

# MCCC News



The Official Publication of the Massachusetts Community College Council / Vol. 24, Issue 2 / October 2023



## Join the Campaign for Fair Pay

Sign the petition to Gov. Healey in support of fair pay for community college faculty and staff.

Go to

<https://actionnetwork.org/.../cherish-our-community-colleges>



Or Use the QR Code

## MTA Higher Ed Conference 2023: Reconnect, Celebrate, Organize!

**Southbridge Hotel & Conference Center**

14 Mechanic Street

Southbridge, MA 01550

**Saturday, October 21st**

**10:00 AM - 4:00 PM**

Go to [MassTeacher.org](https://MassTeacher.org) to register

## 2024 MCCC Election Schedule

The Offices of President, Vice President, Secretary and the two Adjunct/Part-time Directors are up for election.

### Nominations Open

Wed. Nov. 1, 2023

Nominations Close

Thurs. Feb. 8, 2024

(Candidate signatures and newsletter statements are due on this date)

### Balloting opens

Monday

Mar. 11, 2024

Balloting closes

Thursday

Mar. 28, 2024

## Cherish Act Gets Broad Support

Dozens of Higher Ed. activists from across the state braved heavy rains on Sept. 18, and wore blue HigherEDFORALL t-shirts to show their support for the MTA sponsored Cherish Act that would make major funding increases for public higher education. After a press conference elsewhere in the Statehouse earlier, supporters gathered in the Gardner Auditorium for the hearing of the Joint Higher Education Committee at 10:00A.M.

Members of the Joint Committee, co-chaired by Sen. Jo Comerford and Rep. David Rogers, heard testimony from various stake holders including administrators, faculty and staff, and students on the need for greater funding. The objective is to create a high-quality debt-free public education for all Massachusetts residents that has suffered disinvestment for years. The current funding is below 2001 levels.

As MTA describes it, “The Cherish Act establishes a blueprint for a world-class system of public higher education that is urgently needed to meet widely shared goals in the Commonwealth.” It seeks to capitalize on the millions raised by the Fair Share Amendment to transpor-

tation infrastructure, and Cherish would do that in a major way. The bill is estimated to invest about \$790 million into higher education over several years.

In her opening statements, Sen. Jo Comerford, one of the bill’s primary sponsors, made a very strong arguments for what the bill contains. She stressed the many benefits higher education brings to the state’s citizens calling it “an equity engine.”

Several legislators testified in favor of the bill including Rep. Sean Garballey, another primary sponsor. He said, “The Cherish Act is about investing in our students, in our knowledge-driven economy and in the future of our commonwealth.” He also pointed out some of the inequities the bill would address such as better pay and health insurance for adjuncts.

Sen. Jake Oliveira spoke as a proud graduate of Framingham State University citing the great opportunities it provided him and many others. He also said that he has already seen benefits to higher ed. from the Fair Share funds, not just by himself but also by his wife who is a professor at Springfield Technical Community College.

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Eric Parkison from Bunker Hill Community College (center) testified about the Cherish Act to the Joint Committee on Higher Education explaining the financial difficulties adjunct faculty face as fellow adjuncts Guy Bellino from Salem State University and Phyllis Keenan from Greenfield Community College waited for their turns to speak at the hearing. (Photo by Don Williams)

## DCE Contract Tips - Fall 2023

### Reappointment Rights and Seniority

The DCE Seniority List is published by each college every year on August 15. This list reflects DCE seniority accrued through the previous June 30. This list is important because it indicates reappointment rights by work area and the priority in which available courses are assigned. Although this was always the case, its importance is now elevated because of declining enrollment and fewer course sections being offered. Unit members are advised to consult the list and question if it does not appear accurate. Seniority is expressed in years, but its calculation is determined by the means provided by the collective bargaining agreement (see below).

Reappointment rights are effective after teaching five courses over three consecutive fiscal years (7/1-6/30) at the college. These courses do not have to be in the same department. Teaching two or more courses per year in a work area at the college earns one-year seniority. One course in one area and one course in another area in a fiscal year provides one-year seniority in each work area. Loss of accrued seniority results after a consecutive two fiscal year break in service at the college unless on an authorized leave of absence. Canceled courses do not count toward a break in service.

