-deferred until withdrawn.

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.

See MTRS at http://www.mass.gov/mtrs/ for more information.

For more information, call the BTU office at 617-288-2000.

Call the BTU for more information and/or Great West at 1-877-435-1900. See http://www.mass.gov/mtip/10403.html or email info@compgreatwest.com.

Call the BTU for more information.

Call the BTU for more information.

Call the BTU for more information.


Log onto http://www.mass.gov/mtrs/info/benefit-summaries/403b/ for more information.

Log onto http://www.mass.gov/mtrs/info/benefit-summaries/403b/ for more information.

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Log onto http://www.mass.gov/mtrs/info/benefit-summaries/403b/ for more information.
Check your direct deposit receipts to make sure the correct amount is being deducted. If there’s a mistake, you should report it immediately. Boston Retirement System (BRS) policy adopted in 2011 allows BRS to collect errors in deduction rates. The deduction rates are entered by the Boston Public Schools OHC Dept. upon your hiring. We have seen many mistakes over the years. Contact BRS, Room 816 at City Hall, 617-635-4005. You may have to leave a message as many of the BRS staff are still working remotely. Members can also contact Karen Cross directly for information and help with retirement questions or procedures at karen.cross@boston.org

A simple equation is used to determine your retirement allowance. Your age factor (hired pre-2012)
$$ P = \frac{100}{A - F + 60} $$
where:
- $P$ is your pension percentage
- $A$ is your age at retirement
- $F$ is your years of credited service

For members of Group 2
$$ P = \frac{100}{A - F + 60} $$
where:
- $P$ is your pension percentage
- $A$ is your age at retirement
- $F$ is your years of credited service

The “Retirement percentage” chart  
For members with effective membership dates before April 2, 2012

| AGE AT RETIREMENT | 46 | 47 | 48 | 49 | 50 | 51 | 52 | 53 | 54 | 55 | 56 | 57 | 58 | 59 | 60 | 61 | 62 | 63 | 64 | 65 | 66 | 67 |
| REGULAR           | 10| 10| 10| 10| 10| 10| 10| 10| 10| 10| 10| 10| 10| 10| 10| 10| 10| 10| 10| 10| 10| 10|
| RETIREMENT PLUS   | 12| 12| 12| 12| 12| 12| 12| 12| 12| 12| 12| 12| 12| 12| 12| 12| 12| 12| 12| 12| 12| 12|

*Note: Retired members may earn the percentage shown up to the age at retirement.

The “Retirement” percentage chart
For members with effective membership dates before April 2, 2012

A comparison of the percentage of salary average allowed under the regular and RetirementPlus formulas, by service and age

To be eligible for regular retirement (also known as superannuation retirement) under either the “regular” formula, or if you are participating in RetirementPlus, the enhanced RetirementPlus benefit, you must meet the corresponding eligibility requirements.

**Regular** formula:
You must have 15 or more years of credited service at any age, or be age 55 with 10 or more years of credited service.

**RetirementPlus formula:**
You must have 15 or more years of credited service, at least 20 years of which are membership service with the MTS or the Boston Retirement System as a teacher, in order to receive the benefit.

The chart is intended to help you plan your retirement. It represents the percentage of salary average allowed under the regular and RetirementPlus formulas, by service and age.

The table includes:
- **Retirement Percentage:**
  - Regular
  - RetirementPlus
- **Percentage of Salary Average:**
  - Regular
  - RetirementPlus
- **Age at Retirement:**
  - Regular
  - RetirementPlus

The table is effective April 2010.

* Two notes on “years of service”:
  1. RetirementPlus increase, only whole years of credited service will be counted (the amount is not rounded up). For example, if you have 32.9 years of credited service, your RetirementPlus % increase is based on 32 years of credited service, or 32.9%.
  2. Percentage of allowable salary average, your full years and months of credited service will be counted. For example, Jan 1-B, 1984-2000, is counted as 17 years of credited service. At that time, you would have 17 years, 10 months and 10 days of service—32,599 years of credited service. The amount of credited service will be used to calculate Jan’s allowable percentage of salary average, which is 17.6% (Because the last decimal place represents full months, and the last three decimal places represent only partial months, the last three decimal places will not be included in Jan’s benefit calculation.)
What are the BTU Organizing Committees?

by Natalia Cuadra-Saez, BTU Organizer

F rom fundraising hundreds of thousands of dollars in scholarship funds for undocumented students to winning a full-time Ethnic Studies coach position to elevating 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.

Class Size FAQ...

continued from page 2

offer a paraprofessional or payment to you, 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. Stay strong. Your principal and others may try to pressure you to settle for payment. If you do this, you are letting our colleagues and our kids down.

