Superintendent Tom Boasberg won’t come to the bargaining table, so teachers came to him

An energized and large crowd of dedicated teachers rallied outside the DPS Administration Building last Tuesday, anxious to take their urgent message about inadequate pay to the DPS School Board meeting and Superintendent Tom Boasberg. The group got their chance to speak to board members during public comments, but first took time to generate enthusiasm and support by protesting on Lincoln St. as the meeting got underway.

"Isn’t this great! Isn’t this amazing!” said DCTA President Henry Roman as one-by-one, teachers stood to address the crowd and passersby.

Roman had just finished giving an interview to Telemundo, just one of the Denver news outlets in attendance to capture the evening’s events. Elsewhere on the sidewalk, teachers could be seen responding to questions from reporters while holding up their signs for the cameras. In addition, traffic on nearby streets produced horn honks with every pass, in response to signs from the chanting protestors.

Inside the building, the horns, applause and shouts of the protest could be heard clearly as the board meeting’s agenda progressed. Finally, toward the close of the meeting, DCTA teachers entered the room to speak directly to the board and Tom. At the top of their requests: That Boasberg and the district start to actually bargain with teachers in good faith.

"I’m here to ask that the board have Tom Boasberg come to bargaining,” said Alexander Edwards, a special education teacher in the district. “We can’t bargain in good faith when the other side doesn’t come to the table.”
The teachers that addressed the Board repeated much of the passionate appeals made at Wednesday’s Bargaining Session, when Boasberg was absent.

In his testimony, Edwards told the Board how frustrating it has been for him to gauge what his income will be during the year, and how it is nearly impossible for him to determine what he might make in coming years. He pleaded with the Board to commit Boasberg’s attendance to all negotiations, saying his future and the future of his students depends on it.

Rebecka Hendricks, who teaches in a “hard-to-staff” position, lamented her inability to “live like an adult,” telling the Board she has gone without common life phases others her age take for granted.

“I have a Master’s Degree and I have 10 years experience,” she said. “I’m a professional but I can’t afford to live in the city. I can’t afford to live like an adult and live alone. I have to have a roommate. I can’t even fathom thinking about trying to start a family one day.”

As a result, Hendricks said she’s considering leaving the profession she loves, and she knows many other teachers who feel the same way.

“Students deserve to have a teacher who loves their job,” she said.

Throughout the teacher’s comments, Boasberg sat stone-faced and silent offering no response or even acknowledgement that what he was hearing was important for the district’s future or student’s needs.

First-year DPS teacher Matthew Placido lamented the fact that while he loves his students, he faces an uncertain future. During his first year in the district, Placido said he had to use all of his personal savings in order to survive due to his inadequate salary and Denver’s increasing cost of living. He’s already certain he’ll have to take a second job next year, and he’s worried that it might impact his students.

Placido expressed to the board how difficult it will be for him to stay in the district if he wants to have a secure future. What’s more, he said, he’ll be taking the information and insight he’s learned through district professional development resources to another district.

“I love the PDU’s I’ve had here at DPS,” he said. “I think it’s some of the best I’ve ever had. But the district is wasting its money on them when teachers aren’t going to stick around.”

At the end of the teacher’s comments, there was no commitment from Boasberg that he would attend future negotiations, and the Board gave no indication they had taken the feedback seriously.
Is Your Career at Risk?

Whether you are a probationary or a non-probationary teacher and you are concerned about your LEAP ratings or how the LEAP process was conducted contact DCTA right way! There are deadlines that must be met.

Under current Colorado law, any non-probationary teacher who receives two consecutive years of less than effective ratings (approaching or not meeting) is at risk of losing their non-probationary status. If this is your second year, please contact DCTA right now for advice on how to appeal this rating. If you fail to act, you will become a probationary teacher in the fall and may be non-renewed next spring. This is something you must take seriously.

Do you feel that your approaching rating was inappropriate? Were you in a “decision box?” Did your evaluator give you the lower score? You need to act immediately, whether you are probationary or non-probationary, even if this is the first year for your rating. Please contact DCTA for advice on the redress process as soon as possible.

DCTA needs YOU, Yes YOU!

Volunteer for the New Educator Welcome event, July 30

Every year DPS hires hundreds of new teachers who don’t know what you know: the importance of union membership. We need experienced educators like you to welcome and share your experiences with them. Come represent DCTA at this summer’s New Educator Welcome. Be the first to meet the newest DPS teachers and share with them the benefits of being members of their union!

It is a fun-filled day at the Denver Performing Arts Complex. Volunteers can spend the entire day, or volunteer for the morning or afternoon, and join us after at the Limelight for free drinks and appetizers. Lunch and Parking is included. Tell your friends and colleagues to join you on July 30th to help DCTA’s membership recruitment. RSVP by clicking here.