### Appointment

A tentative appointment for one course shall be assigned first to those unit members with the longest seniority in the work area. You should, under normal circumstances, be notified of your assignment five weeks prior to the beginning of classes. You should be



MCCC DCE Grievance Coordinator Joe Rizzo

given a contract indicating the courses and salary to which you have been assigned. An employee who hires, fires, or evaluates DCE faculty cannot teach a course in DCE unless all unit members with reappointment rights have course that will run.

### Course Material

Faculty must submit the course syllabus within one week of the beginning of classes. This should include the items appearing on the course material checklist contained in the collective bargaining agreement (Form DE-1 for online courses and Form DCE-E1 for all other courses). DCE faculty enjoy academic freedom which provides for professional latitude in fulfilling one's contractual obligations in this regard. An Interaction Plan (Form DE-2) must also be submitted for distance education courses. Instructors have the right to choose their textbook(s) and other course materials. The exception to this is when it is a past practice of departmental selection and DCE faculty are given an opportunity to participate in the decision-making process, or when the appointment is made as the semester is to begin where a textbook was previously selected by the college. The college may approve an alternate selection.

The instructor must post the syllabus using the college's learning management system.

### DCE Salary Steps - Fall 2023

**Step 1 Step 2 Step 3 Step 4**

**\$1,291 per credit \$1,375 per credit**

**\$1,465 per credit \$1,561 per credit**

The laboratory component is paid .74 of the appropriate pay step for each lab hour of the course. The lab schedule is:

**Step 1 Step 2 Step 3 Step 4**

**\$955 \$1,018 \$1,084 \$1,155**

### Salary Step Placement and Movement:

DCE faculty will move from salary Step 1 to salary Step 2 upon teaching the sixth class and move to Step 3 upon teaching the eleventh class. Step 4 is effective upon attaining 8 years of seniority at the college. New faculty at the college would normally start at Step 1 but may start at Step 2 or 3 of the salary schedule based on degrees, qualifications, and experience.

The DCE contract allows salary to be determined based on the DCE courses and years taught at other community colleges in our system so that the unit member is paid at the highest DCE step achieved in the Massachusetts Community College system. The unit member must initiate this process by asking the College to include the work history at the other institution(s) and to authorize the other College(s) to disclose this information. Unit members with a two-year break in service in the system are not eligible. This contract provision pertains only to the calculation of salary. Unit members who wish to exercise this contractual right should contact the Human Resources office at the college.

(Some unit members, usually in the health areas, are paid by the contact hour rather than credit hour. The reason for this emanates from the nature of the

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## Cherish Act Support . . .

*Continued from front page*

MTA President Max Page and Vice President Deb McCarthy had the opportunity to speak early in the hearing. Page told the body, "There is no racial or economic justice in the commonwealth without access to high-quality debt-free higher education."

Cait Brumme CEO of MassChallenge, a global non-profit that accelerates over 600 high-growth startups a year, also spoke, making the business case for Cherish saying, "Companies' access to an educated workforce is



MTA President Max Page urged legislators to pass the Cherish Act with Vice President Deb McCarthy waiting beside him. (Photo by Don Williams)

their primary reason for locating in Massachusetts."

MCCC members had the opportunity to testify in the form of two adjunct members, Eric Parkison from Bunker Hill and Phyllis Keenan from Greenfield. Parkison spoke about the financial strains that adjuncts face trying to piece together schedules on a semester-by-semester basis. The lack of consistency makes it difficult to find housing and buy a car. MCCC adjuncts Paul Johansen and Margaret Crowe also had the opportunity to speak. the state constitution that MTA co-sponsored. Those funds were supposed to go to education and MCCC President Claudine Barnes and Vice President Joe Nardoni did get a chance to speak at the very end of the hearing. Nardoni spoke about the low, uncompetitive salaries at our community colleges, and the difficulties of hiring well qualified people who balk at accepting positions with such low pay compared to other systems in the country.

Barnes thanked the legislators for the MassReconnect program for tuition-free enrollment for older students, but asked that they ensure that funds will continue to be appropriated in future years. The program puts a huge workload on our professional staff members and they need continued resources. She also addressed the lack of full-time faculty pointing out that many departments have no full-time faculty members. Many other departments have only one, like her own college where she is the only full-time history professor.

