

## USW Local 8751 - District 4

*Boston School Bus Drivers' Union*

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[www.BostonSchoolBusUnion.org](http://www.BostonSchoolBusUnion.org)

CONTRACT 2011 BULLETIN

April 5, 2011

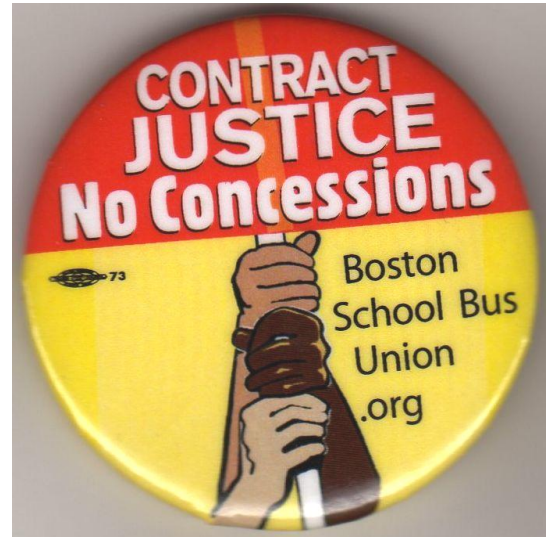
### Unity and Solidarity Key to Winning Contract Justice!

**We need and deserve gains in Pension, Dental, Wages to meet the cost of living, and more!**

This Union leadership has worked hard to serve you, the members, processing hundreds of grievances, amassing a formidable winning record in arbitration, successfully providing legal representation to our members facing false and frame up charges, professionally administering our 401K retirement as well as the Union's finances, advocating and assisting members with health, Sickness and Accident (S&A) and Long Term Disability (LTD) issues, as well as joining with labor and the community to defend equal, quality education. We believe these duties and more to be critical aspects of our job.

**No duty, however, is as important as organizing to win the absolute best possible Contract!** Now is our time to fight for the gains and improvements, economic and "language (rights)" we need – Pension (retirement), real quality Dental (we have already retained experts to research the best possible plans for the money), greater company contributions to Health premiums, Wage increases and more. All of us have benefited from the gains won in the 2008-2011 contract – company paid LTD, Medical Opt Out payments, job security guarantees, wage and bonus increases, protections against GPS, etc. We need and deserve more! We must fight for "language" improvements like further flat rate guarantees, strengthening our rights against unjust "guilty until proven innocent" discipline, closing any S&A/LTD loop holes, and better job guarantees given the massive school closures and transportation budget cuts.

No union negotiates a contract in a vacuum. These are tough times for unions and the working class generally. The corporations and banks, with support from their friends in government at every level, have orchestrated an ugly anti union, anti worker, cutback and concession climate. Their lies and hate are parroted by most of the media – in newspapers, on TV, and by their talk show cronies. Fortunately, unions and our allies are fighting back with a spirit, discipline, energy and organization not seen in the U.S. for decades. In



Madison, Wisconsin, New Hampshire and throughout the Mid-West, 100's of thousands are standing up! The best road to a fair and just contract for Local 8751 is to follow Wisconsin's workers' brilliant example of fight back.

As we have said in the many bulletins, yard meetings, training sessions, and rallies, Local 8751 has fought hard over the years to swim against the anti-union cut-back tide. Thus far we have been more successful than any others. Every other School Dept. and city union has suffered many layoffs; we have had NONE, and in fact have added jobs. We have successfully said NO to wage freezes and health care and other benefit cuts that others have taken and regret. Every other transportation related union in the state has been victimized by discipline and firings as a result of GPS "spy" technology...but not us! Unions throughout the country regularly contact us asking to use our GPS language as a model to defend their members' rights. We have built bridges to the community and played a leading

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**Unity! Unidada!**



**Unidada! Unidada!**

role in the 2 ½ year old Coalition for Equal Quality Education, and have joined with all the city unions as well. We have been preparing for this contract for years. But make no mistake. The profit hungry, cutback wolves are at the door. We will require the greatest level of Unity, Solidarity and Discipline to maintain what we have and win more!

### **Join the Contract 2011 Task Force Today!**

As in the 2008-2011 Contract, the Local is establishing a united leadership/membership Task Force, with the involvement of labor and community allies and the International Steelworkers, to aid in our organizing efforts. The Task Force is taking up the responsibilities of communication, distribution (bulletins, news releases, posters, buttons, T shirts, etc.), outreach to labor, community, and elected officials, research and more. To succeed this battle must be fought not only at the negotiating table but in the yards, the greater Boston community, and if necessary, in rallies and on picket lines.  
**Volunteer Today!**

### **An Informed and Active Membership Can Win!**

#### **Contract Clinics to be held in all yards**

In order to maximize membership access and active participation in the contract process, the leadership will hold "Contract Clinics" in all yards. Please attend. We want and need your input. Carefully review the current (2008-2011) contract for the purpose of identifying areas for improvement. If you no longer have the contract issued to you, call us or go to our web site at [www.bostonschoolbusunion.org/contract.html](http://www.bostonschoolbusunion.org/contract.html) for viewable web and downloadable PDF versions. All economic and "language" suggestions are welcome. (see Schedule next page)