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

No. These forms are not valid without involvement of a member of the BTU staff. Do not sign any form without consulting with your field representative, or BTU Vice President Erik Berg, at eberg@btu.org. We believe that class size issues are most effectively addressed by adding personnel, not paying money. And with the limited exceptions of single-strand elementary schools and secondary schools with a single course offering, and the rare circumstance of a column 2 maximum being exceeded in order to accommodate a child already in the school, the payment that is owed to teachers is significantly more than $1,500 or $2,500.

Are there exceptions to the class size limits?

There are two limited exceptions. In elementary schools with only a single class at a grade level or secondary schools with only a singular course offering, the limits may be exceeded by two. And in the case where the limit in Column 2 is exceeded in order to keep a student already in the school, the limit may be extended to the Column 1 limit. But in either case, payment is owed to the teacher. These payment amounts may not be applied to other situations. Check with your field rep if you are unsure about your situation.

What about inclusion classes?

As BPS transitions away from designated inclusion classes, the limits in Column 1 will remain in place for all general education classrooms. However, unless and until your school and/or grade level has had a new inclusion plan approved and implemented, the previous inclusion class size limit of 20 remains in place.

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

There are two arbitration decisions governing this situation. The calculations are different for elementary and secondary teachers, but in every case, teachers are owed significantly more than $1,500 or $2,500 per student. In general, after each school year the district and the union get together and work out compensation for any teachers who may be owed payment. This can take many months to resolve.

Join family, friends, students, and colleagues to remember

Steve Gordon

Celebrating a Life of Learning

Thursday, September 28th

4:30-7:00pm

Boston Teachers Union Hall

Refreshments and light dinner will be served

Please RSVP at bit.ly/drgordonmemorial
Welcome Paraprofessionals/GTCs! Family Liaisons

Dear Paraprofessional:

Welcome to the Boston Teachers 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 617-288-2800 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 parapro workday.

Health and Welfare Benefits

Para 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.

Credit Union

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

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 dates 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. (To 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

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 will 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

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 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 chr@busteachers.org.
**SALARY & BENEFITS**

**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)

**Salary Lane Placement**
- Basic Rate and then Rates with 30, 60, or 90 or
- In Service and/or College credits and Bachelor's degrees plus
- Bachelor's + 15

**Career Awards**
- After completion of 9 years of service and increase every 5 years.

**Substituting for a Teacher**
- Pay is $13.00 in addition to regular pay for substituting in his/her regular classroom.

**Health Insurance**
- 6 different plans: HMO and out-of-network individual and family plans.

**Medicare**
- Anyone entering public employment after 3/31/86 must pay.
- Medicare tax and is eligible (age 65 provided she has 30 years service).

**Tuition Reimbursement**
- Paraprofessionals with 5+ years eligible for $1,000 yearly tuition reimbursement.

**Leave for Adoption**
- 2 days per year, unused days accumulate. Also, graduation
days allowed.

**Personal Leave**
- Grants paid leave for personal reasons.
- Paid leave for family members' illness.

**Maternity Leave**
- 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)

**Personal Leave**
- Grants paid leave for personal reasons.
- Depends on family relationship.

**Religious Holy Days**
- Grants paid leave for limited circumstances.
- Depends on holiday specifics.

**Pension**
- 30 minutes for lunch plus a 10-minute break per day.
- Paid leave for family illness.
- Limited to 30 days per school year if accumulated, through
- more can be granted.

**Salary & Benefits**

**Retirement, Tax-deferred Savings Plans**

**Public Pension**
- Participation is mandatory under state law; vested employees obtain a pension at retirement.

**Participation in a 403B or a Tax-Sheltered Annuity (TSA) plan**
- Participation is voluntary; 40 plus vendors to choose from.

**Life Insurance**
- City sponsors plan.
- Use pre-tax dollars for dependent care.

**Health Insurance**
- Includes Dental, Eye Care and Legal benefit. City pays plan
- premium, but some benefits have co-pays. Terrific benefit!

**Mandatory Benefits**
- 15 days granted per year; unused days accumulate and have
- cash value at separation after 10 years of service.

**Rent for Family Illness**
- Paid as well as unpaid leave.
- Limited to 30 days per school year if accumulated, through
- more can be granted.

**Vacation Leave**
- Allows paid leave under limited circumstances.

**Bereavement Leave**
- Leave for family members' illness.
- Limited to 30 days per school year if accumulated, through
- more can be granted.

**Duty Free Lunch & Break**
- 30 minutes for lunch plus 10 minute break per day.

**Dependent Care Program**
- Use pre-tax dollars for dependent care.
- Applies within 30 days of hire or during open enrollment
- beginning mid October.