When questioned by Rep. Jenny Armini about why the colleges rely so heavily on adjunct faculty, Barnes responded that with uncertain funding the colleges are reluctant to commit to hire new, full-time faculty. Passing the cherish act would give the colleges much more fiscal certainty. ■

# It's Nice to Be Valued – But Gestures, While Appreciated, Still Don't Value Us Fairly

By Joe Nardoni,  
MCCC Vice President and SAC Coordinator

A recent study demonstrates that on average, FT faculty at the Massachusetts Community Colleges are underpaid by 54.8 percent when you compare us to the FT faculty salaries in California, the state with the closest cost of living to Massachusetts. Not only that, but our faculty workloads are, for the most part, greater than those of faculty working in California. Our faculty and professional staff have not had our salaries adjusted for equity since the early 2000s. It is time for the Commonwealth to do the right thing and to show us the money.

The MCCC learned at our last Joint Study meeting with the Presidents that they were going to acknowledge the amazing job our professional staff advisors did in getting the influx of students drawn to enroll by the MassReconnect program registered and into classes on time. This acknowledgement would be on the order of something like a special thank you luncheon. The Presidents deserve our thanks for that, as this is well-deserved and it shows real appreciation for the way our members stepped up.

This is nothing new for our members, both faculty and staff, who have gone the extra mile as a matter of

course to offer our students high quality instruction and support in ways that have often been above and beyond our job descriptions, during the 28+ years I have been teaching at Middlesex Community College, in ways too varied and times too often to recognize them all as they happened at Middlesex, not to mention the other 14 Massachusetts Community Colleges.

However, gestures just don't go far enough, not when our members have regularly gone beyond our contractual requirements to make sure they get things right for their students; not when our members have been the victims of institutionalized diminishment because we teach the underserved and the impoverished; not when our members work harder and longer hours than the majority of community college faculty across the country; not when our members have been denied the opportunity for over twenty years to attain the salaries we should have already been earning to fairly compensate us for the work we do.

Show us the money, because it's long overdue. Show us the money because it has been over 8 months since we ratified our last contract and, except for one college who has seen fit to pay out some of the raises, we haven't seen a dime of the money that contract promised us. Show us the money because even with it, we will still fall further behind our counterparts in the other higher education locals because they got 8% this fiscal year and we have to date received nothing, and have nothing in the pipeline.

That's why we have begun a petition campaign to encourage Governor Healey to see that she needs to act on our behalf right now—it is simply wrong not to include the members of the local who submitted more signatures than any other higher ed local when we presented the petitions that won an 8% one-year salary increase for everyone else in higher ed from the Governor on February 16th of this year. As of this writing, we have

collected over 1,000 signatures, about 10% of which have come from people who support the community colleges. This is a great beginning!

That's why it's so important to keep working at this, to get tables set up on campus so we can work with our students to not only get fully-funded community college, but a fully-funded community college that no longer exploits our members' time and work because we answered the call to help the underserved and often-impoorished students who attend our campuses.

That's why it's so important to post the QR code to the petition on your office door and everywhere on campus that you can. That's why it is important that you talk to your students before your class starts, so that they know that fully-funded, free to the student community college means nothing if they don't have the FT faculty and staff to teach the courses they need. That's why it's so important that you share the petition with your friends over social media or in person.

That's why it is so important to also make your calls to Governor Healey so she can hear your stories about what it's like to be a single parent and trying to raise two teenagers on less than 70K per year, regardless of where you live in the Commonwealth. It's important that she hear what you think of penny-pinching bureaucrats who make more than we do demand that we take substandard raises, when we were promised during our negotiations that taking a two-year contract would give us access to Governor Healey's parameters. It's important that she hear what you think of the tax breaks for the rich just handed out when our tax collections in this current year didn't meet their projections, while we are expected to take a 2% raise that won't even keep up with inflation.

Our community college funding system is broken. It's time that Governor Healey take one small step towards fixing it. **Show us the money.** ■

## DCE Contract Tips . . .

*Continued from page 2*

courses where they are team taught and have mixed modalities including clinical assignments.)

**Payment for Under-Enrolled Courses:** The College may run a course that is by its definition under-enrolled. The College may offer the faculty member reduced compensation to teach an under-enrolled course which the faculty member may accept or decline. If the faculty member declines, the College may appoint another faculty member to teach the course. The reduced compensation shall be computed on a per capita basis. The definition of adequate enrollment may vary by college.