#### **April 27<sup>th</sup> (Wednesday) Demands Meeting**

All members should attend and let your voice be heard to formulate and vote on the Contract 2011 economic and language demands. **The Demands meeting will be 6:00 PM at the Boston Teachers Union, behind the Bayside Expo Center.**

#### **Vote for Negotiating Committee Yard Reps at the April 14<sup>th</sup> Elections**

The same as in the 2008-2011 Contract, the Negotiating Committee will be composed of the Local leadership staff, the International Steelworkers union rep and two yard representative members elected by all members (members will be able to vote for reps from all 4 yards). As in the last contract negotiations, this will be an invaluable formula to combine members with years of experience and expertise, those with intimate knowledge of the daily workings of the Union and skills in negotiating and research, with others who can bring fresh ideas and energy. Signs are posted in the yards of those candidates who were nominated at the March 24<sup>th</sup> membership meeting. Please don't forget to vote!

#### **Beware of Company/City Attacks and Harassment and any appeals to internal disunity and division!**

As we prepare for the Contract 2011 battle, so do our enemies – First Student and the City. The company has initiated a campaign of discipline, harassment and contract violations designed to put us on the defensive. City "management" types have been illegally following and threatening drivers, some even boarding busses. The Transportation Unit is tampering with routes and flat rates in clear violation of the contract. Add to this the media's time worn anti bus driver campaigns – witness the despicable, slanderous coverage of the Edwin Depeiza case. Brother Depeiza was the victim of unjust police abuse and was then further victimized by the TV and newspapers. Beware! These management, city and media tactics are standard pre-contract strategy. Now is the time to close ranks to defend our Union, each other, and our rights, and to win economic justice! Any organizing based on negativism, unwarranted and politically motivated attacks on the Local leadership – rumors, half truths, conscious distortions, and efforts to pit member against member - will only serve the interests of First Student and the City, and erode solidarity. We hope you will join together in calling for an end to divisiveness now.

### **Let's All Unite to Fight for the Best Union Contract Ever!**

## Boston student walk-out hits education cuts



Hundreds of students throughout the city walked out of schools on March 23 and converged on Boston School Department Headquarters to protest the School Committee's budget vote to close or merge 19 schools and cut more than 200 jobs.

The students were joined by parents, teachers, school bus drivers and community activists in a protest organized by El Movimiento for Ethnic Studies in Boston Public Schools and the Coalition for Equal Quality Education. Three busloads of members of the Boston School Bus Union, Steelworkers Local 8751 participated in the spirited protest.

When the meeting began, Boston police and school department officials attempted to prevent the students from entering the building. The students chanted "Whose building? Our building!" and "Let us in!" as their supporters insisted on their right to be there. The people prevailed, and the meeting chamber was packed to overflowing. In fact, it spilled out into the hallway.

As the budget was presented, the crowd held up signs reading "No to school closings" and "No resegregation of Boston schools." Signs called for "Equal quality education" and demanded "Fund our schools, not bank bailouts and war!"

The students surrounded the officials who presented the budget, and they held up a coffin, which represented the death of public education. They kept up the chant "S.O.S., Save Our Schools!"

More than two dozen speakers, many of them students, condemned the budget-cutting vote. Several students pointed out the hypocrisy of the School Department's slogan of "Focus on Children." They said the focus was on money, not children, and that closing the schools would increase class sizes and dropout rates and would deny Boston students their future.

"The U.S. can give money to ... drop a bomb on Libya, but they can't give money to our education," said Sackona Fitts, a Fenway High School sophomore. "Who are we? We are the youth. We are the next generation. We're going to do everything we can." (boston.com, March 24)

Fernando Fernii Rodriguez, a student leader from the Social Justice Academy, one of the schools being

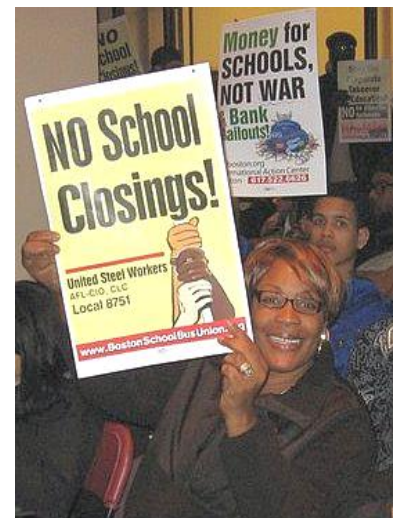
## Get Involved in the Contract Struggle!

**Vote for Negotiating Committee**  
Thursday, April 14<sup>th</sup> 5:00 AM – 2:00 PM  
In the Yards

**Membership Demands Meeting**  
Wednesday, April 27<sup>th</sup> 6:30 PM  
Boston Teachers Union

**Contract Clinics in the Yards**  
10:30 AM – 12:30 PM  
Charlestown – Thurs. April 7<sup>th</sup>  
Freeport – Monday, April 11<sup>th</sup>  
Readville – Tuesday, April 12<sup>th</sup>  
Washington St. – Wed., April 13<sup>th</sup>

Photos: Steve Kirschbaum



closed, applauded the students' unity and action and called for students to continue to organize. Speakers from the Coalition for Equal Quality Education congratulated the students on their action and called for the struggle to continue. City Councilor Charles Yancey called on the School Committee to vote "No."

