



Update

Vol. 39 No. 3

November 2014

A Quick Lesson On The Taylor Law and Triborough Amendment

The Taylor Law was enacted in 1967 to create a fair process for negotiating contracts. It established important rights for public employees such as the right to organize and the right to bargain wages, benefits and working conditions. In return, it took away public employees' right to strike. Unfortunately, the Taylor Law had many loopholes, permitting management to stall negotiations before swooping in and making changes to working conditions with no regard for the very collective bargaining the law enabled. The law's weakness meant that, once a contract expired, EVERYTHING had to be renegotiated *without* the last resort option of striking. **It left public employees completely powerless.** So in 1982, the Triborough Amendment was passed which closed the loopholes and strengthened the Taylor Law. It required that the old contract stay in effect until a new one was negotiated thereby providing incentive to both sides to negotiate in good faith.

What these pieces of legislation do for education and for the public:

- They reduce the number of crippling strikes to zero.
- The Triborough Amendment creates a stable environment that allows both sides to negotiate in good faith. Some say that the Triborough Amendment is not an incentive to negotiate; but for districts at impasse, it ensures that there is no interruption of services and that schools remain in session and teachers continue to be paid. Contracts remain in effect but school budget costs, such as healthcare, continue to rise. Districts are incentivized to negotiate in order to achieve cost-containment.
- In recognizing that labor peace serves the public good, the legislation prohibits public workers from striking while protecting their rights to bargain with management on a level playing field.

I know that many of you are frustrated by the lack of specific information regarding our current negotiations, and a look back at our history would show that we are delayed more than usual at settling this contract. The delay however, is not the "fault" of either side. We came to the table with over 80 items to negotiate; and at each session, progress has been made. Negotiating is a fluid process. What may be agreed upon at one session may be withdrawn at the next if circumstances change. The discussions between the sides are confidential until a complete package is created. The District's side must discuss items with the Board of Education to get guidance and direction, just as the SFT's negotiating team seeks guidance from your Executive Board when necessary. We ask for your continued patience and cooperation as we work to settle this contract as quickly and successfully as possible.

On behalf of the entire SFT Executive Board, I'd like to extend our best wishes for a peaceful and enjoyable Thanksgiving.

In Unity,

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SRP Recognition Day – Tuesday, November 18th

Don't forget to thank your SRP's Today!

Did you know that the third Tuesday of November is **National SRP Recognition Day**? “What are SRP's, and why do they need recognition?” you ask. Well, simply put, SRP's are ‘School Related Professionals’. They are the movers and shakers, the bones and nerves of our schools. SRP's are behind the scenes in our classrooms, offices, cafeterias and hallways. They are everywhere. Without them our students would lack much needed support. The extra TLC in the classroom would disappear, the sick wouldn't heal, the hungry wouldn't be fed, lights would go dim and mischief would echo down the hallways.

Aside from teachers and administrators, SRP's are all the other staff and faculty: from Teaching Assistants and Nurses, to Aides, Secretaries, Custodians, Cafeteria Workers, Security Guards and Bus Drivers. These men and women sustain us and our students. Their jobs are quite diverse but have one thing in common: they are often taken for granted and are, at times, underappreciated.

We've all heard the saying that it takes a village to raise a child. Well, it takes a school full of SRP's, teachers and administrators to teach that same child in a manner which is meaningful and beneficial. We are all pieces of the puzzle and, in the big picture, are equally essential to the success of the students in our care. Show your SRP's that they are valued and respected by wearing the button you'll find in your mailbox.

Please take the time on Tuesday, November 18th to stop into their offices or greet them in the halls and say “thank you!” After all, it is their day!

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