Bruce Randolph Teachers Say No

Yesterday, in a monumental move, teachers at Bruce Randolph overwhelmingly voted to abolish their “Autonomy Agreement” and return to a traditional school status.

The Autonomy Agreement predates the Innovation Law that gave rise to now more than 50 DPS “Innovation Schools” and was considered by the District to be the flagship school and proof of concept for the Innovation Law. Yesterday’s vote, however, proved that teachers at Bruce Randolph have a very different opinion.

Many of the teachers that we talked to during yesterday’s vote said that they felt that teachers had less of a voice than those teachers in traditional schools. They had no grievance process and all decisions were made ultimately by the principal, with no accountability or recourse. This led many to feel that it was time for the Autonomy Agreement to go, so that teachers could regain the rights that they had lost.

Bruce Randolph is not the first school to vote to go back to a traditional school, either. Last month, two other schools voted not to accept a renewal of their current innovation plans, also citing lack of teacher voice and rights.

The reality of innovation is that the District’s philosophy that it’s the governance of the school that makes a difference is flawed. The Innovation Office at DPS currently has 30 people in it. That’s 30 people not serving students. To this date, the District has yet to provide any data that proves that innovation status leads to better student outcomes. The only firm data that we have seen about innovation schools is that they have a higher turnover rate than traditional schools. How is that good for students? How are students better served by teachers who have less rights and less voice than teachers at other schools? Governance is not the problem in DPS. The problem is lack of support for students and teachers and lack of respect. When DPS starts focusing on those issues rather than pulling resources from its schools to experiment with governance structures to try to prove how “progressive” they are and garner national publicity, students will be better served. It’s time DPS stops using our students to better their public relations.

The ProComp Agreement expires in 9 days, on March 14!

Only one Compensation Agreement Bargaining Session remains, so be certain to attend the last session and make your voice heard! The last session is scheduled for Wednesday, March 14. We have requested that session to be all day and that Tom attend.

***Contact your UD Kate Martin, Alizay Furtado, or Brock Grosso to schedule a meeting to discuss the DCTA vision of a new teacher compensation system in DPS. Changes are being bargained now, and it is imperative that you know where we are headed on YOUR compensation system.***
Bargaining Update

Our final bargaining session for a new compensation system is next Wednesday, March 14. At our last session, in which we proposed going back to a traditional salary schedule, on February 27, we asked the District for an all-day session and have yet to hear back. We will let everyone know as soon as we have a start time.

Also, we asked that Superintendent Boasberg, the true decision-maker for the District Bargaining Team, attend in an effort to get a deal done. You may recall that it was not until Tom showed up and bargained with us all day, and into the next morning, on our last bargaining date for the Master Agreement that we were able to make any progress. While we have not received an official response on this from the District, we have found out that Tom has scheduled himself to be at Thomas Jefferson High School on the 14th rather than at our bargaining session. We are extremely disappointed in this decision. Stay tuned to your email to see what ways you can help us get Tom to the table!

Regardless, DCTA is committed to getting a new system negotiated on the 14th. As we build up to this day, members are planning a week of actions (March 5-13). Here are some examples of what they are planning: walk-ins where all staff will enter their building at the same time in the morning, having a DCTA t-shirt day, handing out fliers to parents at dismissal (don’t use school copiers), or having their duty free lunch in a conspicuous area and explain why. Of course, we also encourage every member to attend bargaining on the 14th! What is your school prepared to do? If your school would like to plan an action, reach out to your UD right away! Feel free to send any pictures taken during actions at your school so that we can publicize what is happening across the District!

DPS to Change How all Employees are Paid

DCTA was informed that DPS will transition to a bimonthly payroll system this summer. Rather than being paid at the end of each month, you will be getting paid half your monthly wages every two weeks (on the 7th and 22nd? Need to check). This was not something that DCTA agreed to, because, when teachers get paid is not part of our bargaining agreement. We are presently in discussions with the district as we have heard some feedback from you. If you would like to let the district know the impact of this change on you, please email Kathleen Masteller and copy Debbie Hearty.