The Black Educators Alliance of Massachusetts has filed a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights showing that the closings discriminate against Black and Latino/a students.

Although the School Committee passed the budget unanimously, the Coalition for Equal Quality Education plans to meet April 13<sup>th</sup> at English High to organize further protests targeting the City Council and the mayor.

Dear Members of USW Local 8751:

Recently the Boston Bus Drivers' 401(k) investment committee has been discussing adding additional investment options to your 401(k) plan, such as an annuity option. This is something that the investment committee and Alpha Pension Group, your 401(k) plan's registered investment advisors, are reviewing; and we expect to have an investment option similar to an annuity available to you soon. This new feature, called a Guaranteed Investment Contract (GIC), will aim to provide the stability associated with annuities with yields generally higher than current money market funds.

Lately, some members have discussed withdrawing their account balances and setting up an individual annuity contract with an outside insurance agent. We caution against this action for several reasons. First, there are many different kinds of annuity contracts being sold in the U.S., many of which are much more valuable to an insurance company than to a retiree. Second, an annuity potentially has higher fees and charges than the options available to you in your union's 401(k) plan. Also, the investment fees in your 401(k) plan are currently credited back to you through your labor contract. Lastly, some annuity contracts are not liquid for many years and do not give you access to your money even in the case of emergency or retirement during that period of time.

Your questions are welcome and can be directed to Alpha Pension Group. Please let us know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,  
Alpha Pension Group  
800 South Street Suite 600 Waltham, MA 02453 781 647 4100

TOM the DANCING BUG  
PRESENTS:



**U.S. Bombs U.S. Schools**

THE U.S. MILITARY INITIATED A STUNNING CAMPAIGN OF BROAD STRIKES AGAINST U.S. SCHOOLS, UNLEASHING WARPLANES AND MISSILES TO DESTROY EACH OF ITS PUBLIC EDUCATION FACILITIES.

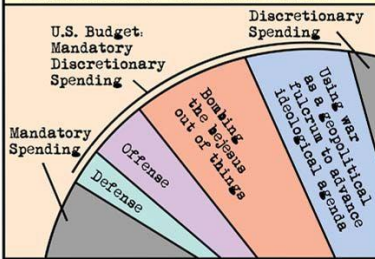


BY RUBEN BOLLING

IN THIS BUDGET CRISIS, WE CAN'T AFFORD BOOKS AND TEACHERS. BUT WE CAN ALWAYS AFFORD BOMBS AND BOMBERS. SO, WE DO WHAT WE CAN.



THANKFULLY, MILITARY ACTIONS ARE IN THE BUDGET'S "MANDATORY DISCRETIONARY" SPENDING BUCKET.



THE WAY WE SHOW LOVE AND CONCERN FOR A PEOPLE IS TO BOMB THEM. IF WE SUPPORT THE AFGHAN, IRAQI AND LIBYAN PEOPLE ENOUGH TO BOMB THEM, CAN'T WE DO THE SAME FOR OUR OWN CHILDREN?



WE CAN'T AFFORD TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE TEACHERS' UNION, BUT AFTER A BOMBING, IF WE CONTRACT WITH HALLIBURTON AND BLACKWATER TO SEND TEACHERS IN, THE SKY'S THE LIMIT!



**NEXT: THE U.S. SHOWS LOVE AND CONCERN FOR School Bus Drivers**

**School Bus Drivers Join "Peace Parade"**

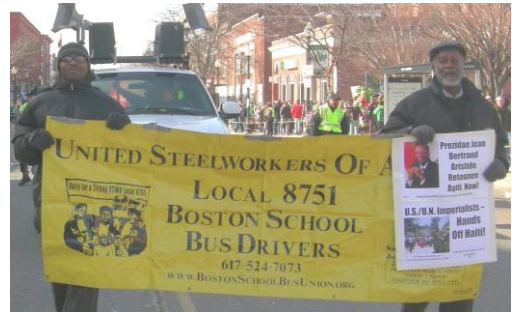


Photo: Maureen Skehan

Nearly 1,000 marchers, led by the Smedley D. Butler Brigade of Veterans for Peace, withstood chilly winds and South Boston's bitter history of racism and anti-lesbian/gay/bi/trans/queer discrimination when they conducted a "Peace Parade" through South Boston's neighborhoods on March 20, behind the exclusionary St. Patrick's parade.

The Veterans For Peace courageously led the Peace Parade up Broadway St. Marchers also included several LGBTQ rights groups, anti-war activists and unionists from the Service Employees, Steelworkers and American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees. They chanted and demanded an end to the wars; bring the troops home now; money for human needs, not war; no school closings; and an end to racism and anti-LGBTQ bigotry. They strutted to the sound of their own marching band and to the School Bus Drivers' sound truck blasting the Street Dogs' "Power in the Union!"

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