

Vaccine Mandate Updates, Black Lives Matter at School Week, and more

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 January 25, 2022

We hope this bulletin finds you well. As has been the case throughout the pandemic, the day-to-day changes are often fluid and changing in real time. As we come up on the end of the month, we have more important updates. Please be sure to read special bulletins like [the one we sent Sunday](#) in addition to the weekly bulletins for the latest:

Update on the vaccine mandate: We held another informational meeting on Friday for BTU members interested in learning more about the latest development on the vaccine mandate and impact bargaining. Please find an [FAQ we have created on this topic](#), but please note that some of the questions are still subject to impact bargaining. Please contact your Field Rep if you have any further questions in the meantime. As we shared in the special bulletin Sunday, the City has issued a second extension of their compliance deadline for their new policy – we had advocated strongly over the weekend for this and continue to advocate for more time as we negotiate the impacts of the policy. **BPS and city employees are now allowed an additional week to come into compliance with the policy.** No BTU bargaining unit member will be disciplined nor placed on administrative leave between now and January 31, 2022.

While the BTU has always encouraged our members, our students, and all those who are eligible to get vaccinated and boosted against COVID-19, **we believe that the policy must be implemented in a fair and equitable manner, and that includes considering how the policy will impact student relationships, special education and EL services, staffing shortages and the diversity of our educators.** The one week delay is necessary both for the stability of our schools right now and for the need to continue discussing the impacts on our students and educators moving forward.

Black Lives Matter at School Week is coming up next week! The BLM at School committee has compiled a [toolkit](#) including a list of movies for each grade band that we've matched to the 13 guiding principles of the BLM movement; a discussion guide to help educators facilitate critical conversations connecting the media they've engaged with to the movement; an essay contest; and a door decorating contest. **Student winners of the essay contest will win a free BLM @ School shirt and have their essay published in the Boston Union Teacher newspaper.** Class winners of the door decorating contest will receive a free field trip in the spring with support including chaperones from the BTU.

On the educator end, we're launching a workshop series in partnership with the Telescope Network where educators can join 1.5-hour sessions to earn PDPs. Participants will receive a free shirt, but for folks who want to purchase shirts, we're selling them for \$11. **You can order them through Venmo (@BLMatBTU)** – make sure to include your full name, shirt size, and school site, so they can be mailed.

The BTU Winter Conference will take place on Saturday, February 12 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.! The theme will be “Cozy Up With The Contract” and the conference will focus on fighting burnout, prioritizing educator well-being, and ramping up the contract campaign. We are planning to be in person at the BTU hall with significant COVID precautions but will pivot to Zoom if need be. **The first 100 people to register and attend will receive a swag bag!** Register at <https://btu.org/winter>.

Master Contract Bargaining Update: We continue to negotiate our master contract and will be ramping up our campaign soon. This past week, we presented proposals on lower class sizes, sustainable workloads, and equity for our educators at non-traditional schools. See the [latest update](#) by silent rep Mikaela Zetley for major takeaways from the session. As shared previously, you can continue to read [the full summary of those negotiations](#) thanks to our silent reps, and if you are interested in becoming a silent rep and joining the next session, please [apply here!](#)

Don't forget: Every home in the U.S. is now eligible to order 4 free at-home COVID-19 tests to be delivered within 7-12 days of the order. To order your free COVID-19 tests, please visit covidtests.gov.

Related Information

Scholarship Updates

Save the date: This year's BTU scholarship brunch will be on Saturday, June 11 at...

Updates on BuildBPS

BPS Community Sessions: There will be many community meetings for feedback on the BuildBPS plan. See the...

Article IV: School Assessment

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