



# Bargaining Update

May 21, 2026

Dear colleagues,

These bargaining updates are intended to keep membership up to date on developments with Day CBA negotiations. As Day Negotiations Team Chair, I'll be sending them out regularly so that members can follow the process, take heart from our progress, and understand better all the challenges that Management throws at us. If contract negotiation is like a roller coaster, it's one you better hope you don't have to get on more than once in three years, the approximate time it takes to bury the trauma of the last ride.

But contract negotiation is *not* like a roller coaster in at least one important respect: We never wind up exactly where we started! We can and do win improvements for our members in each bargaining cycle, thanks to the dedicated efforts of MCCC leadership, MTA Field Reps, and the brain trust that is the Day Negotiations Team. And boy oh boy, do we have a brainy Team:

- Claudine Barnes (CCCC), MCCC President, faculty (ex officio)
- Caitlin Bogue (QCC) Co-Secretary, professional staff
- Colleen Fitzpatrick, MTA Field Rep
- Rena Gorman (STCC), Co-Secretary, faculty
- Trevor Kearns (GCC), Chair, faculty
- Joe Nardoni (MCC), MCCC Vice-President, faculty (ex officio)
- Ellen Pratt (MWCC), Vice-Chair, professional staff
- Thomas Schaeffer (CCCC) faculty
- Jose Intriago Suarez (NSCC) professional staff

Personally, it's been an absolute pleasure working with them, and I'm confident we can make significant progress on key issues in this cycle. Please lend them your support in whatever way you can.

## **How Bargaining Works and How You Can Contribute**

The Day Team meets weekly for about two hours. We use this time to craft proposals and deliberate on strategy. We discuss data that informs our work, including the recommendations of the MCCC Professional Staff Committee, bargaining holdovers from previous cycles, and the

voluminous Day Survey results as well as relevant developments at local campuses, arbitration decisions, and so on.

We also meet with Management's Team to conduct bargaining. These meetings are called "bargaining sessions" or "at the table" meetings, and it is where we formally present proposals and negotiate over them. This summer, we are scheduled to meet with Management once per month, with a shared goal of having all our proposals on the table by the beginning of the Fall semester. It is advantageous for our members for bargaining to move swiftly so as to avoid delays in raises and the implementation of better terms.

Once proposals are on the table, we negotiate, packaging changes together, trading off items to achieve our highest priorities, presenting counter-proposals, and hopefully getting Management to acknowledge the rising challenges and workloads we all experience in our MCCC roles. We will never get *everything* we want in a given bargaining cycle; by the same token, we will never let Management get *everything* they want, either. Bargaining needn't operate on a zero-sum basis, but in the recent environment at the Massachusetts community colleges, it often does.

Thankfully, we have a (Not So) Secret Weapon on our side this time, and going forward in future cycles: the [Organizing Committee](#)! The OC organizes members at all campuses to take action on our own behalf, including showing up at bargaining sessions as Silent Representatives. If you would like to do something to help bargaining, follow the OC's lead or sign up to be a Silent Rep.

### **Recent Developments: Run Aground on Ground Rules**

So far, we've met with Management at the table twice (4/29 and 5/6). We had tens of Silent Reps at each meeting (thank you!) that certainly contributed to our presence at the table.

It is customary to negotiate first over Ground Rules that both parties will adhere to in the course of the rest of bargaining. The Day Team and Management each presented Ground Rules that differ only on a few key points, and somewhat unexpectedly, we were unable to settle Ground Rules in these first meetings due to Management objecting to using transcription for Zoom meetings. This is a disability accommodation for a Day Team member, but Management expressed discomfort at being "recorded." We will attempt to move past this point by using live captioning in Zoom meetings instead.

Another point of disagreement in our Ground Rules is the nature of Silent Rep participation. Management is not comfortable looking into the faces of the people their bargaining decisions impact, so they propose to return to the webinar format for virtual bargaining sessions. This allows them to avoid any unsettling gazes that might prick their conscience or pluck their well-guarded heartstrings, and it prevents Silent Reps from seeing each other. We do not plan to agree to this arrangement. Management has also allowed for in-person Silent Reps in their Ground Rules, an acknowledgment of the legitimacy of this long-standing practice in contract negotiations.

The final point of disagreement is around the number of bargaining sessions to hold before all proposals must be on the table. We propose one more session than Management has this summer, September 1. Our next bargaining session will be June 9 or 10; Management is currently deliberating on their availability.

One very important factor that impacts our own availability is a recent, unilateral change to the bargaining process that Management surprised us with this cycle. It was past practice for members of the Day Team to each receive reassigned time (one course section for faculty, 7 hours for professional staff) in order to have time to do the work as well as to travel to in-person bargaining sessions. (The Day Chair receives two course sections / 14 hours since the Chair also conducts impact bargaining for all the campuses.)

However, for this cycle, Management announced that the Colleges would not provide this reassigned time. The MCCC filed an Unfair Labor Practice over this decision, and that legal process is underway. In the meantime, our Team labors without that reassigned time, necessitating odd bargaining times in the late afternoon or early evening. Management has offered reassigned time to professional staff Day Team members this summer, but only on the days scheduled for table bargaining. This seems like an intentional move to hobble our Team's ability to function well in bargaining, and the Union is doing what we can to fight it.

One other development to note from our first two sessions: It is also customary for the MCCC to present its Bargaining Principles (attached as a separate PDF) at the first bargaining session. This document is the polestar we strive ever to steer towards through our proposals and negotiations. Once we clear the Ground Rules shallows, we head into deeper waters, stiffer headwinds, and higher waves. Collective bargaining is guaranteed its storms, mighty and middling, but with your support, the Day Team will win through to a brighter day and a more pacific shore for all our Day members.

As MCCC VP Joe Nardoni says,

Conceive it

Believe it

Achieve it

*We will not be denied!*

Sincerely,

Trevor Kearns

Day Negotiations Chair

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