



# WTU Contract Negotiations

## Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. When will we get a contract? Why is it taking so long?

You can have a contract tomorrow if you are willing to give up job security, a 7 ½ hour work day, a 10 month school year and your **DIGNITY**. DCPS's main priority for the new contract is an extended day, an extended school year and to diminish teachers' voice. We are looking for a better alternative. A better school day, not a longer one. Our proposals are to strengthen the 7 ½ hour school day we already have and provide teachers with the trust, support and time they need to do their jobs.

### 2. We are working under an expired contract, is this legal?

This contract shall remain in full force and effect during the period of any negotiation in accordance with article 42 of this agreement. This was done to ensure teachers' working rights are protected.

### 3. Why should I care about the contract?

- Your contract provides;
  - a working environment that allows you to do your job with dignity and respect and one that makes the teacher profession relevant
  - an opportunity for you to participate in decision-making related to teaching and learning
  - protection from workplace abuse, harassment and bullying
  - attractive and competitive compensation and benefits

### 4. How much money are we getting? Will we get retroactive pay?

DCPS proposed a 4% increase. We are going to propose a higher raise because of the cost of living by pursuing pattern bargaining to align our compensation package with the police and fire departments.

**5. If I am planning to retire by the end of school year 2014-15, will I receive the benefits of the compensation package?**

The team will seek benefits from the compensation package for all teachers that were employed by DCPS for the years the new contract will retroactively cover.

**6. How can I be sure this contract meets my specific needs?**

The WTU contract team has consistently invited members from various content and service areas to join them in shaping and strengthening specific language related to their areas of certification and professional standards.

**7. How can this contract support me in my job?**

Our proposals guarantee relevant professional development, integrated curriculum, technology and adequate supplies. For example, we are asking that each teacher receive a \$250 card each quarter to purchase educational materials for their classroom.

**8. Can we get rid of IMPACT?**

Yes, but not through the contract. This doesn't mean we can't do anything about it. The citywide campaigns that will be launched by the 4,500 WTU members will help us to get rid of IMPACT because it will get us the support of the community at large, to put pressure on the school district, to consider a more supportive evaluation system that allows teachers to grow professionally.

**9. How are you going to remove the barriers that slow the process of finishing the contract?**

We are trying to get a contract ratified by the end of the school year. We are using every available avenue to apply pressure to get the contract completed, including a citywide rally of parents, teachers, and community stakeholders. We are also planning to present our proposals to city council members and State Board of Education (SBOE) members to be transparent about WTU's vision for quality schools in every community. **Forty-five hundred teachers speaking in one voice with their allies will send a clear, powerful message, we want to chart a new direction for public education in the District of Columbia.**