**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.

**Salary Lane Placement**
- Basic Rate and then Rates with 30, 60, or 90 or
- In Service and/or College credits and Bachelor's degrees plus
- Bachelor's + 15

**Contractual Package for Paraprofessionals**

**SALARY & BENEFITS**

**Additional Contractual Changes for 2010-2024**

**2010-2024**
- Payroll 9/1/2024
- Payroll 9/1/2023
- Payroll 9/1/2022
- Payroll 9/1/2021
- Payroll 9/1/2020
- Payroll 9/1/2019
- Payroll 9/1/2018
- Payroll 9/1/2017
- Payroll 9/1/2016
- Payroll 9/1/2015
- Payroll 9/1/2014
- Payroll 9/1/2013
- Payroll 9/1/2012
- Payroll 9/1/2011
- Payroll 9/1/2010
- Payroll 9/1/2009
- Payroll 9/1/2008
- Payroll 9/1/2007
- Payroll 9/1/2006
- Payroll 9/1/2005
- Payroll 9/1/2004

**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 a controversy 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
BU 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 BU proceed with a grievance on your behalf should the
Contract support your claim.
Welcome Parent Liaisons request one from your building representative.

For union membership, call the BTU Office at 617-288-2000 for an application, or you will automatically receive union mail if you complete and return an application.

You can obtain a copy of the contract at any school building. You can also view this information online at www.btu.org.

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.

SALARY & BENEFITS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Salary Step</th>
<th>Benefit</th>
<th>How It Takes Effect?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Career Award | Completion of 7-year on anniversary date | Should be automatic if there are any issues complete and submit PIS.
| 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. |
| Medicare | Anyone entering public employment after 3/31/86 must pay Medicare tax and is eligible for age 65 provided they have 10 years’ service. | Employees pay 1.45% of gross wages. Deductions are mandatory and continue with employment. |
| BTU Health and Welfare Fund | Includes Dental, Eye Care and Legal benefits. City pays plan premiums, note some benefits have co-pays. | Apply at BTU H&W office at 617-288-0500 at start of employment.
| 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 on holiday specifics.
| Maternity Leave | Paid as well as unpaid leave if city continues to pay share of health coverage. | 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 | One year of service - $500 Three years of service - $1,000 | 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. | First $5,000 of term coverage comes with purchase of health insurance. 1% 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.
| Life Insurance | City sponsors plan. | Paid as well as unpaid leave & city continues to pay its share of health coverage. |
| | | Includes Dental, Eye Care and Legal benefits. City pays plan premiums, note some benefits have co-pays. | Terrific benefit! Includes Dental, Eye Care and Legal benefits. City pays plan premiums, note some benefits have co-pays. |
| | | Public Pension | Part of 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/.
| | | Retirement, Tax-deferred Savings Plans | As a member of the BTU, you will receive a pension at retirement. Participation is mandatory under state law; vested employees obtain a pension at retirement. |
| | | ADDITIONAL CONTRACTUAL CHANGES FOR 2016-2024 | 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 will 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/

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.

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 will receive a pension at retirement. Participation is mandatory under state law; vested employees obtain a pension at retirement. As exclusive bargaining agent, the BTU negotiates the contract, enforces the contract, and promotes the general welfare of the membership.

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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.)

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continued on page 20
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.

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Credit Union

Substitute 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 pay-roll deductions for savings and checking, arrange for a loan, and take care of many other banking needs. To join, bring $300 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

Your membership meetings are held on 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 or email us at chart@btu.org.

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The mission of the Educator Supports Program (ESP) is to strengthen student learning and teacher performance through coaching and/or evaluation that feels fair, transparent, and humane for all stakeholders. We accomplish this through two main support options: Peer Assistance (PA) and Peer Assistance & Review (PAR).

ESP offers two levels of support:

➢ Peer Assistance support provides non-evaluative coaching. Your primary evaluator does not change.

➢ PAR support provides a Consulting Teacher who serves as the primary evaluator. At the end of the evaluation cycle, the Consulting Teacher recommends a rating to the ESP Panel. The Panel reviews the evidence, deliberates, and votes to determine the summative rating.

Who are the Consulting Teachers?
Consulting Teachers are veteran BTU teachers who are trained as coaches and evaluators.

How is my principal involved?
When you enroll in PAR, your principal serves as a secondary evaluator. Principals may also present evidence to the PAR panel during deliberation.

In Peer Assistance, your principal remains your evaluator. Your Consulting Teacher is available for coaching and support in meeting prescriptions set by your evaluator.