Keep Up-to-Date on All Things DCTA

With the school year winding down, DCTA will soon shift all communications, including any communication regarding compensation negotiations, to members’ personal email addresses. Please make sure to update your personal email address by filling out this form! You don’t want to miss out on any important updates!

New Study: Teachers Paid Less than their Peers

According to the Economic Policy Institute teachers across the country have had enough of the teacher pay penalty. Click here to read about how teachers are paid less than their peers in every state.
Click here to see the new True Pay Calendar, which goes into effect this summer!

School Visits

**Last week:** We spent time at McAuliffe at Manual, East, Kennedy, Manual, Baker, Sabin, High Tech Early College, Swigert, George Washington, Hamilton, North, Valdez, Northfield, McAuliffe

**This week:** We will be visiting Grant Ranch, Bromwell, Polaris, Cheltenham, Gilliam, Denver Center for 21st Century Learning, Green Valley Ranch Elementary, Collegiate Prep Academy, Vista Academy, Montclair, Beach Court, CEC, Inspire Elementary, Fairview, Farrell B. Howell, Barnum

Our Office is Expanding!

DUU will be adding an additional UD in time for next school year, thanks to a grant from NEA. This position will be grant-funded for 3 years but has the possibility to become permanent. We will be posting the position soon, so keep an eye out on www.unionjobs.com for more information!

Don’t Miss the CEA Ambassador Fellowship Opportunity for 2018-19

Teachers and support professionals are natural leaders. If you want to expand your knowledge and ability to influence educational policy and professional practice CEA will help provide you with quality learning, working conditions and civic engagement on issues that influence public education.

Hurry! The application will close on **June 1, 2018**. Interviews will be on June 19th - 20th (face-to-face or via online video).

As a CEA fellow, you will be at the forefront of modeling excellence in education at the local, state and national level.

Please visit the following page: [https://ceatoday.coloradoea.org/cea-ambassador-fellowship/2018-19-application/](https://ceatoday.coloradoea.org/cea-ambassador-fellowship/2018-19-application/) to learn more about the experience and to access the application.

Please contact Cassie Harrelson at charrelson@coloradoea.org with any questions.

303.837.1500(o) | 303.335.6117(c)
charrelson@coloradoea.org | www.coloradoea.org

Were you a probationary teacher who was non-renewed by DPS? Did they tell you that you were conditionally eligible or ineligible for rehire by DPS? Were you hired by another DPS school and then the offer was rescinded because you were not labeled “immediately eligible for rehire”? Please fill out this online form.
Share Your Expertise

The Colorado Education Association (CEA) wants to hear from educators on Colorado’s educational system. Specifically wanting input on Colorado’s Education Leadership Council’s strategic plan focused on the following areas:

1. Developing systems that produce agile learners;
2. Fostering robust community and family partnerships;
3. Building partnerships to support student learning and transitions;
4. Elevating the teaching profession and supporting teachers.

There are two opportunities to attend:

Webinar: June, 6th 4:00 – 5:30 (Click here to register)
Face-to-Face: June 7th 3:00 – 4:30 at CEA (1500 Grant Street; Denver, CO 80203 (Click here to register)
Please contact Cassie Harrelson at charrelson@coloradoea.org with any questions.

Hold Your Building Rep Elections Now!

With two weeks left in the school year, we advise you to hold your DCTA Building Rep elections now. Don’t find yourself in the position of many schools who wait until the new school year resumes and realize there aren’t enough teal days left on the calendar for teachers to get their 5 days of teacher-directed planning days! Please notify us of the results of your elections so we can reach out to new reps and invite them to trainings. If you are a rep, and are moving to another school, let us know so we can update our records.

Will this be the LAST Slate you will ever receive?

The answer is “YES” if you are retiring and you have not joined NEA/CEA/DCTA Retired (DCTA-R).

Why join NEA/CEA/DCTA-R?

- Continue to receive updates regarding the state of Denver Public Schools.
- Get involved in School Board elections.
- Stay informed about PERA, health benefits, Social Security, Medicare, pension protection, and other retirement security concerns.
- Improve public education through mentoring and intergenerational programs and activities.
- Get political updates of what is happening at the State Capital.
- Enjoy activities with former colleagues and new friends.
- Volunteer in community-based programs and/or political action.
- Participate in national and regional conferences and seminars.
- Continue your eligibility for Legal Services. (this is important if you are planning to substitute)
- Receive a wide range of benefits through NEA Member Benefits.
- Retain your California Casualty Insurance.

Click here to learn more about DCTA-R and to download the DCTA-R Application.

Creating the Schools Denver Students Deserve