



Washington Teachers' Union
FULFILLING THE COMMITMENT TO BUILD GREAT MINDS

News Release

**For Immediate Release:
May 8, 2023**

Contact:
Jacqueline Pogue Lyons
jpoguelyons@wtulocal6.net
202-517-1477

WTU: City Says It Can't Figure Out How to Pay Teachers Negotiated Pay

WASHINGTON—The District of Columbia government has told the Washington Teachers' Union that it cannot at this time figure out how to pay teachers the retroactive pay they're owed, which was negotiated and promised in the collective bargaining agreement ratified by the union and District of Columbia Public Schools last year, WTU President Jacqueline Pogue Lyons said today.

"On behalf of all teachers who get up every morning and teach this city's students with utmost professionalism, I am disappointed and upset by today's news," Pogue Lyons said. There is no valid reason for the failure of city leadership to miss the deadlines that we agreed to."

Under the collective bargaining agreement, which was signed three years after the last WTU contract had expired, WTU members active since the 2020-2021 school year were to receive retroactive pay increases for the three years they worked with an expired contract. That money was scheduled to be paid on May 19, but the city now claims too many "administrative complications" make that impossible. City administrators claim they will be able to provide partial retroactive pay on May 19, and the rest by June 16—both significantly later than expected. The city also says it won't be able to pay agreed-upon bonuses for hard-to-fill positions and stipends for special education teachers until the end of the school year.

In a memo, the city administrator said processing the payments "is extremely complicated and made more difficult by the 12 collective bargaining agreements the District has negotiated and finalized this fiscal year." The memo also noted it didn't want to overpay or underpay employees.

"We are looking into every option available to us at this time, including legal action," Pogue Lyons continued. "DCPS teachers should be paid what they're owed and if late, with interest. It was bad enough that teachers had to work on an expired contract for three years and now they're doubly insulted by having rightfully owed money delayed," "A minimum responsibility of a city government is to figure out how to pay its workforce," Pogue Lyons said. "And people wonder why it's so hard to keep teachers in DCPS."

#