DCTA Elections—Call for Nominations

We look forward to active participation in our election process to promote growth and build the strength of our union. If you are interested in running for a position or nominating a fellow member, fill out and submit the Nomination Form below. Nominations will be accepted February 27 through March 16.

Ballots are to be distributed at Rep Council on March 20th and must be returned to DCTA by 6 PM on April 18th or they can be dropped off at Rep Council on April 17th. Please do not place them in the school mail as we can’t guarantee that they will be delivered by the deadline. These are the DCTA governance positions that are open: DCTA Secretary, DCTA Treasurer, Northeast Sector Director (3 openings), Northwest Sector Director (1 opening), Southeast Sector Director (4 openings), Southwest Sector Director (3 openings). There are also 19 openings for the National Education Association (NEA) 2018 Representative Assembly. DCTA pays for the top 3 vote-getters. Other elected representatives are responsible for their own expenses. There are also multiple openings for each sector’s Colorado Education Association (CEA) 2019, 2020, 2021 Delegate Assembly.
The Colorado Education Association, representing 35,000 educators across our state, is opposed to President Trump’s call to arm school employees. As educators, we stand for the opportunities that all students deserve. Our advocacy begins with providing safe, desirable environments where teaching and learning can occur. Violence met with violence results in more tragedy and is not the kind of vigilance we want for our students. It is the wrong conversation to be having in order to solve the problem of school safety at its source.

The mass school shooting in Florida means we once again must rally around a school community that is suffering due to gun violence. We can only protect students and educators by finding real, long-term solutions that prevent violence from even entering the doors of a school -- legislation that focuses on an increase in mental health resources, provides common sense gun legislation, and places non-violent security measures into schools to make entry into the building safe. Arming school employees will not keep students and educators safe. More guns is not the answer. For the sake of our students, we need do better than this.

Amie Baca-Oehlert, high school counselor and CEA Vice President

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**NEA Member Benefits Ends Partnership with National Rifle Association**

NEA Member Benefits contacted their business partners to see what actions they were taking given the recent school shootings. All of the partners that had a relationship with the NRA have announced they will sever their ties with the NRA. Theses partners include: First National Bank of Omaha (FNBO); Enterprise, Alamo, Hertz and National car rental companies; Symantec/LifeLock; and TrueCar.

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**On March 14, there will be a nation-wide day of action where people will be wearing orange to honor the lives lost in the Parkland Tragedy.**

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In case you missed it last week, [click here](#) to see our tips on how to respond to students protests on guns in schools.

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Another event you can take part in is [March for Our Lives](#). Student survivors of the Parkland shooting have taken the lead and are planning a nationwide march on March 24th. There will be a march in DC and we will have a [local event here in Denver](#) that is being led by our very own Tay Anderson. Meet on the 24th at the Capitol from 2-5 pm. Please support students all over the country in fighting for gun reform!
NEW Bill Supported by the Colorado Education Association

The Colorado Superintendent’s New School Funding Distribution Formula was written in order to assure that priority students receive more funding.

It aims to provide all 178 Colorado school districts with an increased level of funding for all students, while at the same time establishing a more equitable distribution of funding for students who are underserved and/or face the greatest challenges to achieving Colorado’s Graduation Guidelines and finishing high school ready for college and career.

The work of the Superintendents has become a bill sponsored by Representative Dave Young, Senator Don Coram, and Senator Andy Kerr. This bill was developed to create a distribution formula that uses weights for special education, English Language Learners, gifted and talented students, as well as students living in poverty. It creates a transparent model which recognizes cost differences among districts related to size, geography and the cost of doing business and includes an increased base amount to begin moving total per student funding in Colorado closer to the national average.

Caucus Tonight!

If you like the idea of retiring on your pension and are a proponent of traditional public schools, go to your district’s caucus on March 6th!

Check out the CEA website for their endorsements and where to go. This usually takes one or two hours, time well-spent!

Even the littlest DCTA member celebrates Read Across America at Colfax Elementary!

