

BEU CALENDAR

May 19-20 MTA Annual Meeting

Hynes Auditorium, Boston

May 20 Rally for Public Education

Boston Common, 2:00-5:00pm (see below)

Jun 5 BEU Retirement Tea

Temple Emeth, 3:00-5:00pm (see below)

Jun 19 Executive Board Meeting

Jun 23 Last Day of School

Jun 30-Jul 5 NEA

Representative Assembly

RALLY FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION!

SAT. MAY 20, 2:00-5:00PM

BOSTON COMMON

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

MASSTEACHER.ORG

CELEBRATE YOUR COLLEAGUES' RETIREMENT!

TEMPLE EMETH, PUTTERHAM CIR.
(Park on Puddingstone Road)

JUNE 5, 3-5PM

MUSIC & REFRESHMENTS

IMPORTANT EVALUATION PROTECTIONS

In March, the BEU and BSC ratified the Educator Evaluation Agreement; we think this new agreement strengthens the process and increases the rights of individual educators over our previous agreement.

In theory the process is supposed to promote collaboration, constructive feedback, and risk-taking. We continue to hope that the school district will support the ability of evaluators to produce constructive evaluations. In many cases, - perhaps most - however, evaluators themselves are either too overworked or insufficiently trained for this to happen. We therefore negotiated an agreement that safeguards educators from being harmed by poorly- or improperly-done evaluations.

Below are highlights of some of the important items in our new agreement that you should be aware of.

Self Assessment Protections

At the beginning of your cycle, you will create a self-assessment. Since the purpose of the self-assessment is for the educator to reflect upon their strengths and weaknesses, the self-assessment cannot be used as part of your evaluation rating. Your evaluator may not suggest changes or edits to the self-assessment, nor can you be required to make changes. The evaluator's role in the self-assessment is merely to read it, acknowledge it, and use it to inform the rest of the process.

Goals and Ratings without Student Outcomes

No student outcomes (test scores,

grades, benchmarks, etc.) can be used to rate you. So, when writing your goals, keep student performance indicators out. The "measurable" part of your goal indicates the actions that you as an educator will take. For example, don't write a goal like "80% of my students will show proficiency on a math assessment about fractions." Instead, you might write, "I will teach at least 10 lessons this year on fractions." Thus, you will be evaluated on your ability to provide opportunities for your students - not on how well your students perform, which in many ways is out of your control.

For some evaluators, this may seem like a big change, so it's important to know your rights here and push back (or seek assistance from the BEU) if your evaluator is pressing you to include student performance indicators / outcomes in your goals. Also, while group goals are allowed, you cannot be required to use group goals. Choose goals that are meaningful to you and your growth as an educator.

Observations Conducted More Openly

We negotiated some stronger language around observations. Announced observations are supposed to last a full class period; if this doesn't happen you are entitled to another observation.

In the new agreement, for an unannounced observation to "count" as an official unannounced observation, there must be a pre-determined signal between the educator and evaluator (so that the educator knows that they are being observed). If this does not happen, then the evaluator may

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The Contract Corner:

TRANSFERS: VOLUNTARY OR NOT?



Dear Contract Corner,

I'm thinking about applying for an opening in another school in Brookline? What are my rights and what should I be aware of if I do that?

*Signed,
Time for a Change?*

Dear Time for a Change?

Below is the contract language that guides Voluntary Transfers. Notice that if you notify HR by March 1 that you would like to transfer, they are obligated to let you know of any openings for which you are qualified and which you have indicated on your request. If you have not done sent this request by March 1, you still have the right to apply for openings in other buildings or areas.

Signed,
Contract Corner

3.17 Transfers

A. Voluntary Transfers. Any person desiring a transfer shall submit a written request (or via e-mail) to the Superintendent and the building Principal not later than March 1. Requests shall specify the location or the assignment desired. If a suitable opening exists, any necessary interviews will be arranged. The Superintendent shall endeavor to process requests for transfers as promptly as possible and the proposed transfers must be agreeable to the building Principals involved. Any person who informs the Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources in writing (or via e-mail) that he/she wishes to be notified of a specific vacancy in a position not normally considered to be above his/her rank and status shall be notified if and when such a vacancy occurs. The Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources will honor any request for confidentiality which is contained in such a notice. During the summer vacation period, the Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources will notify the BEU President, in writing (or via e-mail), and will post a notice at BSC offices concerning any such vacancy.

B. -----

C. BSC's decision final. The BSC's decision with respect to any transfer, whether voluntary or involuntary, shall be final; provided that involuntary transfers shall not be used as a form of discipline.

