

MCCC News



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Over 55 MCCC members joined the Zoom Day contract negotiating session between the MCCC and management teams on Aug. 16. The Contract Action Team put out the call through the chapter presidents and included a MCCC United logo that people could use as a background, so management

representatives could see the support for the MCCC team. In the Zoom screenshot MCCC Team Chair, Lisa Coole from the Massasoit chapter is pictured at the top left, and Mike Murray, chair of the Board of Higher Education team is second from the right.

Day Contract Action Started: Management Throws a Curve Ball

After spending over a year of bargaining over the Day contract that expired June 30, 2021, with many issues still to be resolved, the MCCC Contract Action Team (CAT) has started pressing to support the bargaining team and bring about a successful contract.

A strategy of rank-and-file members being “silent observers” on the Zoom negotiating sessions was instigated. Participants were given “MCCC United” they could use as backgrounds to show

the management team that MCCC members are exasperated and upset over the delays.

CAT chair Robert Whitman said, “At the bargaining session held on July 26th 9 CAT members engaged in silent observation. The offer from management was on its face ludicrous and unacceptable. Their lack of respect and contempt for community college teachers was on full display.”

At the next bargaining session held on August 14th, over 50 MCCC members

attended by observing respectfully and silently.

But management made a surprise move and proposed a two-year agreement that would cover the expired 2021 year and expire in June of 2023. Their salary proposal kept with the governor’s mandated limits. This included a 2 percent raise for year one, along with a 1.5 percent one-time bonus as COVID compensation. Year two would have another 2 percent raise with a 0.5 percent addition to offset the deductions for the Paid Family Medi-

cal Leave (PFML). The raises would all be retroactive.

In putting forward the proposal, Mike Murray, chief negotiator for the Board of Higher Ed., said that one reason for the change was the uncertainty brought on by the legislation—proposed by the college presidents—that changed Section 26 and took away the separation of state funding from DCE courses.

While the bargaining teams caucused, the observers discussed among them-

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MCCC Directors, Board Back in the Room

For the first time in over two years, on June 15, the MCCC Board of Directors met in their boardroom at the Worcester office in person. It was an opportunity for newly elected directors to connect directly with the new leadership and their Board colleagues.

Having people in the building was a good opportunity to orient new Board members to how the body conducts its business. Parliamentarian Patti Legault-Frank presented an overview of Parliamentary Procedure in MCCC Meetings that helps to maintain order and do its job efficiently. Topics included Robert's Rules of Order, types of motions, the process to modify or withdraw a motion, Executive Session and Special Meetings.

The board adopted a schedule of meetings for the academic year that included two in person board meetings: November 18, 2022 and June 14, 2023. The rest of the MCCC meetings, including the April 21, 2023 Delegate Assembly will be held remotely using Zoom. While there may still be COVID reasons for not meeting in person, the use of video conferencing saves the MCCC considerable expense in travel mileage reimbursements and meals costs. It also saves the Board members significant time, as travel to the Worcester office can take some members over an hour and a half of driving each way, making serving on the Board much less demanding.

Another charge for the June Board meeting is to elect three members to serve as at-large members of the Executive Committee along with the three officers— president, vice president, and secretary. This smaller committee reviews issues and brings suggestions to the Board for actions. This year's at-large Ex Comm members are Brian Falter (NSCC), Candace Shivers (MtWCC), and Keli "Swan" Gates (CCCC).

Lisa Coole, Day Negotiations Team Chair, reviewed the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) and survey language for The Student Evaluation Survey Instrument developed by the BHA and the MCCC joint committee that was established by the 2018-202 Collective Bargaining Agreement. She answered questions about the history of the process, implementation time lines, plan for pilot testing, how evaluations scores will be calculated and concerns about bias. A motion was made and passed to ratify the MOA.

The June meeting also approved the job description for the new position of Office Manager and Treasurer. Related to this, a temporary contract was also approved for Phil Mahler, who agreed to temporarily serve in the position until a successor is hired.

Other actions included appointments to some MCCC committees and approval of summer stipends for the Day and DCE Negotiations chairs and for Day team members who have a schedule of bargaining sessions over the summer.

