



Bargaining Update

December 2, 2022

Greetings MCCC Unit Members,

This communication provides a brief update on the Day Contract Negotiations since the last update on November 22, 2022. If you have not yet had a chance to review that update, I strongly encourage you to do so in order to better understand the context of recent developments. Bargaining updates may be found here: <https://mccc-union.org/>

On November 29th, we met with Management. In attendance were over 100 silent observers, and members of the CAT team. Management also had Nate Mackinnon, Executive Director to the Massachusetts Association of Community Colleges in attendance as a silent observer

Prior to this meeting, we were cautiously optimistic given how many tentative agreements and MOA's had been reached to date. Our plan was to present a fair and reasonable final package on Monday the 29th, for a 2- year contract that could be ratified given the totality of circumstances around this long and complex bargaining process; much of which was exasperated by the realities and issues raised from the Pandemic.

Unfortunately, despite sending out our revised financial, office hours, sabbatical, and classification committee counter proposals via email well in advance of the meeting we did not receive any written responses from Management until the meeting on Tuesday commenced. **This made it impossible for the Bargaining Team to present a package proposal.**

And as if the optimism was not already diminished, Management proposed the following at the meeting Tuesday:

That the parties sign an MOA to create a separate committee to renegotiate the remaining aspects of the Distance Education Agreement (workload, compensation evaluation) commencing in January 2023. The committee would include both Day and DCE units and any agreement reached would be incorporated into both units' successor CBA's. They further proposed that this proposal is tied to the following:

- The BHE/colleges would agree to remove the bottom (2) two intervals of the current Day grid and add (2) two new intervals to the top of the Day grid effective July 2022, and then upon ratification or approval of any deal on DE issues as reached by the joint committee, the grid will be amended again to remove the then bottom (3) three intervals as well as add (3) three new intervals to the top of the grid.
- Management further stated that in the event that an MOA is not reached by September 1, 2023, the current DE agreement will “sunset/terminate”.

The team finds the above proposal beyond unreasonable, and with a limited rationale that has not been proven to be valid. Management claims that in order to assist funding other areas of the financial proposals that are not tied to the Governor's parameters, some of the funding would need to come from monies saved by paying stipends for faculty for course preparation under the DEA. Our understanding is much of this was and should have been funded by the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF) paid out by the state in response to the Pandemic. We made a verbal request to receive some of the budgetary specifics that Management has referred to.

As noted in previous updates, we are concerned about Management's intent to possibly eliminate or significantly reduce stipends and to consider all course modalities the same for purposes of class size and workload. **While that part we have heard before in recent meetings with Management, the intimidating language to hold up funds and possibly leave MCCC faculty without a Distance Education Agreement is preposterous.**

Note: In previous sessions, we have asked for a similar committee and/or a priority commitment to bargain faculty and professional workload. That was immediately rejected. Imagine if we proposed to that that if no agreement was reached by a date certain then we would automatically get our workload adjustment.

This is the main issue that the team has been meeting over and we have sought both practical and legal advice from MTA representatives and the DCE Bargaining Chair. Given that we still do not have their counter language on other aspects of our financial proposal as of this writing, it makes it difficult to assess next moves. However, we have expressed this sentiment loud and clear to management and we will move forward on a package proposal based on our last financial counter if nothing is offered prior to Tuesday's meeting.

Other Proposals:

At the 11/29/22 meeting, Tentative Agreements were reached on Office Hours, the Classification Committee, and Faculty Extra Work. See last bargaining update for details.

Outstanding is the sabbatical proposal as the counter language that management presented on Tuesday added *where practicable* which would give the colleges an "escape hatch" to not adhere to the professional staff/faculty ratio language drafted to address equity in how sabbatical is offered. When asked to explain what type of situation they envision not being "practicable" they had no examples to offer.

Work to Rule:

Several colleges had already gone on Work to Rule (WTR) prior to this meeting but given that a TA was not reached on or before 11/29/22 per the Board of Directors (BOD) motion, remaining schools have considered and, in most cases, have held or scheduled meetings with members and have voted in favor of WTR in some capacity. Some colleges have postponed WTR to in or around the start of the spring semester. Some colleges have also modified their WTR protocols given the unique situations that each college presents in terms of hiring committees, concerns for professional staff impact, and other committee work.

Other News:

On December 1st, the MTA held a press conference at the State House with legislators, members and coalition partners to launch the Higher Ed for All campaign. The room was packed, and the energy for making a transformative investment in public higher ed was palpable! You can read some of the media coverage in this link <https://www.masslive.com/politics/2022/12/passage-of-millionaires-tax-has-higher-ed-leaders-seeking-expanded-access-to-state-colleges-and-universities.html> It was also recorded and should be available to share next week. MCCC President Claudine Barnes made a bold and impactful statement around inequities in the Community College system, especially in terms of low salaries in the face of the high cost of living.

The next meeting with management is scheduled for: **Tuesday, December 6 @ 2:00-4:00PM**. For more information on the CAT and/or participating as a silent observer, please contact the CAT Chair Robert Whitman bhccwork58@gmail.com We strongly believe that the presence of silent observers has been effective thus far and encourage members to attend as able.

While not anticipated, meeting times and dates are subject to change with prior notice.

In solidarity,

Lisa Coole, Day Negotiations Chair

For questions, please email me at: lcoole41@gmail.com