Dear Contract Corner:

I think I am being asked to change my teaching position for next year. Can they do that? Do I have the right to say no?

*Signed,
Don't Want to Move On*

Dear Don't Want to Move On,

Below you will find the contract language for Involuntary Transfers. Notice that you have the right to a meeting to discuss this with a BEU representative present. I suggest you contact the BEU right away and arrange for someone to meet with you and your principal or Curriculum Coordinator.

Signed,
Contract Corner

3.17 Transfers

B. Involuntary Transfers. Written notice of a proposed involuntary transfer and the reasons therefore shall be given to the teacher involved. The transfer shall not be made until the teacher or the teacher and a representative of the BEU have had an opportunity to discuss the proposed transfer with the Superintendent or his/her designee, nor shall such transfer be effected without the consultation of the building principals involved. Upon request of the teacher, a BEU representative may be present at meetings with the teacher concerning involuntary transfers. A teacher being involuntarily transferred may at his/her option take a leave of absence without pay for one (1) year.

C. BSC's decision final. The BSC's decision with respect to any transfer, whether voluntary or involuntary, shall be final; provided that involuntary transfers shall not be used as a form of discipline.

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to call the BEU at 617-277-0251. One of the following grievance committee members will get back in touch with you.

Deb Allen (Devotion, retired)
Jody Curran (Driscoll)
Hillary Golden (Lincoln)
Mark Goldner (Heath)
Rich Gorman (BHS)
Anna Maclver (Runkle)
Shelley Mains (BHS)
Susan Moreno (BHS)
Jill Sifantus (BHS)
Susan Stark (BHS)
David Weinstein (Pierce, retired)
Jessica Wender-Shubow
Sue Zobel (Lincoln)

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not use any observations collected during this time as evidence for the evaluation.

All observations must be followed by a post-observation "conversation" with you within 5 school days, which must be an "in person" meeting. The subsequent write-up must include evidence of your perspective on what the evaluator initially observed or reported.

You should know that administrators have the right to observe at any time, but that for their observations to be used as evidence for your evaluation the above must be followed.

Evidence Limited

You'll need only one piece of evidence for each goal and each of the four standards. This means you will generally only need 6 pieces of evidence. (Note that a single piece of evidence can count towards more than one standard and/or goal). If the evaluator thinks you need more evidence, they have the right to ask for additional evidence and need to explain what they expect, and then you'll have two weeks to provide this

evidence.

We recommend that you keep a running file of evidence you might want to use at the end of your cycle. It's a pain to have to search for things at the last minute, especially if you're under the gun and your evaluator asks for additional evidence.

Missed Evaluation Submission Deadlines

If the evaluator misses the deadline for filing the summative assessment or the formative evaluation in 2 year plans (barring extenuating circumstances), your plan is extended by an extra year - in other words, you cannot be penalized for the evaluator's delayed filing.

If you are rated Needs Improvement or Unsatisfactory, your evaluator must have a face-to-face conversation with you about your evaluation.

The BSC agreed to continue not using the Exemplary rating unless it is negotiated with the BEU. In addition, we successfully negotiated specific language stating that you cannot be prevented from receiving a Proficient rating because you declined to do work outside of your contractual

hours.

Disputing Ratings

Finally, if you have Professional Status and think you've been evaluated unfairly and have received a Needs Improvement or Unsatisfactory, you may request a review by the Evaluation Advisory Committee.

If you are a Pre-PTS educator and have concerns about your evaluation, you should also contact the BEU.

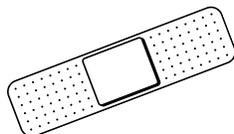
Our evaluation process is cumbersome and onerous - and we all question its usefulness. Unfortunately much of it is mandated by state law. We can and should engage politically to try to end unhelpful mandates like this, but in the meantime we are confident that our current agreement provides some very strong protections for educators.

The new evaluation is the result of over a year's worth of work and negotiations between representatives of the BEU and the superintendent. BEU representatives on the negotiating team were Jody Curran, Mark Goldner and Jessica Wender-Shubow. Don't hesitate to contact any of us with your questions and/or concerns.

-- *Mark Goldner (Heath)*



YOUR HEALTH CARE



Hope you all made it through Open Enrollment and have had all of your questions answered. This year the GIC increased our deductibles rather than make a huge hike in our premiums.

-We now have to pay a pharmaceutical deductible of \$100/single or \$200/family.

This is due to higher drug prices. That problem will take political organizing to solve.