What if I’m not eligible?
- First- and second-year teachers are provided a New Teacher Developer and mentoring beyond the first year.
- We offer consultancy visits if you’d like some feedback on your practice. More at tinyurl.com/BPSESP.

Other Resources
- We offer PD workshops on coaching, peer evaluation, and best teaching practices.
- We also share online resources like "Lesson Planning 101" at tinyurl.com/BPSESP.

ELIGIBILITY
ESP is a voluntary program open to any BTU educator under the following circumstances:

Third-year Provisional Teachers who have been rated overall “Needs Improvement” at the end of their second year may choose Peer Assistance or Peer Assistance Review support from a Consulting Teacher.

Permanent Teachers who have been rated overall “Needs Improvement” or “Unsatisfactory” by their evaluator, may choose Peer Assistance support from a Consulting Teacher, or if the educator’s evaluation plan is 6 months or longer they are eligible for PAR.

Not sure? Contact us anyway. We are here to help.

Q & A
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Gina Desir
Lesley Gant
Albert Holland
Karla Jenkins
Robin Lee
Darlene Prado
Erik Berg (BTU Co-Chair)
Jerome Doherty (ESP Co-Chair)

ESD Panel
The ESP Panel supervises the Consulting Teachers and determines final evaluation ratings for PAR teachers. The SY2023-2024 Panel:

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Let’s Put Social Back Into Media

Being involved in educational matters can take many forms. Attending union meetings and school committee meetings 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 part of life, venting on social media leaves a lasting impression. Let us be mindful that it’s not only our supporters of a temporary state of mind. Let us be mindful that it’s not only our supporters but our adversaries too, and that social media is a way to connect with our friends and co-workers, and to stay informed, be involved, and to promote policies to benefit our students.

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 #BTU-Proud 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.

Facebook

The BTU has a Facebook Page called Boston Teachers Union. Please follow “like” the page to receive updates of union activities. Share with your 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.

Instagram

On Instagram, the BTU is @bostonteachersunion. Follow a local reporter whose stories you like. Go to their profile and like their posts. If time is short or you don’t quite know what to say, simply “like” the existing blog posts that speak to you.

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 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.

BUT...we need YOUR HELP to make this Back to School Fair a success!

40,000+ Free Books and Activities for Boston Public School Families!

Stop by between 1:00 and 4:00 PM on Saturday, September 23rd, 2023

Boston Teachers Union & Carson Beach
180 Mt. Vernon St., Boston, MA 02125
(entrance is off of Day Boulevard, before Carson Beach)

Save the Date! September 23rd

Boston Teachers Union members participate in these special events!

Walk for the pink ribbon!

Making Strides Against Breast Cancer

Please join the BTU Walkers as we join the thousands of others fighting the good fight.

You can support it too by helping us reach (or exceed!) our fundraising goal.

For more information or to join the walk, contact Brenda Chaney at bchaney@btu.org

BTU.org/backtoschool

Volunteers Needed to Help Us Sort Books on Monday, September 18 from 3-7 PM

All are welcome to pitch in, including students fulfilling community service.

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It was the Friday afternoon before April break, and Nia Reid-Patterson’s third-floor classroom at the Conley Elementary School in Roslindale was hot—really hot—thanks to some unusually warm spring weather. Outside the window, the sun was shining and vacation awaited. These were not the most conducive conditions for serious academic work, but Nia and her 6th-grade ELA inclusion students were unfazed. They were working in pairs to describe the main character’s point of view in Two Roads by Joseph Bruchac, a historical novel in which twelve-year-old protagonist Cal discovers his Native American heritage as he and his father travel the country and endure many hardships. Students were eager to share their ideas and quotes to support their ideas during the whole-class share-out.

Nia’s class was using the Expeditionary Learning (EL) grades 3-6 English Language Arts curriculum the district recently adopted. Her journey with writing and talking with each other about what they are reading and I just feel so proud of them. They are finding their voices.” Nia described the learning journey for one student in her class, “He came to me as an ELA 6 student, and at first he just completely refused to write. Once I convinced him to write something, he would just pick random quotes from the text as ‘evidence’. It was a long, slow process, but now he is able to really dive deep into the text and identify characters’ struggles.

He was able to explain what cultural genocide is from the book and connect it to things happening in Boston. He can write full essays and participates in class discussions. Now he is one of my ‘roving reporters’ who goes around the room to check in with other students and help them answer questions using evidence from the text.”

In the middle of the school year, others started to notice and admire the work Nia and her colleagues at the Conley were doing with the EL curriculum. Stacie Withington, an ELA program director, said, “I was so excited at the Tier 1 learning that was taking place at the school in all rooms. The Tier 1 accessibility for all students was such a showcase of love. Teachers were making finding success with EL because they had been hearing from many teachers that it was a big challenge to implement. Seeing that Nia and her students were clearly in an EL groove, they quickly determined that this classroom presented a powerful opportunity for professional learning for other BPS teachers. And thus the ‘EL in Action’ Learning Site was born.