“The more that you read, the more you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you’ll go.”

Dr. Seuss
Seventeenth Annual César E. Chávez Day
March
Join us on Saturday, March 31, as we march to honor Chávez’s legacy as an educator, environmentalist, and a civil rights leader.
Mass starts at 9:00 am in the Saint John Francis Chapel at Regis University (3333 Regis Boulevard), followed by the march to the César E. Chávez Park (4121 Tennyson St) and festivities with music, food, and awards. Click here to RSVP.

International Women’s Day is Thursday, March 8
Emily Griffith, Isabella Bird, Elizabeth Hope Skinner, Dora Moore, Marie Greenwood, Ana Marie Sandoval. These are some of the influential women whose names grace some of our DPS schools.
Did you know that 75% percent of teachers in K-12 education are women? That percentage goes up to 90 in elementary schools. Does working in a woman-dominated profession then mean lower pay? DCTA continues its commitment to fight for you!
Use this link to see how you can help make changes!
#IWD2018 #PressforProgress,

Institute on LGBTQ-Inclusive Educational Practices
A Queer Endeavor (AQE) will be hosting a two-day statewide educator institute that will bring educators, administrators, and other youth-serving adults together to engage in professional development around LGBTQ-inclusive educational practices. If you are interested in attending, click here for more information!

The Illusion of School Choice
Please join DCTA, The Caucus of Today’s Teachers, the Alliance to Reclaim Our Schools, and more community organizations to learn about, discuss, and make a plan to address the ongoing issue of school closures and restructuring in Denver Public Schools.
Thursday, March 8 from 5:30-7pm
Abraham Lincoln High School - 2285 S. Federal Blvd.
Childcare and Spanish translation available.
The evening will include an overview of the history of school closures in DPS, testimonies from parents, teachers, and students, and a discussion.
Please click here for more information.

SSPs for Students First Committee
Are you a Special Service Provider that wants DCTA to fight for the issues important to you? Are you looking for an avenue to get more involved in creating the schools Denver students deserve?
Now’s your chance! A group of SSPs have created a new DCTA committee called SSPs for Students First with the goal of increasing SSP voice in our Association. Your voice can be heard even if you are not currently active in DCTA!
If you’re interested in joining this committee, please fill out this form. The next committee meeting is happening Saturday, March 10!
Opportunity to be Heard!

Is student discipline a problem in your school, are you concerned about the new reorganization of the special education department, need to know what supports are available?

Come to the March DCTA board meeting and hear from Eldridge Greer, head of DPS student services. This is an opportunity for you ask questions and share your concerns/issues in a teacher/SSP friendly environment.

Dinner will be served. Please RSVP so that we can order enough food.

March DCTA Board Meeting
Tuesday, March 13, 2018 4:30 pm
1500 Grant (Grant and Colfax): 4th floor
Free parking in lot. Sign in at front desk.

March Rep Council
Rep Council is on Tuesday, March 20 at DCIS Baker from 4:30 pm—6 pm. All members are welcome to attend!

REGIONAL MEETINGS SUSPENDED
Starting in March, Regional Meetings will be suspended due to lack of attendance. Please reach out to your Uniserv Director to schedule a building meeting or area meeting for information around NEA benefits, Compensation System Bargaining, LEAP and self-advocacy, or any other topics specific to your building.

ADMIN LEAVE GROUP
DCTA members are coming together on March 8th from 4-5pm at Denver School of the Arts to discuss fighting for changes to the districts admin leave policy. Reach out to Brock at bgrosso@coloradoea.org to RSVP.

School Visits
Last week: We spent time at Doull, Eagleton, Summit, Valverde,
This week: We will be visiting Kepner Beacon, McAuliffe at Manual, Kennedy High, Centennial, Newlon, Denison, Bear Valley, East, Colfax, Emily Griffith, Lincoln

Reminder for CMAS Season:
Many of you will be administering tests for the next few months. We would like to remind you that although your planning and lunch times may be adjusted during testing, you are entitled to this time even if your duties have

Our Students. Our Profession. Our Careers.