



MEMORANDUM

TO: BEA MEMBERSHIP
FROM: KIMBERLY GIBSON, BEA PRESIDENT
RE: END OF YEAR
DATE: JUNE 27, 2018

As the 2017-2018 school year comes to an end, I wanted to thank you all for what you've done over this past school year. Every BEA member faced challenges with larger class sizes, larger caseloads, and expanded job responsibilities yet you came to work and supported colleagues and students throughout the year. In times like these it truly is an honor to represent you as BEA president.

I also wanted to send an update on the RIF and Contract Negotiations. But then this morning the U.S. Supreme Court ruling on the Janus vs. AFSCME case came out so this memo will include information on that as well. I wish you all a restful summer and will see you on the first day of school. We will hold our BEA meeting in the BHS auditorium prior to the Superintendent's Convocation. At that time, you will be updated on the Contract Negotiations, as stated below, because there are several bargaining sessions scheduled throughout the summer months.

RIF Update:

The District recalled 54 pink slipped teachers this week and reinstated a number of blue slipped teachers as well. At the Finance Subcommittee meeting of the School Committee last week the Supt. discussed hoping to recall an additional 20 teachers during the summer. They have to wait to see if additional funding becomes available. The BEA is aware of the fact that, at the Elementary level, current SEI teachers with Professional Status were recalled out of order based on holding an ESL license or being committed to obtaining the ESL license. This is a licensure requirement of the state and impacts compliance for the District. The BEA Grievance Chair, Tim Sullivan will be reviewing the situations to determine whether a grievance will be filed over this action.

Contract Negotiations Update:

The BEA Bargaining Team has been working hard to negotiate a new Collective Bargaining Agreement with the School Committee utilizing the Interest Based Bargaining approach. The Contract Negotiations started in late February and we have had 13 bargaining sessions to date. I can report that we are making progress on a number of issues and that we still have a significant number of issues to discuss at the table. We will continue meeting over the summer, but due to the number and

complexity of the issues involved, we are not close to reaching an agreement on a new Contract as of this date. The Bargaining Team will provide you with a full update on the status of the Contract Negotiations at the start of the school year.

Janus Decision:

Today, the U.S. Supreme Court issued its decision in the Janus v. AFSCME case. As anticipated, the decision came down 5-4 against the interests of working men and women and for the Koch brothers and other corporate interests that bankrolled the case. Many of the same forces behind the Janus case were also behind the pro-charter Yes on Question 2 campaign in 2016.

What does this mean for us?

First, by staying together, we will be stronger than ever. We may not always agree on how things in our local work out but one thing is for sure, we are stronger together! This is not the time to leave our union, it is a time to come together and show our strength. You, the Members of the BEA are dedicated and faithful. You've endured five straight years of layoffs which have resulted in larger class sizes and continual challenges. We have an outdated Funding Formula for Education at the State level and need to work together to get this changed. Contact your State Legislators when asked to do so. Our collective voices make a difference.

Tell your co-workers and friends that you are “sticking with the union” by posting a message on social media. Take a photo of yourself and co-workers holding up a sign with the word UNION. Post photos on social media. If you have an All In button, please wear it.

Second, talk about the importance of our union. Remind people that our union supports:

- Our voice. Educators need a voice and real power to improve teaching and learning conditions at the local, state and national levels. Whether the issue is testing, funding, educator evaluation, a bullying administrator, our voices — on behalf of ourselves, our students and our communities — are louder when we speak through our union. All BEA Members are our union!
- Our profession. The union supports the schools, colleges and universities our students and communities deserve. Together, we are stronger as we demand the professional autonomy and respect that educators and all workers deserve. We advocate for pro-student education policies at the local, state and national levels and provide professional learning opportunities to our members.
- Our interests. The union gives employees the power to bargain collectively for fair pay, benefits, working conditions and due process rights. This is fundamental to attracting and retaining qualified educators at all levels. If members drop out of the union to save a few dollars, it will cost them much more down the road in lost wages, fewer benefits and deteriorating working conditions. Imagine what the last five years of Reduction in Force scenarios could have looked like without the union. Imagine what your working conditions could have been if management didn't have to bargain with the BEA!

- Our rights. Members defend their rights through organizing and with the support of the MTA's field, legal, policy and communications services, as well as with access to a \$1 million liability insurance policy.

The Janus decision is an outrage that underscores just how polarized our country has become. The case was backed by special interests that have long sought to "defund and defang" public employee unions. But there are more of us than there are of them. When we stick together, we can beat back the corporate privatizers and become stronger than ever.

Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

As we have information we will share it with everyone. The MTA and NEA will have postings on their websites so be sure to check them often.

Be active in our union to make a difference. I am proud and honored to serve as the president of the BEA.

In solidarity,
Kim Gibson