



Lawrence Teachers' Union, LTU 1019



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Lawrence Teachers Union Reaches Contract Accord with City

Collective Bargaining Agreement Awaits Member Ratification

LAWRENCE - The negotiating committee of the Lawrence Teachers Union and Receiver Jeffrey C. Riley announced today they have reached a tentative agreement on a contract for the teachers of the Lawrence Public Schools.

Negotiated to recognize teachers as valued professionals with a leading role in the turnaround of the city's schools, this agreement gives Lawrence educators their first contract in over three-and-a-half years.

Frank McLaughlin, president of the Lawrence Teachers Union, said he will recommend to the union's membership that they ratify the agreement. It would be in effect through June of 2017.

"One highlight of the contract is that it gives teachers the opportunity to have a real voice in decision-making in their schools, which will have a direct and positive impact on what goes on in the classroom," McLaughlin said. "This is good for teachers, good for students, and good for teamwork at every school."

He added, "The election of Mayor Daniel Rivera has brought Lawrence to a turning point. We will be working together to help bring hope and opportunity to our city."

Lawrence teachers and Riley have worked successfully together since his appointment in January 2012, making significant early gains in MCAS scores, graduation rate, and dropout

rate. Last September, Riley placed the turnaround of the one of the city's most troubled schools in the hands of the Lawrence Teachers Union with the opening of the Oliver Partnership School, a first-of-its-kind labor-management-community partnership in Massachusetts.

It was in that spirit of collaborative commitment to the best interests of Lawrence's students and families that both parties entered over a year of negotiation, including mediation sessions, that culminated in this agreement.

"I believe our teachers are Lawrence Public Schools' greatest assets, and have always understood and respected their desire for a contract," said Riley. "Ultimately I had to be willing to alter some of the powers granted with receivership to reach an agreement. However, this contract will reinforce the reforms we have put in place over the past two years, while providing key employment protections, fair compensation, and new opportunities for teachers."

Mayor Daniel Rivera praised today's announcement as the latest in a series of steps forward for the city and its schools.

"This agreement provides another ray of hope on our work to make Lawrence better, and goes to show that educational innovation and organized labor in our public schools are not mutually exclusive," said Rivera. "Both Frank McLaughlin and Jeff Riley have shown incredible leadership in coming together on an agreement. I too will encourage teachers across the district to ratify this agreement."

The Lawrence Teachers Union will hold a special meeting at 4:15 p.m. on Monday, March 24, at the Firefighters Relief's In to brief its members on the terms of the tentative collective bargaining agreement.

The ratification vote will be held on April 2 from 4 to 7 p.m., also at the Relief's In.

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