
[FAC-L] A message from Vice President Nelson, April 15, 2026

From Division of Finance and Planning

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To fac-l <fac-l@ilstu.edu>



**ILLINOIS STATE
UNIVERSITY**
Illinois' first public university

Dear members of the Redbird community,

Illinois State University and AFSCME Local 1110 met with a federal mediator for the fifth time this morning. Unfortunately, the parties were unable to reach an agreement, and the union has indicated that the strike will continue. Contingency plans remain in place to maintain a high level of quality services across campus, which is the University's top priority during this strike.

As a public, higher-education institution with a nearly 170-year legacy of serving generations of students, Illinois State recognizes and values its employees and the roles each plays in the student experience. The University also recognizes that competitive compensation is essential for that to continue. Consequently, the University has worked diligently to ensure that we offer AFSCME 1110-represented employees pay that is competitive with that for comparable roles in the local marketplace. Illinois State's current offer to the Union does just that.

The Union has stated that many employees in this unit earn only \$16.00 per hour. This is inaccurate. None of the employees currently earn \$16.00 per hour, and fewer than 7% earn less than \$17.00 per hour; all are in entry-level positions. Under the University's offer, after wage increases at ratification and on July 1, 2026, all entry-level employees would earn \$17.76 or more, which is at or above the median pay offered by other employers in Bloomington-Normal for similar entry-level positions. Under the University's offer, as of July 1, 2026, all but one of the other positions in the bargaining unit would also be at or above the median pay offered by other employers in Bloomington-Normal for similar positions.

At ratification, wages in this bargaining unit would top at \$29.29 per hour, and the average hourly wage rate, by type of work, would be as follows:

- Building Services positions would immediately average \$22.78 per hour (192 employees).
- Grounds positions would immediately average \$26.42 per hour (18 employees).
- Dining positions would immediately average \$21.34 per hour (122 positions).
- Positions in other units (e.g., physical plant, storekeepers, mechanics, equipment service workers, athletics, laundry, and building maintenance) would immediately average \$24.45 per hour (18 employees).

Following the initial wage increase at ratification, each employee in the bargaining unit would also receive a guaranteed 3% increase in base pay on July 1 of this year (just 11 weeks from today) and then annually on July 1 through July 1, 2029. This means employees would receive at least a 6.5% increase in base pay within the next 11 weeks, and, over the life of the contract, all employees in the unit would receive at least a 15.5% total increase (16.5% compounded) in their base wage rate.

Under the University's offer, employees in the unit would also receive a \$600 lump-sum payment (less applicable deductions) upon ratification. And, of course, all employees in the unit would continue to receive the University's very competitive benefits and time-off offerings.

University leadership's focus in negotiations continues to be on reaching a resolution that is competitive in the local marketplace and fiscally sustainable. The University's bargaining team remains willing to meet with the union bargaining team to continue efforts to resolve the remaining issues in bargaining.

I remain especially appreciative of employees who are helping meet the needs of the campus community during this time. Cleaning and dining services, as well as grounds maintenance, continue across campus.

Thank you for your service to our campus community. The University will provide additional timely updates as appropriate. For more information regarding the University's offer and the strike, you can also visit afscme1110negotiations.illinoisstate.edu.

Sincerely,

Glen Nelson, Ph.D.
Vice President for Finance and Planning



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