

June 2017

## BTU Contract Impasse Affects Key Reform Initiative

*Ability of all schools to select quality teachers to meet their needs must be protected*

The Boston Teachers Union (BTU) filed for mediation with the state Department of Labor Relations on May 16 citing the inability to finalize a contract after 16 months of negotiations. Of the three top unresolved issues, the union noted that the sides were “very far apart” on how to deal with tenured BPS teachers who were not selected by schools to fill vacant positions. Over the last three school years, the hiring teams in all BPS schools have had the ability to select quality teachers earlier from inside and outside the BPS that best meet their school needs. This initiative is strongly favored by BPS [Headmasters and Principals](#) as a key tool in improving the quality and compatibility of their teaching teams. Seniority is not a factor. The genie is out of the bottle for this reform and cannot be put back. The cost must be managed and the new contract should facilitate reducing tenured teachers not selected by a school after a year.

### Human Capital Initiative

The belief behind this [initiative](#) is that teacher quality is the single most important strategy to increasing student achievement. The hiring under this initiative started in the 2014-2015 school year. Teachers are hired by schools through “mutual consent” between the teacher and the school hiring team. This process reduced the administrative placement of tenured teachers in schools and eliminated the “bumping” of promising provisional teachers. Through system-wide “open posting” schools could also recruit from outside the BPS by paying a stipend.

### SPC Teachers

The cost of placing teachers not selected by schools in classrooms in FY17 is \$7.6M in a \$1.031B budget. BPS tenured teachers not selected by a school, by state law, have to be placed in a position of “suitable professional capacity.” For the last three school years, every SPC teacher has been placed in a teaching position in their licensure area and received support through observations, evaluations, professional development, skill building and teaching position referrals.

### Number of SPC Teachers

Year	Start of Year	End of Year
SY14-15	133	55
SY15-16	228	61
SY16-17	82	48

### Cost of SPC Teachers \*

In Millions

Year	Budget	Actual
FY15	\$5.9	\$8.9
FY16	\$5.7	\$12.7
FY17	\$10.6	\$7.6
FY18	\$10.6	

\* Salaries, Stipends & Benefits

The number of SPC teachers decline during the school year due to hiring into vacancies, voluntary severance agreements and retirements. However, many teachers remain as SPC teachers year after year. The City must stand firm in its demand that the new contract include a process to further reduce the number of SPC teachers not selected by a school.