The August 24 board meeting was held over Zoom, and a major portion was devoted to a report on Day bargaining by Lisa Coole. She went over the issues already agreed upon with MOAs, and laid out the issues to be addressed in upcoming sessions scheduled for Sept. 21 and 28, including management's proposal at the Aug. 16 session for a quick, two-year contract (see related article) and the MCCC Contract Action Team's "silent observers" participation in the last session. ■



The MCCC Board of Directors held its first in-person meeting in over two years on June 15. It was a chance for the new directors to meet and get to know everyone. It was also an opportunity to conduct training on the responsibilities of the Board and for parliamentarian Patti Legault-Frank (center) to conduct a session on Robert's Rules of Order to facilitate efficient meetings. (Photo by Don Williams)

Management Throws a Curve...

Continued from front page

selves the potential of the proposal. Fear was expressed by MCCC Director, Cathy Boudreau, and MTA Director Rosemarie Freeland that this would set up the potential of eliminating DCE altogether.

Eliminating the ban on using state funds for night and summer courses, as the Section 26 change does, makes it legal for colleges to use full-time faculty to teach at those times. The Day contract defines faculty hours and terms, giving them protection against being forced to teach at those times.

Discussion also went into another reason to have a 2023 expiration: it would put the MCCC on the same bargaining cycle as the other higher ed units at the state universities and UMass. Bargaining as a coalition of all the higher ed. unions can bring a lot of power to the unions. But President Claudine Barnes said the history of coalition bargaining has often found the MCCC stuck as another unit takes a deal that is good for them, leaving us at a disadvantage.

The MCCC bargaining team told the silent observers that they would continue

to pursue their objectives. Chair Lisa Coole said that she will be putting out Bargaining Updates with their specific information about contract progress. Bargaining sessions have been scheduled for Sept. 21 and 28, and the CAT will be encouraging more members to become "silent observers" and to watch for more actions to push for a fair settlement.

CAT chair Whitman said, "Increasing our observers at the table is having a positive impact on bargaining. We will be working on a state-wide action plan to support the bargaining team as they fight for a fair contract for our members." ■

New OBRA Investment Options

Part-time faculty and staff who have OBRA pension deductions taken in lieu of Social Security will have new investment options as of Oct. 1, 2022.

The Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1990 (OBRA) allowed states to opt out of Social Security. It saves the state from having to contribute the employer's 6.2 percent share of Social Security, and also frees it from making any contribution to the employees' accounts.

The OBRA pension plan will be changing next month to allow participants to choose among SMARTPath retirement funds. Previously, participants

only had one investment option, a "capital preservation" fund, that prevented benefitting from growth in the markets. This plan will still be available. The new funds will have target-date options with a mix of securities that are heavily weighted towards stocks when a member is far from retirement age and become increasingly conservative as the member gets closer to retirement.

The new OBRA options will become available Oct. 1. To learn more, members can log on to their SMART Plan accounts. They can also contact their SMART Plan advisor by calling (877) 457-1900. A prospectus can be accessed at the [Empower Financial SMART Plan website, www.mass-smart.com](https://www.mass-smart.com). It explains the 12 investment funds and their investment strategies that participants can choose from. They range from the very conservative capital preservation strategy to investment professional managed accounts.

It is recommended that participants consult with an independent financial advisor before making any retirement decisions. ■

VISIT THE MCCC ONLINE!

www.mccc-union.org

The MCCC website is the best and most up-to-date source for late breaking developments important to Day and DCE Unit members in addition to being a valuable resource for MCCC contact information, bargaining and legislative updates, contracts, committee assignments, bylaws, local chapter leadership, calendar of meetings and events, and the MCCC News newsletters (current and past).

Find links to NEA, MTA and MCCC on Facebook. Bookmark the site for frequent referral. Need help with the website? Send any concerns about broken links, suggestions to the webmaster.

Reach Out to Me with Your Issues

Welcome back to the new academic year! It has been a very busy start to my first term as MCCC President and as the President of the Higher Education Leadership Council. Again, I want to thank everyone for your support and want to ensure you that I am listening and responding to your questions and concerns. My proverbial door is always open and I welcome members reaching out to me about issues large and small.

As college enrollments have been dropping, we have seen an increase in the number of colleges engaging in reorganizations and shifting of workloads. We have also seen increased pressure on professional staff unit members and a decline in the number of classes available to DCE faculty.



Claudine Barnes, MCCC President

Please make yourselves familiar with your contracts and with your contractual rights. If you feel there is a need for trainings around the contracts, please let me know so I can ensure these trainings occur.

