



FROM: Merrie and Max

TO: All Higher Ed members

Dear Higher Education Members,

Over the past several months, public higher education workers in Massachusetts and throughout the country have faced growing anxiety about our institutions' responses to our current crisis. We are worried about whether we will be required to return to unsafe conditions and campuses that are ill-prepared to address potential outbreaks of COVID-19. We are worried that layoffs and furloughs will be our administrations' answer to economic challenges. We are worried about what compromising our safety and jobs will mean for our students and the long-term health of our public colleges and universities.

Many of you have been engaged in important work around these issues on your campuses, talking with one another about your concerns, building membership solidarity and seeking to hold your administrations accountable. But these issues are bigger than our individual campuses, and we need the strength of all of our members and all of our locals together in this fight.

To that end, and with the advice of a number of higher education leaders, **we are launching a campaign to win a safe and equitable fall return**, where educator and student jobs are protected and where we demand that our employers secure — from the federal government, the state government and campus sources — the funds needed to protect our campuses during this crisis.

As a start, we ask that you sign and distribute this petition widely. It calls for a safe, equitable, layoff-free reopening of our campuses:

<https://actionnetwork.org/petitions/a-petition-from-the-unionized-education-workers-who-make-our-campus-work/>

Next week, we hope you will join together at several key events:

Monday, July 13, 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., STCC Standout

Stand up for our MCCC brothers and sisters at Springfield Technical Community College, where the college president has implemented dozens of layoffs and program closures. Information is here:

<https://www.facebook.com/events/1108690402861510/>

Wednesday, July 15, at 4 p.m. Demand Progressive Taxes on Tax Day

Join with activists across the state and our allies in Raise Up Massachusetts to launch the "Invest in Our Recovery" campaign — a call for progressive taxes on wealthy investors and highly profitable corporations to prevent catastrophic budget cuts to our public schools and colleges and to bring about the broader common good. <https://actionnetwork.org/campaigns/our-recovery/>



Wednesday, July 15, 6:30-8:00 p.m., Health and Safety Issues During COVID-19

This session is a town hall hosted by members of MTA's Environmental Health & Safety committee and MTA staff. This town hall will discuss the broad health and safety concerns related to returning to work in the fall and will review the resources produced by the MTA Health and Safety Committee to help locals prepare. Members will have an opportunity to share organizing strategies and common safety issues across locals. The goals of this conversation include establishing an organizing framework for health and safety; ensuring members, students and their communities are protected; and, building our union power.

Register for this meeting at <https://www.mobilize.us/massteacher/event/280436/>

Thursday, July 16, 10:00 to 11:30 a.m., MSCA Forum – Now More Than Ever: Funding the Future of Public Higher Education in Massachusetts

The third in a series of forums held by the Massachusetts State College Association that are exploring our contemporary issues and how unions and members can work together to address these issues, this forum will explore the funding of public higher education in Massachusetts and what it has meant for our students and our work. We will begin looking at promising ways that we can campaign for more funding and build the colleges and universities our students and our faculty and librarians deserve.

RSVP by Wednesday, July 15th at <https://forms.gle/3qnF3UztdY8fP4qr8>

Thursday, July 16, 4:00 to 5:30 p.m., Higher Education Town Hall

We will hold a Higher Education Town Hall to learn more about this campaign, the actions that are already planned, and what we can all do together to fight for our safety, our jobs and the public colleges and universities that our students deserve!

Register in advance for this meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMrdeuqqTgiGtS2KdUpfnHrGtkUAdSr8l4W>

The threats are real — but so is our ability to fight back and demand the public colleges and universities we all deserve.