



USWA Local 8751 - District 4

Boston School Bus Drivers Union

25 Colgate Rd. • Roslindale, MA 02131
Telephone (617) 524-7073 Fax (617) 524-1691

Contract Update - October 6, 2004

More Wages and Benefits and Strengthened Language Come to Table as Union Rejects Company's 5th "Final Offer"

Local 8751 Rank & File Power is the Decisive Factor!

On Monday, October 4th, the Union's Negotiations Committee unanimously rejected First Student's fifth "final offer". Why? The rank and file has insisted that, after a year and 3 months of being treated like second class citizens, our families deserve economic justice, and **we deserve all the rights and benefits that we have struggled for and won over our proud 30 year history.** You, the drivers, have forced First Student to listen, even though they hear at a very slow pace.

Back on August 11th, the company's "final offer" included a bit more wages, a 50% paid dental plan, **100% family vision plan**, and some improvements in language rights. With its major concession demands, the Union rejected it as an insult.

On August 30th, the company's phony "really final offer" kept the money the same (while telling us there was more), added **10K per year to the 401K drop**, and **withdrew most of the union-busting concessions** they were demanding, like GPS systems, part timers, etc. The Union rejected it, saying the members deserve much better..

On September 21st, the company's "**best, last and final offer**" withdrew the remaining onerous concessions, increased the wage offer 1.5% over 5 years (**2% retro, 2.5% this year, then 3%, 3.5%, and 3.5%**), increased the **dental offer to 100% paid for family**, and issued an ultimatum, "Take it to your members". The Union said, "The members told us to finish the job. No deal."

On September 30th, the company's offer was renamed "**best, last and final offer (as presented on Sept. 21st with language modifications)**". In it, corporate lawyers and their School Department advisers belatedly agreed to the **Union's 401K committee operations**, the **Occupational Safety and Health Committee**, and Union demands around **Orientation pay and protocol.**

After hearing loud and clear from the Union that there was still much unfinished business, the First Student again issued "**modifications**" to its final offer, **withdrawing its demand to discipline drivers who decline charters**, offering an **agreement to stop denying our Sickness and Accident insurance**, and agreeing to continue operating with **14% stand-bys.** On October 1st they offered another modification, agreeing to the Union's **Childcare Committee.**

What's Left At Stake?

Clearly, had the Union folded at any of the company's "final offers", **much progress would have been lost.** The Union's leadership has taken a time tested approach to these negotiations, that says, "Workers who stand up for their rights can win! You have the power!" You have demonstrated in the streets, in the yards, and at the negotiating table that you deserve **Respect.** That you deserve your **Rights.** That your families deserve their **Economic Justice.** So the Union has delivered to the company a counterproposal dated October 4th, which intends to ensure that the next 4 years your Respect and Rights are guaranteed by a legally binding contract. (over)

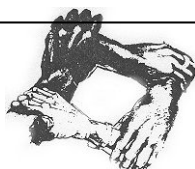


Join Local 8751 at this historic march for workers rights. See your yard Million Worker March organizer for bus tickets, or call the **New England Million Worker March** hotline at the Local's office **617 524-3507.**

www.MillionWorkerMarch.org

www.BostonSchoolBusUnion.org

Buses leave Roxbury Community College Saturday night, Oct. 16th. Return Sunday night Oct. 17th.



Contract Issues still unresolved include:

Economics:

Union wage demand: 3% retro, 3% this year, 3.5%, 3.5% and 3.5%
with a 3.5 hour minimum guarantee

Union 401K demand: add \$15,000 more per year to the company's lump sum drop,
and the company to pay all administrative costs.

Personal Days: all at the driver's sole discretion

Paid Sick Time: (current company offer is 0)

Life Insurance: increase to \$50,000 (current company offer is no change from \$25K)

Sickness & Accident: \$250 for 26 weeks (company offer is no change from \$190 for 13 weeks.)

HMO's: 85%/15% (current company offer is no change from 80%/20%)

The company has refused to agree to the Union's reasonable language on the following issues: **5:15 AM notice for snow cancellation days; Absolute preference in hiring – retroactive pay; Drug and Alcohol Screening policy – Union rights ; Bid rights for Boston Ballet; Expedited Arbitration Panel issues; Union Business Lost Time; Incidents vs Accidents.**

The company also refuses to agree to **longstanding Memorandums of Understanding – which are legally part of the current extended contract - between the Union and Laidlaw regarding Charter Weekend/Holiday and Cancellation Policy; October Bid Protocol; Medical Disclaimers; Return to Light Duty; Multiple Company Bids; Route Review Committee; Standby/Citywide policy for holidays and early release days; Union's Softball Team.**

Who Will Decide?

The Union leadership has one main guiding principle: **THE MEMBERSHIP OF LOCAL 8751 IS THE HIGHEST GOVERNING BODY.** When you voted your demands for this contract in November 2003; when you marched on the School Department and the Schrafft Center in June and July; when City Councilors Turner, Yancey, and Arroyo, the Mass. AFL-CIO, Greater Boston Labor Council, Boston Unions United for Fair Contracts came out in support of our just struggle - **IT BECAME THE UNION LEADERSHIP'S JOB TO FIGHT AS HARD AS YOU TO WIN THOSE DEMANDS AND PROTECT YOUR RIGHTS.**

At each proposal, counterproposal and "final offer", the Union's leadership has lowered our negotiating bucket into the well, and at each point, including at the last week's meeting with the company, your Determination, Resolve, Unity and Solidarity have yielded productive water in the bucket. When the bucket comes up dry, **it will be up to you, the rank and file, to decide by democratic vote whether the Union gears up to fight harder, or accepts the gains we have all won together at that point.**

***Join with Parents from Roxbury, Dorchester, Mattapan,
Civil Rights and Community Leaders to tell the Boston School Committee:
Say No to Racism! We Won't Go Back to Segregated Schools!
Unite to Fight for Equal, Quality Education for All Boston Children!***

Once again the forces of racism have reared their ugly heads in Boston. Rallying behind the false slogans of a "return to neighborhood schools" and "Walk 2 Schools", their campaign is but a thinly veiled program designed to deny Boston's Communities of Color the right to equal education. We are a Union that has stood against racism since our founding nearly 3 decades ago. We have marched in Boston and in Washington. We have faced rocks, bricks and bigots in carrying out our job of transporting Boston's students. Our history has shown us that unity is indispensable in any fight for justice – a contract, a strike, a rally, a march, etc.

**Tuesday, October 12th
6:00 – 8:00PM
Madison Park Technical
& Vocational high
School
Lower cafeteria
75 Malcolm X Boulevard,
Roxbury**

**Saturday,
October 16th
10:00AM – 12:00 noon
Dorchester Education
Complex
(Dorchester High)
9 Peacevale Road,
Dorchester**

