Following the failure of the Pueblo Board of Education to accept a factfinders recommendation to give teachers a cost-of-living adjustment and other benefits, teachers in the district took to the streets on Monday for the first teachers’ strike in Colorado since DCTA’s in 1994.

The teachers are demanding that the district agree to the recommendations of the factfinder of a 2% COLA increase and a $30 increase per month in health insurance benefits, as well as a 2.5% COLA and step for the paraprofessionals in the district. These demands are extremely reasonable given the fact that the statewide rise in cost-of-living in Colorado this year is forecasted to be 3.4%. DCTA stands in solidarity with the Pueblo teachers.

The Pueblo strike comes at a very interesting time for DCTA members, as we are also in the middle of negotiations and possibly facing a strike in January if a new compensation agreement is not made by then. It’s important that we keep the pressure on DPS to negotiate in good faith by coming to the table as soon as possible. DCTA will be holding a public bargaining session at the Knights of Columbus building at 1555 Grant St., beginning at 5pm. We are asking all teachers to attend and show the District that they are ready to negotiate. The longer DPS waits, the more likely it is that Denver teachers start taking actions like Pueblo.
In order to put more pressure on the District to return to the bargaining table, DCTA has scheduled a week of action. We are asking all schools to participate in as many activities as possible!

**Tuesday, May 15**—School Walk-ins for a fair compensation system

**Wednesday, May 16**—Public Bargaining at the Knights of Columbus ([Click here to RSVP](#))

**Thursday, May 17**—Attend the DPS Board of Education Meeting ([Click here to RSVP](#))

We are also looking for teachers to speak at the public bargaining session and the Board of Education meeting for about 3 minutes each on the difficulty of working and living in DPS under the current compensation system. If you are interested, please [email us](#) to let us know!

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**Open Enrollment for Health Care Benefits ends this Friday, May 11!**

Make sure you renew your health benefits [by this Friday](#). Benefits will take effect beginning July 1. Retirees and employees who were non-renewed still need to renew benefits in order to receive your benefits for July and August.

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**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 emailing [DCTA@coloradoea.org](mailto:DCTA@coloradoea.org).
What to Do if You are Non-Renewed?

Immediately request letters of recommendation from supportive district administrators and colleagues. Do not wait for board action to take this step. The district may pressure you to resign "voluntarily" rather than face non-renewal by asserting that a resignation will look better to prospective employers on their resumes. We advise teachers to reject the "voluntary resignation" offer in these situations because the act of resigning may make you ineligible for unemployment compensation and may also affect your future teaching license renewal. Prospective new employers understand lay-offs while employment applications will ask you if you resigned in lieu of a non-renewal.

We recommend you apply for unemployment the day after the last day of school, as summer pay is for work already performed and you are essentially "laid off." If your unemployment benefit is denied, contact DCTA immediately so we can appeal the decision within 20 calendar days from the date the denial was mailed.

If you feel that the evaluation process was violated, contact DCTA immediately; however, this will not affect the non-renewal, but can change your evaluation as you seek other employment.

Lastly, it is important to maintain your CEA/NEA membership in case we need to seek legal help for you.

School Visits

**Last week:** We spent time at Pasqual Le-Doux, Slavens, Grant Ranch, Denison, Knapp, Smith, Fairview, and Trevista

**This week:** We will be visiting Lincoln HS, JFK High School, Florence Crittenton, George Washington HS, Beach Court, Barnum, and Edison

May Rep Council

Rep Council is on Tuesday, May 15 at DCIS Baker from 4:30 pm—6 pm. All are encouraged to attend. There will be important bargaining updates.

Union Solidarity

While DCTA is the biggest union in DPS, it is not the only union in DPS. Our sisters and brothers in ATU (bus drivers and bus mechanics) are continuing negotiations with the District on May 10 and 11. We wish them well and will keep you up-to-date in any ways that you can support them!
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 nonprobationary, even if this is the first year for your rating. Please contact DCTA for advice on the redress process as soon as possible.

Update Your Contact Information!

Please send us with your personal email address. During the summer, all communications from DCTA will go to personal email addresses.

This will include information on Bargaining.

Creating the Schools Denver Students Deserve

Happy Teacher Appreciation Week! May 8 - 12 #ThankATeacher

DCIS - Montbello Walk-in for fair compensation

East High School Walk-in for fair compensation