Four weeks later, eight BPS 6th grade teachers from schools around the district convened at the Conley for a day of learning and collaboration. The staff had been set the afternoon before the observation meeting. Stacie Withington, an ELA program director, said, “I was so excited at the Tier 1 learning that was taking place at the school in all rooms. The Tier 1 accessibility for all students was such a showcase of love. Teachers were making finding success with EL because they had been hearing from many teachers that it was a big challenge to implement. Seeing that Nia and her students were clearly in an EL groove, they quickly determined that this classroom presented a powerful opportunity for professional learning for other BPS teachers. And thus the ‘EL in Action’ Learning Site was born.

Four weeks later, eight BPS 6th grade teachers from schools around the district convened at the Conley for a day of learning and collaboration. The stage had been set the afternoon before when the group came together on Zoom to share their own experiences and challenges with implementing the EL curriculum in their classrooms and schools. Participant Kat Hepburn, a 6th-grade inclusion teacher at the Clap elementary school, explained that she wanted to learn what parts of the huge EL curriculum to prioritize. Her Clap colleague Sarah Moore, a learning specialist, added, “This is our first year of full implementation and we are in the process of learning what works, what doesn’t, and where there is room to make adjustments that fit the needs of all of our students.” Victor Joyner, a 6th-grade teacher at the Manning Elementary school, was focused on both the pacing of the EL modules and inclusive supports that would provide access for all students. The group spent several minutes talking about what made the curriculum intimidating and challenging to use. All agreed that they were excited to see how another BPS colleague was using it.

On the morning of the Learning Site, the group met in the bright and cheerful Conley art room for a pre-observation meeting. Stacie helped each participant choose an observation focus from the six components of successful practice she and Nia had identified—close reading routines, intentional grouping, authentic texts, planning with the student lens in mind, addressing all four language domains, and explicit instruction in metacognition. Then the group walked upstairs to Nia’s room for a 45-minute classroom observation, where, fortunately for all, air conditioning had been recently installed.

Students were tasked with writing a summary of one chapter of Two Roads. After Nia reviewed the criteria for a high-quality summary, students worked diligently, writing in their workbooks, referring to the text and their success checklists, and talking quietly with their partners. Nia sat in the back at one of the student tables, providing support to a group of four students through occasional prompting and affirmation. After about 25 minutes, Nia and her students transitioned to peer review of their partner’s summary. Students made substantive suggestions to each other, critiquing their identification of central ideas and pushing each other to use more descriptive language.

Back in the art room after the observation, participants were abuzz about what they had seen. They recalled that every student was engaged in the learning activities, how confident the students were as they described their work, and how eager they were to give and receive feedback from each other.
about their writing. Victor expressed interest in learning more about the checklist Nia had given the students so they could monitor their own progress. Kat wondered if Nia was having students read the whole book or if she had strategies to move students through the material without doing so.

After lunch, the group spent an hour debriefing with Nia. Each of the small groups presented their observations and appreciated related to their focus, then asked Nia an excusing question to get at the “how and why” of her successful practice, such as, “How do you decide which parts of the EL curriculum to prioritize?” Nia shared her approach to unpacking the curriculum, scaffolding for struggling readers and writers, and building community during the wide-ranging conversation. “This is my first year with EL so I am learning as I go. It’s a process and I tell students that if something isn’t working then we will talk about it and do something different,” she told the group. She emphasized the importance of knowing students and respecting them as people, saying, “Really knowing who they are is so important, not just checking boxes. I tell students, ‘We’re family in here. Sometimes we can’t stand each other but we’re together all year and we are here to support each other.’ She spoke passionately about high expectations for students, “They have to know that you believe in them, that they can do the work. Because they can!”

The dialogue also included specific strategies for developing students’ content knowledge, for example, how to help students identify themes in literature and to distinguish between central ideas and themes. Nia also talked about her strategy for building student skills over time by gradually adding components and complexity, as she had with peer feedback and summary writing tasks. When one participant asked how she’s handling some of the challenging themes in the text like racism, Nia explained that she doesn’t shy away from conversations about potentially sensitive topics with students, saying, “Sometimes when we shelter students we do them more harm.” The debrief ended with participants sharing their gratitude for the experience and for Nia’s incredible work.

