

WHAT SHOULD STUDENTS KNOW ABOUT “WORK-TO-RULE”?



Q: What does “working-to-rule” mean?

Educators have called a ‘work-to-rule’ action to force BCPS to address our concerns over internet reliability for classes that effect the 70% students not in school buildings as well as the students in the buildings. The internet failures of the week of April 6th meant educators lost hours of instructional time, and at least 100 minutes of weekly planning time. In addition, the fallout from the ransomware attack continues to create chaos with employees’ health insurance, retirement, and sick leave. On top of that, thousands of employees’ personal data was exposed by BCPS, and we have had to deal with 4 separate instruction models in the past year. BCPS can fix these problems, and the ‘work-to-rule’ action can bring attention and pressure on BCPS to resolve them. Educators have been ignored while trying to fix these issues and Work to Rule is our last resort.

Working “to-the-rule” means performing our normal duties (“the rule” meaning those duties that are required) during the normal workday. It is meant to highlight and reduce the unpaid voluntary work educators do before and after school, on weekends, and during our lunch and planning periods.

Q: What can we expect as students during this time?

You may notice one or more of the following:

- ➔ It may take teachers longer to grade exams and assignments. We will do our best to provide grades as soon as possible.
- ➔ Educators may be unable to write letters of recommendation while work-to-rule is in effect.

Q: Why are educators taking this action now?

TABCO members have dealt with too many crises created or mishandled by central office administration.

- ➔ The biggest problem—WiFi outages mean we can’t teach the 70% of students that are not in school buildings. It also makes in-person instruction difficult, if not impossible. This is unacceptable.
- ➔ There were four new educational models (original distance learning, enhanced distance learning Spring 2020, enhanced distance learning Fall 2020, hybrid learning inter 2021 and now four-day in-person for elementary),
- ➔ Three separate tech crises (the ransomware attack spawned the reimaging process, the entire payroll crisis- W2, leave time, pension 403(b), overpay and more, in addition to a data breach compromising at least 2500 people’s personal information).

→ BCPS has ‘excessed’ dozens of teachers, making their jobs insecure on top of the above crises.

We must work to rule starting April 22nd because it is our last resort to force the system to address these crises for our students and for ourselves.

Q: What do teachers and staff want?

- We need all internet and network issues resolved so we can effectively reach all our students.
- We now need the option of an in-person learning cohort 4-days a week and a separate cohort for virtual instruction.
- BCPS needs to compensate us for our lost 100 minutes of planning time, showing us that BCPS understands our lost time and values us enough to make us whole.
- BCPS must rescind all excessing of staff. BCPS’ budget was fully funded by County Executive Olszewski.
- BCPS must explain in detail what they are doing to protect the 2500 members whose personal information was compromised by another BCPS data breach. BCPS must tell us what they are doing to protect all members against future breaches.

Q: How can you support your teachers and other staff during this time?

- Schedule an appointment to speak with your teacher during the regular workday, instead of contacting them after hours.
- Please be patient with your teacher regarding grading of assignments and responding to email.