

# Benefits of Joining the Baltimore Teachers Union

## Why Join BTU?

### VOTING RIGHTS

- ✓ Being a member affords one the right to vote on the contract that governs your working conditions, salary, benefits, and protections.
- ✓ Being a member affords one the right to vote on union leadership; the individuals who represent the teacher, paraprofessional and school related personnel bargaining units and interact with the school district.

### INCREASED PROTECTIONS

- ✓ Being a member offers you [increased protections](#) and legal representation. Think of it as a professional insurance. Part of your dues go towards a fund that covers the cost of a lawyer in case you are accused of child abuse. (Sadly, this is not an uncommon occurrence in the district, and is more often than not a baseless claim). Paying for this representation out of pocket can result in \$10k plus in fees.

### MEMBER BENEFITS

- ✓ Here are some of the [financial and medical benefits](#) of being an [AFT Member](#).

## Union Dues

### WHERE THEY GO...

Individuals who choose not to be dues paying members are free riders who benefit from essential services paid for by others. Running a union costs money. Paying for union staff and lawyers costs money. Paying rent on the Union office costs money. Bargaining contracts, which benefits everyone in the Teacher and PSRP bargaining units, requires countless hours of preparation, research, negotiations, and organizing. Our pay, benefits, and protections were hard won over decades of resource-intensive work that costs money. Union dues provide the money for this important work.

### WHAT THEY DO...

- BTU dues also go towards policy advocacy at the city, state, and federal levels. The BTU advocated for a change in the composition of the Board of School Commissioners which will add two board members who are elected by the citizens of Baltimore City.
- The Union is continuing to advocate for a fully elected school board instead of a Board appointed by the Mayor.
- The union successfully thwarted Governor Hogan's attempts to bring vouchers for children to attend private schools, and to alter Maryland's charter school law in a way that would create an unjust two-tiered system of education which would drain public schools of much needed resources.
- The union helped to establish a new law that limits the amount of standardized testing in public schools in order to protect teaching and learning time.

*These victories and important defenses against harmful legislation are only possible because of the resources that come from union dues. Your membership in the BTU ensures that you have a strong voice at the tables where these important decisions are made.*

Signing up for BTU membership can now be done conveniently [online here!](#)