After the debrief, each participant reflected on their big takeaways and formulated a plan to put their learning into action in their own context. Victor shared in on evaluation, saying, “I will find more authentic opportunities for students to evaluate models of writing and peer writing.” Kat made short- and long-term plans to build student independence both for the remainder of the school year and more holistically in the fall. Sarah was also thinking about student independence, noting, “I need to think about how to build routines for reading text for understanding because I do not see all students able to do that independently.”

At the end of the session, everyone had the chance to share what made the Learning Site experience a professional learning success. Several mentioned the opportunity to observe a classroom for a long time and see the lesson develop. Other highlights were the debrief protocols and length, which fostered a deep, meaningful conversation. Most important of all was Nia’s openness. As Kat said, “Nia’s responses to our questions were so helpful!” Overall, it was an inspiring experience for all and provided a big boost of optimism as participants looked ahead to implementing EL in their classrooms next year.

Nia found the experience of being a host teacher both motivating and gratifying, explaining, “Planning for the Learning Site really pushed me to look ahead further in the curriculum, because I knew that I wanted the visitors to see a particular type of lesson on this set date three weeks ahead. And I had been planning only about a week at a time.” She also noted that it was a positive experience for her students. “They enjoyed hearing the thank you notes (participants wrote) – it builds their confidence and their ability to work independently and it makes them proud to be models.” In summary, she said “I enjoyed the experience and making connections with other sixth grade teachers, because this is a single-strand school. It made me think that I am doing stuff right if other teachers see that. And it felt good to help other teachers see the value in American,” she said, “I wish I had had that when I was starting.”

Supports for BPS Teachers Seeking National Board Certification

By Margaret Arlauskas, NBCT & Cathy O’Flaherty, NBCT, BPS/BU National Board Leadership Team

The BPS with the BPS Office of Teacher Leadership and Development supports BPS teachers pursuing National Board certification. Teachers can begin the certification process before three years of teaching is complete. Part-time and long-term substitute teaching does count towards the three year employment requirement. Teachers need to complete three years of teaching before becoming National Board certified. Prior to completing the process, teachers need to hold a Bachelor’s Degree and teacher’s license.

Leadership

The BPS/BTU National Board program seeks to increase the numbers of National Board Teachers (NBCTs) in Boston. National Board is a process designed for teachers to demonstrate, through standards-based evidence, the positive impact they have on student learning as a result of their deep and abiding understanding of students, content knowledge, pedagogical practice, ongoing reflection, and participation in learning communities. National Board Certification empowers teachers and raises the status of accomplished teaching in a demonstrable way. It paves a path for teacher leadership. Our program seeks to connect teachers in Boston to the resources they need to complete this process and become NBCTs.

Financial Benefits

The financial payoff is another incentive to become a National Board Certified Teacher. The Boston Union fought hard and won a 4% pay increase (retirement worthy) for NBCTs. Under our current BTU contract, we also enjoy reimbursement of fees upon certification along with the opportunity to earn graduate credit through George Mason University. More information for graduate credit can be found here: [https://education.gmu.edu/teacher-professional-development/nbpts-options-at-mason/nbct-achievement](https://education.gmu.edu/teacher-professional-development/nbpts-options-at-mason/nbct-achievement)

Becoming a National Board Certified Teacher in Boston can therefore result in a 4% pay increase and possible salary lane advancement along with the added value of your positive commitment and impact on student learning.

Resources

The BPS/BTU National Board Program offers multiple resources and supports. One is the National Board Certified Teacher Leadership Team (NBCT LT) which consists of five NBCTs: Margaret Arlauskas, Cristina DeGuzman, Suzanne Gill, Matthew Kazlauskas, and Emmanuel Fairley-Pittman. They work to organize candidate support with no-cost, online workshops and information sessions that will be held throughout the school year. The NBCT LT has also developed a framework of support including On-Call Readers who are NBCTs and can read each candidate’s component twice. In addition, the NBCT LT has developed Professional Learning Facilitators/ Cohort leaders to run online cohorts both at the school level and regionally throughout Boston. Cohorts of teachers pursuing certification will be facilitated by National Board Certified Teacher Leaders.

The National Board has online webinars to support candidates. Candidates can watch them live or at a later time that may be more convenient. All webinars are available by National Board staff and NBCTs throughout the United States. For more information, please contact our team to express your interest. There will be opportunities to lead a cohort at your school or for the district remotely. Another opportunity is to become an On-Call reader to support NOCTs and New NBCT candidates by reading their portfolio components.

How Can You Contact Us?