-Our yearly healthcare deductible has increased to \$500/single or \$1,000/ family.

Our current healthcare contract will expire June 30, 2018. The PEC (Public Employees Committee) and Administrators from the Town will begin negotiating for a new contract soon. Maintaining the premium split of 83% Town and 17% Employees is uppermost on our agenda. We will be examining GIC healthcare data as well as other new carriers. We have a December 1, 2017 deadline so the PEC will be busy and meeting often.

Please use your Benny Card wisely. Always remember that we have a Healthcare Reimbursement Agreement (HRA) that can pay a portion of certain copays (E.R.visits, hospitalization for in-patient and out-patient visits and High Tech Imaging after 3rd visit). If you use your Benny Card for these procedures you will not be reimbursed by HRA funds.

Feel free to email me with any questions or concerns.... 2sheilaleach@gmail.com

-*Sheila Leach, PEC Rep*

FINANCE FOR EDUCATORS

MUCH ADO ABOUT INVESTING

Three Cheers for the Skeptical Millennials



Three cheers, Skeptical Millennials, for avoiding investment advisors. A recent survey conducted by the brokerage company Scottrade revealed that millennials are deservedly dubious about the integrity of financial advisors. In fact, the survey revealed that 67% of millennials believe that “advisors recommend products and solutions that are in their advisors best interests.” (It’s interesting, and a bit alarming, to note that only 22% of baby boomers maintain this same level of mistrust when dealing with financial advisors.)

And millennials should be apprehensive about placing their full trust in investment advisors not bound by an ironclad “fiduciary standard.” Under the current regulations, the majority of financial representatives are only required to adhere to a ridiculously low bar set by the, oh so vague “suitability standard” which only requires that you “know your client” and sell them “suitable products.” If you decide to engage the services of a financial advisor, select someone who meets the “fiduciary standard.” A fiduciary is obligated to disclose “conflicts of interest,” including selling products that generate a commission, to practice complete transparency when disclosing fees, and always to place the client’s best interests first.

Active versus Passive Investing: And the Winner is?

For those of you still paying a financial advisor for their would-be prophetic, but mostly pathetic, stock market prognostications, please take a seat and brace yourself. In a recent WSJ article “Indexes Beat Stock Pickers Even over 15 Years,” the authors Maxey and Dieterich provide some interesting commentary on a recently published study about the benefits of active versus passive investing. In a study that included an unprecedented 15 years of data, “82% of all U.S. (actively managed) funds trailed their respective benchmark.” (In this context, “benchmark” is synonymous with low-cost index funds – the Vanguard funds I recommend to BEU members - that mimic the market without trying to predict its direction.)

Investing in Retirement

Are you planning to retire in 2017, 2018 or 2019? Confused? If you can’t “make head or tail” of the understandably daunting, complex and sometimes confusing process of retiring, exhale and recognize that you’re not alone. When you’re confronted with the intimidating task of completing the novella sized “Retirement Application,” and you’re bewildered about whether to select “Option A” or “Option C,” rest assured you’re not alone. When you turn the page requiring you to list all creditable service in chronological order over the past four decades, you need not despair.

If you’re willing to invest some time – preferably at least a year before your projected retirement date - the MTRS provides a wide range of services to help you successfully navigate the retirement process. (You can read the rest of the article on the BEU website along with some concrete planning suggestions.)

-Robert Miller, Devotion (retired)

The President’s Work WORKLOAD OVERSIGHT UNDER- WAY:

The BEU has called on the School Committee to schedule the first meetings of the contractually binding process through which the BEU will negotiate changes in workload. Thank you Jeremy Bloch, Alisa Conner and Laura Vish for stepping up to represent the BEU with me!

WATCH FOR COMMITTEE UP- DATES ON THE NEW BEU WEB- SITE:

Brookline.massteacher.org

REMINDER:

As of Jun 1, the BEU Groupsite will be shut down. Be sure to do a first time log-in for the new site using your MTA membership number at the MTA website first time login.

We hope you enjoy this newsletter and find it informative. If you are represented by the BEU but are not a member, we ask you to join us.

Please note: Non-members represented in Units A and B and non-members employed more than 3 years in the Para Unit are responsible for paying an agency service fee, about 75% of the dues, billed late spring or summer.

THE BROOKLINE EDUCATOR

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BEU members discuss issues and find additional news at the website:

BEU.groupsite.com All members are encouraged to join using a personal email address.

*Amie Buchman, Communications
Chair*

Jessica Wender-Shubow, President