



# AEEF News and Views

Newsletter of the Association of Employees of the Educational Foundation



October 2008

## SPECIAL EDITION

### **WGBH to Cut FY09 Budget: Asks Union to Suspend Wage Increase and Renegotiate**

WGBH management has informed the union leadership that, due to the indirect effects of the current economic crisis on individual and corporate donations and the direct effects on credit and lending, the Foundation will not be able to meet its current budget for fiscal 2009 and is in the process of planning cuts to that budget. Management has asked the union, as provided by our contract, to renegotiate the FY09 wage increases set to take effect on October 27. In addition, due to the close proximity of this request to the October 27 start of the new wage rates, management has also asked the AEEF to agree to the temporary suspension of those wage increases until the parties are able to meet and decide whether a negotiated change is acceptable.

In consultation with legal counsel, CWA support staff, and the AEEF Executive Board, the officers have scheduled a referendum on the temporary suspension of the FY09 wage increases. In an emergency meeting held on October 16, the AEEF Executive Board, by a majority vote, endorsed the temporary suspension.

### **Referendum Schedule**

BOSTON	October 23-28	Balloting by shop steward
CAPE COD	October 23-27	Balloting by shop steward
LOS ANGELES	October 23-27	Balloting by shop steward
NEW YORK	October 23-27	Balloting by mail
GREENFIELD	October 23-27	Balloting by mail
OTHER	October 23-27	Balloting by mail

## AEEF Contract Remains in Force

With our union contract in place, management cannot unilaterally change the wage increases we negotiated last year and ratified in the spring, nor can they suspend their implementation on October 27. Only the union membership, by a majority vote, can agree to do that.

What management can do is layoff personnel and, in the current economy, the union would like the opportunity to explore our options with management for avoiding or at least minimizing that likelihood through the negotiation process.

While our contract requires that we negotiate possible adjustments to the wage increase under conditions of a 3% or greater cut to the budget for that given fiscal year, the union is under no obligation to agree to any adjustment. In the event that an agreement which sought to adjust the FY09 increases was reached, it too would be subject to ratification by the membership.

The October 23-28 referendum is not a vote to freeze your wages; it is a vote to temporarily suspend the implementation of the FY09 3.5% general wage increase as well as any applicable progression increases.

If the vote passes: The union and management will begin negotiations on ways to address the budget

crisis. If an agreement is reached by January 31, 2008, the membership will vote to ratify it. If the membership does so, the new terms will be implemented; if not the original FY09 wage increases will be implemented retroactive to October 27 and management will have to examine alternate approaches to balance the budget.

If this vote does not pass: The FY09 increases will be implemented and bargaining will commence, but with less flexibility and fewer options available.

### Button Up for Solidarity!

As we move forward in these difficult times, our solidarity will be an important tool for determining how management works with the union, so please show your union solidarity by wearing your union button if you still have one handy from contract bargaining; if you don't, we'll get more!



AEEF-CWA Local 1300  
P.O. Box 381938  
Cambridge, MA 02238