You can contact the NBCT LT by email at [nbpts@gmail.com](mailto:nbpts@gmail.com) or submit a question online at [https://forms.gle/59gH7Jd5FZP87xkK2](https://forms.gle/59gH7Jd5FZP87xkK2). Please contact our team to express your interest. There will be opportunities to lead a cohort at your school or for the district remotely. Another opportunity to become an On-Call reader to support NOCTs and New NBCT candidates by reading their portfolio components.
The Conley Elementary School on Poplar Street in Roslindale serves 165 students in grades K-6. On the way into the building from the parking lot, I notice a sign outside the small garden area saying, in English and Spanish: “We are growing food. All of it will be donated to a local food distribution site.”

Coach Kevin Collins supervises a small group of K0/K1 students with special needs who are joyfully riding tricycles around the hard-top playground or using a bat to hit lightweight balls off a shoulder-height stand.

Inside, almost every classroom is labeled with a colorful welcome sign including grade level, teacher name, and room number. Art teacher Hilary Blair helps another group of K0/K1 children paint leaves for an upcoming school-wide art show, while students in Antonietta Brownell’s K0/K1 class learn about how chicks they are hatching in the classroom develop inside their shells.

Students in grades K2-2 work on a variety of word study activities. Rochelle Perry’s K2 students use whiteboards to write out the alphabet with lower case letters. Second graders learn about double vowel word syllables, identifying different ways the long e sound can be spelled. In Sara Colella’s science class, students in grades 2-3 are looking closely at caterpillars that will soon turn into butterflies!

A third grade boy reads aloud a scene he’s created for the story of Peter Pan, while teacher Faith Nery helps other students provide constructive feedback. Fourth and fifth grade students are taking a MAP test in math or doing independent reading when they complete it.

Here’s hoping you’ll have a great year! Please invite me to visit!

Amika Kemmler Ernst, Ed. D.
Amika45@gmail.com

We were painting leaves green and Ms. Blair was helping us. In art class we’ve learned how to mix colors and how to make collages with pieces of paper.

Ava Bragg, Declan Pamera & Rujovan Cherubin, K0/K1

I was reading a book after I finished testing. I like action, anime, and the Babysitter Club books. One activity I really enjoyed this year was our Family Outing Project: we had to plan an outing for our family and figure out all the costs involved. My trip to Franklin Park Zoo cost $99 – more than I thought it would! This project taught me how to plan and do math better.

Carol Boston, Grade 5

I am working on a project about my Puerto Rican heritage. I learned Bomba is a dance that was created in Puerto Rico. I’m proud of how I became a better student and a better dancer by working really hard this year.

Layla Molina, Grade 6

After reading Peter Pan as a class, we each chose a chapter and rewrote a scene from it. In this picture, Blake is reading his revised scene aloud. We’ve learned that getting other people’s feedback helps make our writing better. We also learned that our classmates have very creative ideas!

Faith Nery’s Grade 3 Students

We were writing all the letters of the alphabet. We’ve learned how to read and write upper and lower case letters. This year we also learned sight words, consonants and vowels, and how to tap out letter sounds.

Rochelle Perry’s K2 Class

I was drawing a picture of a caterpillar in Science. Ms. Colella was helping me. I learned a caterpillar turns into a butterfly!

Ayden Santana, Grade 2

I was racing with Rujo on our bikes in P.E. We learned to ride a bike safely – no crashing!

Tristan Naj, K1
I was taking the MAP test and solving one of the problems. In math this year we’ve learned about decimals, fractions, division, and how to do 4-digit multiplication. I learned that fractions and decimals show the same thing differently. I think it’s interesting how you need to know multiplication facts in order to solve division problems.

Elaina Chiola, Grade 4

### 2023-24 Calendar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Links</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Illustrative Math (Grades 3-11) Planning Cohort</td>
<td>8/21</td>
<td>Flyer / Waitlist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Open Up/ MVP Math (Secondary) Planning Cohort</td>
<td>8/24</td>
<td>Flyer / RSVP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- StudySync (Grade 6 - 8) Planning Cohort</td>
<td>9/19</td>
<td>Flyer / RSVP</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Edcamp for SLIFE Educators (K-12) Edcamp</td>
<td>9/19</td>
<td>Flyer / RSVP</td>
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<tr>
<td>- EL Education (ESL Adapted) (Grades 3 - 6) Planning cohort</td>
<td>9/20</td>
<td>Flyer / RSVP</td>
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<tr>
<td>- OpenSciEd (Grades 6-8) Planning Cohort</td>
<td>9/28</td>
<td>Flyer / RSVP</td>
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<tr>
<td>- SLIFE (Grades 3 - 12) Planning Cohort</td>
<td>10/2</td>
<td>Flyer / RSVP</td>
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<tr>
<td>- StudySync (Grades 9-12) Planning Cohort</td>
<td>10/28</td>
<td>Flyer / RSVP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- 1-1 Peer Observation</td>
<td>ongoing</td>
<td>Info Sheet / RSVP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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### Telescope Programs

#### Learning Site
- In a Learning Site, educators come together for a 1/2 day in a real live classroom around a common area of practice. Participants debrief with the host teacher and set goals for their own classrooms. Participants continue the learning through virtual follow-up sessions to earn an ALC credit.

