



Brookline Educators Union

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Affiliated with the Massachusetts Teachers Association and the National Education Association

VIA EMAIL

Michael Glover, Negotiations Chair
Brookline School Committee
333 Washington St., 5th Floor
Brookline, MA 02445

Dear Mr. Glover,

In May, you asked us to meet to negotiate quick one-year wages-only bridge agreements and we agreed to do that. When we met in July you agreed to our proposal for a \$1.25/hour increase for the Paraprofessional Unit, but you offered us an insultingly low offer for Units A and B equalling 0.82% of the whole package. The insult continues as we have not heard from you since, even after our last proposal on September 9 of 2% for Units A and B, which was approved by Town Meeting last spring.

Despite this recent history, we are hopeful you will still accept this fair wage proposal soon.

While those negotiations wind down, we believe it is appropriate to begin the process for full negotiations, either continuing our negotiations from last school year (if we fail to come to a one-year agreement) or getting a good start on new negotiations (if we succeed in reaching a one-year agreement) as you suggested in your May 10 letter.

To that end, the BEU is offering the following evenings to negotiate:

December 2, 3, 9, 10, 16, 17

January 7, 8, 13, 14, 15, 21, 22, 27, 28, 29, 30

February 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 24, 25, 27

We ask that you choose as many of these dates as possible - with three bargaining units, we have much to discuss. Please confirm dates as soon as possible to ensure they remain available on our very busy calendars.

We are also available in afternoons (actually prefer them), but assume that evenings are better for your team. If this assumption is wrong, tell us and we will offer dates in the afternoon.

We offer the first meeting to develop the ground rules (or revisit ground rules, if we are restarting negotiations) if you would like. During these ground rule discussions, we would be willing to discuss limiting the number of silent representatives in the negotiations room and the length of caucuses, concerns you have previously voiced.

We expect our first substantive bargaining sessions to take place in December which will allow us to have meetings before the budget process pursuant to M.G.L. Ch. 150E.

To be transparent, we will be including Silent Bargaining Representatives on our Negotiations Team. Let us clearly explain how we expect our Negotiations Team to be composed and why:

- Our Negotiations Team will be comprised of a designated team of Core Speaking Representatives and Silent Bargaining Representatives. The composition of the Union's Bargaining Team was voted on by the BEU Representative Council. The Council specifically voted to include silent bargaining representatives on our Negotiations Team.
- The Core Speaking Representatives will speak during negotiations. They will be comprised of a cross representational group of members from each of the units ~~and will~~ not to exceed 16 in number. The Core Speaking Representatives will be charged with relaying the concerns of the Silent Bargaining Representatives to the School Committee team after caucus.
- The Silent Bargaining Representatives will not speak during negotiations. They will sit silently and respectfully with the Core Speaking Representatives. The Silent Bargaining Representatives will provide feedback and information to the Core Speaking Representatives during caucus that will inform the Core Speaking Representatives' discussion with the Employer when the parties return from caucus to substantive bargaining. The Silent Bargaining Representatives will also report back to their colleagues (in the various buildings they work) concerning the progress of negotiations and facilitate a more real-time discussion about contract negotiations. This provides an increased opportunity for 1:1 dialogue between our members and representatives who choose to attend and negotiate their terms and conditions of employment. In this way, more members can be reached and their concerns can be brought back to the Core Speaking Representatives to inform future negotiations.
- The function and value of the Silent Bargaining Representatives of the BEU's Negotiations Team is multi-fold: they provide substantive feedback to the Core Speaking Representatives during negotiation; they ensure a wider breadth of members are reached for feedback on negotiations to ensure their concerns are represented; the broader range of representation will ensure a better solution to issues we will both look to resolve; and they also work to support the BEU's broader objective and purpose of exposing more of its members to the bargaining process and identifying new and emerging leaders who

may have fresh ideas or concerns that should be addressed in bargaining over terms and conditions of employment.

- Such widespread exposure not only assists the Union in its ability to survive, thrive and engage its members in a post-Janus era, it also ensures a degree of transparency, accountability and democracy that supports the Union's efforts to represent the varied interests, requests and concerns of the total sum of its membership base. In Brookline, it is quite active.
- We also expect that the parties, from time to time, may want to invite others for their unique perspective or expertise.

As you know, the BEU feels it is important to maintain our rights to have representatives of our choosing at negotiations. The selection of a union's negotiating team is an internal union matter that cannot justify an employer's refusal to bargain and we have voted to maintain our composition.

Despite our past differences of opinion about the composition of our team and the negotiations process, we think these negotiations can be a productive process that will serve to make our schools better, schools we can be proud of, schools our community deserves.

Sincerely,

Jessica Wender-Shubow
President

Eric Schiff
Negotiations Chair

Cc: Julie Schreiner-Oldham, School Committee Chair
Ben Lummis, Interim Superintendent
Lisa Richardson, Director of Human Resources
BEU