I also want to strongly recommend membership in the union. Not only will you have the full weight of the MCCC and MTA behind you, including legal services when there are grievances, unfair labor practices, and MCAD (Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination) cases, liability insurance, and solidarity which aids significantly in bargaining contracts and in legislative ac-

tion, but you get the benefits that come with MTA Benefits. I realize that for some of you the costs are challenging but I can assure you that the costs are worth it. Efforts are underway now to help improve our membership numbers. If your chapter would like assistance, please reach out to me or the MTA Consultant assigned to your chapter.

We want you to be involved as we are only as strong as our members collectively and there are many ways that you can do so. The MCCC currently has vacancies on many of our standing committees. Committee members serve for terms of two years. If you are interested in serving, please let me know.

There is also the ongoing campaign to support the Fair Share Amendment as well as a contract action team to help support ongoing Day contract negotiations. And, as always, we need your support later in the fall to ensure that are colleges are properly funded in the state budget. The new governor's budget will be out in January.

In the coming weeks, we will be having our first Joint Study meeting. This meeting is the statewide equivalent to MACER meetings. We anticipate that the new Section 26 language that was adopted by the legislature this summer will be one of the topics of conversation. This legislation will allow state funds to be used for evening, weekend, and summer classes.

Through our work with the Massachusetts Association of Community Colleges (MACC), we were able to secure language in this legislation that preserves our contract language. We know that some MCCC members are worried about this legislation, and it is a big change, but nothing has changed in either the Day or DCE contracts; any changes would have to be negotiated and, to date, there has been no new contract language introduced by management that relates to Section 26.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to me or other members of the MTA statewide and local leadership. And, best wishes for a healthy and happy year! ■

Social Security GPO/WEP Reform Faces Uphill Battle in Senate

While employees of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts do not participate in Social Security, many qualify for some Social Security benefits because they paid into it through other private sector employment. Unfortunately, most state retirees will see their SSI benefits reduced by the Government Pension Offset (GPO) and the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) significantly or even completely.

A bill in congress, H.R. 82 titled *The Social Security Fairness Act*, which would eliminate the GPO/WEP, has reached the magic number of 290 co-sponsors, and because of a relatively new rule, any bill with 290 sponsors can be added to the House Consensus Calendar. Once on that calendar it can come up for a vote as long as it maintains those 290 co-sponsors. If passed, it would then proceed to the Senate where it could be passed, rejected or amended.

The Senate version (S.1302) has 40 co-sponsors. Unfortunately, it needs more support to pass. If the filibuster were to be invoked, it would even need 60.

Public employees in six other states besides Massachusetts also face this situation, and senators and members of congress have been working for years to alleviate this problem. As reported in *The Voice of the Retired Public Employee*, publication of the Mass Retirees organization, these are the states and number of affected people in each. The "Retirees" column reflects those where the WEP applies and Spouses/Children reflects GPO numbers.

Delegations from Massachusetts and California are very supportive. Other states are mixed. With the second highest number of state citizens impacted by GPO/WEP, one would think that the Texas senators would be on

board, but Sen. Ted Cruz and Sen. John Cornyn are not. Clearly there is still work to do.

STATE	RETIREES	SPOUSES/CHILDREN
California	262,076	12,666
Colorado	67,665	2,143
Illinois	96,375	3,198
Louisiana	47,264	1,946
Massachusetts	82,572	2,292
Ohio	150,313	4,727
Texas	191,331	7,833

New Higher Ed. Commissioner

After conducting a search in response to Carlos Santiago's decision to step down as Commissioner of Higher Ed. after almost 10 years last January, the Board of Higher Education has selected a replacement in former Pennsylvania Education Secretary, Noe Ortega.

At its Aug. 17 meeting the BHE interviewed four finalists for the position and then took a vote. Eight board members voted for Ortega and four voted for Lane Glenn, President of Northern Essex Community College. The majority was one vote short of the required number, and in a second round the vote was unanimously for Ortega. The board's recommendation goes to Secretary of Education James Peyser, who is expected to confirm the choice soon.

Prior to his position in Pennsylvania, Ortega was at the University of Michigan where he held a number of academic and administrative positions, including the assistant director and senior research associate at the National Center for Institutional Diversity and the managing director for the National Forum on Higher Education for the Public Good.