#### Learning Cohort
- In a Learning Cohort, you join with a group of BPS colleagues to learn together as a team. You will address a common challenge, observe a peer to discuss their practice, develop ideas to bring back to your own setting, and get support as you try out new strategies.

#### Planning Cohort
- A Planning Cohort is a space for educators to collaboratively plan with the support of a teacher expert. During the planning cohort you will have time to unpack curriculum to develop a thoughtful unit plan, pool resources with other teachers in a similar context, and receive feedback from peers and coaches.

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**PROFESSIONAL LEARNING EVENTS**

#### 2-3 hr High School
- Connect & Share Panel Discussion
- Edcamps
- Peer Observation
- Telescope Programs

**In a Telescope PD you can...**
- Learn from your BPS colleagues
- Learn with your BPS colleagues
- Follow-up coaching available
- Sub coverage $ available
- PD Hours or ALCs credits
- Stipends $ for peer leaders

**Connect & Share Panel Discussion**
- During a Connect & Share panel webinar, participants hear from BPS colleagues about what’s working in their classrooms and schools. Presenters share a 10-minute presentation about an effective practice. Participants connect with peers from across BPS, get new ideas, and earn PD hours.

**Edcamps**
- Edcamps are “an innovative form of training with no predetermined speakers or sessions.” Participants create the session topics at the start of the event based on their interests and questions. Participants learn new practices while connecting, and sharing expertise with others in the room.

**Peer Observation**
- During an individualized peer observation, you can observe a recommended BPS colleague. Afterwards, participants will have time to debrief and set goals to bring back to their own classrooms.

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**More at bostonpublicschools.org/telescope**
Welcome Parent Liaisons…

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Credit Union

Parents 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 pay stub or a copy of your Social Security Card. New accounts 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 pay stub or a copy of your Social Security Card.

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 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 educate students in our city. Now it is time to enjoy the pleasures of retirement.

We hold two business meetings each year, one in the fall and another in the spring. These meetings provide an opportunity to connect with you and hear the latest information from the chairs of the RTC’s committees. In addition, we have presentations on topics of interest for our members from the BTU active teachers and quickly answered at the building level by asking the building staff and the Union office. Many questions can be easily and quickly answered at the building level by asking the building representative.

We seek your participation in contacting the members of the City Council, the Mayor and the members of the Boston Retirement Board. In addition to our pension issues we also support state legislation that improves pension of long time retirees and supports increases for the state teachers’ retirement system. On the federal level, we continue to work with allies across the country to repeal the Windfall Elimination Provision and the GPO.

We have other committees that help do the work of planning and executing the RTC activities. We have a social committee that plans our events, a membership committee that keeps track of our membership information, a Data Processing Committee that manages membership lists, the Social Media Committee keeps our Facebook page interesting and up to date; the Archives Committee helps build and maintain the history of the chapter and our work at the BTU and BPS; the benefits committee that keeps track of our benefits program; our travel committee that plans our local travel opportunities (international travel in a BTU program that includes retirees); the Remembrance Committee provides condolence cards to families of deceased members; the Scholarship Committee reviews the rules for the three designated BTU scholarships and determines the scholarship winners.

If you want to help with one of the RTC committees please call us any Wednesday or Thursday from 10 am-2 pm and talk to us about how you can contribute to our committees.

We need your help

We communicate through this newspaper but we also maintain an bulletin that provides the latest information and activities, issues, and events. To do this we need your personal email. We cannot use the old BPS email addresses. We have a strict policy of never giving out personal contact information to others. You can also find information of importance on our Facebook page at (www.facebook.com/BTU/RTC).

Let’s have fun again!

What ever happened to the bowling league? It did not bowl during the pandemic, but we have good news to share. The Bowling League survived the pandemic, but needs more bowlers. Sandy Himes and Katherine Grogan are seeking to reestablish our once vibrant bowling league. They are seeking new members from the BTU active teachers and paras and to all of our retirees. The league meets every Monday at 4 pm at Boston Bowl in Dorchester. It is a fun way to socialize and you really do not need to be a good bowler. It costs $16.00 a week and you bowl three streets a night. Teams are generated based on averages so that there’s a fairness of how teams are formed. Guaranteed that you will have loads of fun and enjoy great company—spares and strikes are up to you!