



Bellingham Technical College
Press Release
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For Immediate Release

BELLINGHAM TECHNICAL COLLEGE AND THE BELLINGHAM EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT TEAM UNION CONTINUE ACTIVE LABOR NEGOTIATIONS

Bellingham, Washington-September 25, 2017 at 12:15 p.m. – Bellingham Technical College (BTC) continues labor negotiations with Bellingham Educational Support Team (BEST), representing 57 classified clerical, technical, instructional and retail support staff at BTC. Joint bargaining sessions between BTC and BEST began in April 2017.

BEST is striking today, Monday, September 25. BTC faculty voted to not cross a staff picket line, therefore all classes are cancelled for Monday, September 25.

BTC and BEST are currently negotiating with the assistance of Washington State Public Employment Relations Commission (PERC) mediators. BTC's bargaining team are remaining available at all hours to continue negotiations until a settlement is reached.

It is the priority of Bellingham Technical College to ensure that employees receive equitable compensation packages that are competitive with their peers at other Washington two-year institutions. BTC recently completed a salary comparison of BTC classified salaries with similar positions within community colleges and state agencies. On average, BTC classified salaries are 12.75% above the salaries paid to similar positions.

In BTC's ongoing goal to indicate the value that BEST employees hold for the college, BTC delivered a last, best and final proposal on September 14, 2017. BTC proposed this offer while working to resolve a \$100,000 deficit.

On Monday, September 18, 2017, BEST members voted down BTC's proposal and subsequently voted to strike on Monday, September 25, 2017, if an agreement was not made by 11:59 pm on Sunday September 24, 2017. Both parties did meet on Sunday.

"BTC continues to bargain in good faith and welcomes PERC's involvement and are prepared to work with the mediator through the duration to bring matters to a resolution," said Marni Saling Mayer, Public Information Officer at Bellingham Technical College. "Keeping our students informed and working with their concerns is our priority. We send them BTC Alerts, update our website and our emergency phones as updates become available. We also have a front line staff working in our College Services building to help students with questions. Multiple services remain available including our Campus Store with varied hours and our library which is open Monday-Thursday from 8a.m. to 4 p.m., Friday from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. and is closed on Saturday."

About Bellingham Technical College

Bellingham Technical College is accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, and offers two Bachelor of Sciences degrees, seven direct transfer degrees such as pre-engineering, pre-nursing, electronics, mechanical engineering, and technology and business. Completion of these degrees prepares BTC students to transfer with a junior status to participating colleges and universities in Washington State. BTC offers 38 associate degree and 51 certificate options providing professional technical education to support local and regional industry workforce needs. For more information, go to www.btc.edu.

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