The complete DCE collective bargaining agreement and DCE seniority lists by college are available on the MCCC website.

### DCE Contract:

<https://mccc-union.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/69/2022/07/Signed-DCE-CBA-2020-2023-7-22-22.pdf>

### DCE Seniority Lists:

DCE Seniority Lists  
([mccc-union.org](https://mccc-union.org))

Please contact your MCCC Chapter leadership or MCCC DCE Grievance Coordinator for additional information or if you have questions.

Joseph Rizzo, MCCC  
DCE Grievance Coordinator  
[grievance-dce@mccc-union.org](mailto:grievance-dce@mccc-union.org) ■



Rep. Sean Garballey (center) spoke in support the Cherish Act, which he co-sponsored, at the Sept. 18 hearing of the Joint Committee on Higher Education. He is flanked by Sen. Jake Oliveira (left) and Rep. Pat Duffy as they wait their turns to speak in support the bill.  
(Photo by Don Williams)



MCCC Vice President Joe Nardoni was joined by former MTA Vice President and long-time MSCA union activist Len Paolillo at the Cherish Act hearing on Sept. 18.  
(Photo by Don Williams)

# Research Report Shows Disappointing Trends

MCCC Research Coordinator Hilaire Jean-Gilles presented his semi-annual report to the Board of Directors at their Sept. 15 meeting. The report covered data up to the Spring 2023 term.

Enrollment trends were the first topics addressed. Citing data from the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, he pointed out that freshman enrollments declined nationally, with some prestigious institutions seeing a 5.6 drop, while community colleges had a slight gain in students. This was attributed to an increase in dual enrollment students.

The 15 MCCC colleges saw an average 7 percent decline in full time equivalent enrollments (FTE) across the system. But five colleges had double digit declines: Cape Cod, Massasoit, Mount Wachusett, Northern Essex, North Shore. Two campuses had no decline: Springfield Tech and Greenfield

The trend is very disturbing. A graph of total Massachusetts community col-



MCCC Research Coordinator Hilaire Jean-Gilles

lege FTE enrollments from Fall 2013 to Fall 2022 showed a drop from 61,017 down to 34,491.

The cost of attending our community colleges is an issue related to enrollment that Jean-Gilles covered. He looked at the tuition and fees charged at the 15 colleges. Tuition is relatively low, running between \$720 and \$780 for a full-time student, and set by the Board of Higher Education.

Fees are charged by the colleges, and they vary more significantly. Fees for a full-time student at Bunker Hill pays the lowest at \$5,724 while a student at Middlesex pays \$6,840. The resulting cost of attending a Massachusetts community college in tuition and fees comes out to an average of \$6,833.

Salary trends are an important component of the coordinator's job. He tracks salaries in the ten "similarly situated states that MCCC salaries were benchmarked to by the Classification Study of 2000. In that study MCCC salaries were supposed to be at the 75th percentile of these states.

The average Massachusetts community college faculty member salary was \$68,324. And the average salary of the other states was \$80,173. But the state where the cost of living is closest to that of Massachusetts was California, where the average salary was \$105,759.

Jean-Gilles said, "As of December 2022, full-time faculty average salaries for the community colleges in Massachusetts were well below the national 75th percentile. In order to bridge this gap, Massachusetts' public two-year faculty salaries should be increased significantly

Unfortunately, there is no provision from the state to keep us at the 75th percentile, but it does stand as a recognized comparator of what MCCC salaries should be. ■

## Know Your Day Contract

### October 2023

- 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.)*

### November 2023

- Nov. 11** Veterans Day holiday (p. 25).
- Nov. 21** Unit Personnel Practices Committee established (p. 46).
- Nov. 23-24** Thanksgiving Holiday (p. 25).
- Nov. 25** Professional Staff must use one of the three off campus days (p. 56).

**NOTE:** Cited page numbers in parentheses are from the 2018–2021 as the 2021–2023 contract has not been published yet. 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.

**CORRECTION:** Last month an older version of the language regarding conversion of vacation time was inadvertently published. The current language is: After June 30, 2021, accrued vacation leave in excess of 375 hours (50 day) shall not be converted to sick leave and any accrued vacation credits above 375 hours (50 days) shall be forfeited at the end of the last payroll period in December of each year.



## 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](mailto: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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1 Ferncroft Road, Danvers, MA 01923

**Or email:**  
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