



Washington Teachers' Union

Amplifying the Voice of DC Teachers

Elizabeth A. Davis, President

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September 30, 2020

Dr. Lewis Ferebee, Chancellor
District of Columbia Public Schools
1200 First Street, NE
Washington, DC 20002

Chancellor Ferebee,

On September 29, DCPS sent teachers the attached staffing assignment survey directing them to inform DCPS by Monday, October 5, whether they qualified for a virtual assignment so that DCPS may determine staffing assignments for return to in-person schooling. The cover email sent to teachers along with this survey indicated that teachers who did not fill out the survey by the deadline would be considered available by default for in-person teaching when schools reopen, i.e. that teachers who did not respond by the deadline would be penalized by being forced to return in-person, without regard to whether they were able to do so. WTU was informed of DCPS's intent to send this survey to teachers only two hours before DCPS did so.

As you know, DCPS and WTU are in the process of negotiating a memorandum of agreement (MOA) related to hybrid reopening, which includes the attached proposed safety checklist for reopening school buildings. WTU is still awaiting DCPS's response to the proposed MOA and safety checklist. The safety checklist aims to ensure that the parents and teachers will be provided evidence that school buildings are safe for in-person return. In the attached September 23 letter addressed to Mayor Bowser and copied to you, several members of the city council also requested evidence that the schools are COVID ready before students or staff are required to return to in-person teaching and learning. As of now, teachers, parents, students, and community members have not been informed as to what, if any, safety measures have been taken to ensure that school buildings are safe.

Accordingly, the WTU requests that DCPS rescind the staffing assignment survey until DCPS has returned to the bargaining table, bargained in good faith to agreement with the WTU over these issues, and issue no policy until an agreement has been reached. Short of that, WTU requests that DCPS extend the deadline for teachers to respond to the staffing assignment survey until the MOA has been agreed upon. This extension ensures that teachers are able to make an informed decision about whether it is safe to return to school in-person.

Best,

Elizabeth A. Davis, *President*
Washington Teachers' Union

CC: Muriel Bowser, Mayor
Paul Kihn, Deputy Mayor for Education
Hanseul Kang, Superintendent, Office of the State Superintendent of Education
Dr. LaQuandra Nesbitt, Director, Department of Health
Keith Anderson, Director, Department of General Services
Phil Mendelson, Chairman, DC Council
Anita Bonds, At-Large Representative, DC Council
David Grosso, At-Large Representative, DC Council
Elissa Silverman, At-Large Representative, DC Council
Robert White, At-Large Representative, DC Council
Brienne Nadeau, Ward 1 Representative, DC Council
Brooke Pinto, Ward 2 Representative, DC Council
Mary Cheh, Ward 3 Representative, DC Council
Brandon Todd, Ward 4 Representative, DC Council
Kenyan McDuffie, Ward 5 Representative, DC Council
Charles Allen, Ward 6 Representative, DC Council
Vincent Gray, Ward 7 Representative, DC Council
Trayon White, Ward 8 Representative, DC Council
Richard Jackson, President, Council of School Officers (CSO)
Edward Smith, Executive Director, DC Nurses Association (DCNA)
Andrew Washington, Executive Director, District Council 20
John Gibson, President Teamsters Local 639
WTU Contract Team
DCPS Contract Team