"My entire career has been dedicated to that particular idea," Ortega was quoted. "What are the voices that need to be elevated? How can I use my leadership to make

sure that I create conditions in which...the institutions I'm leading can be effective." ■



Noe Ortega (Courtesy photo)





Community College Night

Join your union colleagues at **Woo-Sox Community College Night, Thursday, September 22nd**, which has been inspired organized by the Massachusetts Community College Council (MCCC) and the Massachusetts Association of Community Colleges (MACC) to bring together community college colleagues and showcase community colleges.

The game starts at **6:45 pm** and community college guests are welcome to arrive starting at 5:30 p.m. for early access to the stadium, concessions, and lawn games. Representatives from each of the 15 Massachusetts community colleges will be recognized with an on-field pregame ceremony.

MACC is holding 30 seats in Section 1 for those interested in attending.



If these first thirty (30) held tickets sell out, MACC and the MCCC will work with the WooSox to hold additional seats in Sections 1 and 2. The ticket purchasing website is now live! The ticket link can be accessed through the QR code below.

Take yourselves out to the ball park and root for the home team (community colleges). Be proud and show your MCCC or college colors.

MCCC Meetings Calendar 2022-2023

Meetings will be conducted virtually in most cases. Members who wish to attend a meeting, but are not regular meeting attendees, should request access from President Barnes in advance of meeting. Two months will have face-to-face Board of Directors meetings: November and June.

YEAR	MONTH	EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	BOARD OF DIRECTORS	OTHER EVENTS
2022	AUGUST	17 (Wed)	24 (Wed)	
2022	SEPTEMBER	2	16	
2022	OCTOBER	7	15	
2022	NOVEMBER	4	18* In person	
2022	DECEMBER	2		
2023	JANUARY	6	20	
2023	FEBRUARY	3	17	Nominations Due 2/2
2023	MARCH	3	17	3/1 Bylaws Proposals Due
2023	APRIL	7	21	4/22 MCCC Delegate Assembly
2023	MAY	5		5/20-5/21 MTA Annual Meeting
2023	JUNE	2 (Wed)	14* (Wed) In person	
2023	JULY	-	-	6/30-7/5 NEA-RA Orlando, Fla



MCCC News

<http://mccc-union.org>

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The MCCC News is a publication of the Massachusetts Community College Council. The Newsletter is intended to be an information source for the members of the MCCC and for other interested parties. Members' letters up to 200 words and guest columns up to 400 words will be accepted and published on a space-available basis. The material in this publication may be reprinted with the acknowledgment of its source. For further information on issues discussed in this publication, contact Donald Williams, North Shore Community College, One Ferncroft Road, Danvers, MA 01923. email: Communications@mccc-union.org



Write Us

Letters to the Editor

Only submissions by MCCC unit members will be accepted. Letters should be no more than 200 words in length. The author must include name and chapter affiliation, which will be published with the letter. Authors must provide the editor with contact information in the form of either email address, mailing address or telephone number. Letters will be published on a space available basis and may be edited for length and appropriateness. Not all submissions can be published.

Guest Columns

Guest Columns should be no more than 400 words in length. Columns by authors who are not MCCC members may be accepted. The author's name and affiliation will be published with the column.

Mail to:

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Like us
at
mccc.union

Know Your Day Contract

September 2022

- Sept. 2** Earliest classes may begin (p. 53).
- Sept. 5** Faculty office hours must be posted (p. 53).
- Sept. 9** Course materials (Form XIII-E2) for Fall semester must be distributed to students and submitted to supervisor before end of drop/add period (p.59).

October 2022

- Oct. 1** Tenure eligibility list distributed (p. 46).
- Oct. 1** Sick leave bank open (p. 21).
- Oct. 2** Furnish employer with dues to be deducted per employee (p. 18).
- Oct. 6** Supervisor shall return Course Materials to faculty members by end of fifth week of semester. Members have 14 calendar days to respond to supervisor's concerns (p. 59).
- Oct. 13** Columbus Day holiday observed (p. 25).
- Oct. 15** Notice of termination at end of fifth year or later (p. 45).
- Oct. 24** Accrued professional staff vacation time in excess of 64 days (480 hours) converts to sick time. This now occurs twice per year, falling on the end of the last pay period of April and October (p. 24).
- Oct. 30** Last day to opt out of sick bank (p. 21).
(Note: membership in sick leave bank is automatic upon first October of a member's employment.)

NOTE: Cited page numbers in parentheses are from the 2018-2021. Dates may vary depending on the first day of classes. Most of these dates are "last date" standards. In many instances the action can be accomplished before the date indicated.