



Bargaining Update

5/25/23

Greetings MCCC Unit Members,

Given the events of the past week, I wanted to provide an update as we head into summer. For all past bargaining updates please see: <https://mccc-union.org/>

Last Wednesday, May 17th, I sent an email notice to members via chapter presidents, that we finally received written confirmation from Mike Murray (BHE) that the College Presidents had agreed to implement several aspects of the contract that are *not* tied to state funding. The BHE has issued this timeline to all 15 College Presidents, Human Resource Offices, and Chief Financial Officers.

Last Friday, May 19th, we heard from MCCC President Claudine Barnes the breaking news that Governor Healey filed a standalone reserve for the full funding of the Day Contract. This action means that our increases will not be in a supplemental budget but will come before the House and Senate as a standalone item eliminating any concerns that other issues in a supplemental budget would hold up funding. It is our hope that we should see our increases much earlier than this fall as we had previously anticipated. And on this past Monday, May 22nd *"the House gaveled in and out in short order on Monday morning, moving forward a Gov. Maura Healey supplemental budget. The supplemental budget would direct \$26.2 million to a recently concluded collective bargaining agreement with the Massachusetts Community College Council. In her filing letter to lawmakers, the governor asked that they "enact this legislation promptly," as the collective bargaining agreement requires timely ratification and funding." - Sam Drysdale* (State House News Service).

On Saturday, May 20th, I attended and participated in a media shoot upon an offer from MTA communications to share personal insight and relevant testimony around certain aspects of the Cherish Act, especially as they pertain to equity in wages, workload, and how best to retain at risk and marginalized students. This idea was brought on in part because of the cancellation of the March 30th Advocacy Day at the State house due to inclement weather where I had prepared a short speech for the press release. While I am not sure exactly how much of the excerpts will be used, I was advised that pieces of it combined with other student, faculty and staff video clips will be pulled together and used as part of a social media campaign targeted at legislators. As noted by President Barnes in the MCCC May Newsletter, *"We have endorsed Cherish and generally support its language. However, we have a major problem with the debt-free portions of the bill which could end up severely and negatively impacting the enrollment at community colleges by making all of higher ed the same cost to students. While we applaud the equity, our primary tasks as a labor union are to preserve our employment and improve our working conditions. As this bill moves forward in the legislative process, we need to ensure the language is rewritten to protect the community colleges. The college presidents agree regarding this debt-free language, and we have both been reaching out to key legislators about necessary changes."* I used the opportunity to highlight the unique and necessary role that community colleges play in guiding and

preparing students on a variety of academic and professional pathways and to be clear about our insulting pay and increased and uniquely challenging workload as compared to other higher ed institutions.

On Monday, May 22nd, I received an email from Mike Murray that he is leaving the DHE at the end of June. Also addressed on this email was MCCC President Claudine Barnes and DCE Bargaining Team Chair DeAnna Putnam. It was a cordial communication in which he thanked us for our “*cooperation and collegiality over the last few years*”. He also indicated that moving forward contract related inquiries should be directed to Carol Wolff-Fallon and John Casey who both serve as Labor Counsel for the Massachusetts Community Colleges and were present on Management’s team throughout bargaining. While we were not surprised by this news, a reason was not explicitly stated.

On Tuesday, May 23rd, the Day Bargaining Team met to continue our debrief of the past two years of negotiations and to discuss recent developments. During this meeting several questions were raised such as:

- Who will oversee and represent Management in successor bargaining and when will that start?
- What is the status of the parameters for successor bargaining as we hear that other higher education locals are being offered (not yet accepted) a one year 8% increase.
- How does the recent timeline commitment and movement of the budget at the state level impact chapters decision regarding Work to Rule (WTR) and/or wearing of stickers at upcoming commencements and other campus events. With the help of the MTA and upon request stickers bearing the main slogan “Why Wait? Fund Raises Now!” have been distributed.

While Claudine and I were hoping to address some of the above in the Joint Study meeting yesterday, May 24th, unfortunately this meeting was canceled due to only one President being able to attend to represent Management, but we were assured this meeting would be rescheduled.

At this time we have been informed that the DHE is going through a reorganization in terms of contract negotiation teams which will include training. They have assured us that they will keep the MCCC informed. We will be watching this closely and guarding against any unnecessary delays in the process. And while members of the successor bargaining day team have been appointed it will likely not commence meeting formally until the end of the summer given that the Survey committee is still being established. We also have concerns that once the survey is constructed the middle summer is not the best time to get a valid “read” on all of our members due to faculty being off contract and also the continued distractions and frustrations around this current contract.

As far as future parameters are concerned, we know that the DHE is still maintaining their position that we should be held to 2% in our first year of successor bargaining as those were the parameters set by Governor Baker. As reported in previous bargaining updates we vehemently disagree with this analysis and have made it clear in writing and at several meetings attended by our MCCC officers that we will fight against this. The legal request about this matter is in process as we were advised this week that the matter is still under review and there is no decision. Once we receive the decision it will help direct our efforts.

As far as WTR and MCCC stickers, it has always been the Bargaining Team's position that this is a decision that should be made at the Chapter level. As those decisions are made, MCCC VP and Strategic Action Committee (SAC) Chair Joe Nardoni issued an informative email yesterday with the following observations/considerations:

- Wear them with joy and thank your college President in person during your college's commencement proceedings.
- Wear them with joy and remind one another and your college's President that we have one more thing to do: ensure that we get the same deal the other public sector unions will get this year: 4% on July 1st, 2023 and 4% on January 1st, 2024.
- If you choose not to wear them to commencement, display them with pride on your office door or wherever else they will get people's attention, and use that to generate conversations about the work we have left to do

As we await the funding and implementation of the contract, please feel free to address any questions or concerns to me at lcoole41@gmail.com.

Thank you for your continued support and vigilance,

In solidarity,

/S/ Lisa C. Coole

Lisa C. Coole

Chair, Day Contract Negotiations Team