

# NATIONAL BARGAINING NEWS

News from the EIS/FELA national Reps 5th May 2022



## 'If we offer you nothing will you call off the strike?'

Hopes of a settlement at Tuesday's NJNC were dashed when the employers' side turned up unprepared and unwilling to negotiate. They did however suggest that we should suspend strike action in return for this whilst they go and prepare to think about how they could use the unconsolidated amount to make an improved offer. Despite our reducing our claim to a very modest £1200, they completely failed to respond in kind by consolidating

what was on the table and adding a bit more in a revised offer. A token £50 was moved from the 'thank you' payment to the consolidated amount. They refused to even discuss it further until at least 10 days and 5 strike days had passed!!! This latest skulduggery from an organization whose stated aim is to "*promote the advancement of college education for the benefit of the public*" caused dismay to those who are keen to continue to provide college education to their students.

In response to this callous and unreasonable behaviour, a members' Zoom meeting was held on Wednesday to discuss members views and concerns. This led to an Emergency FELA Executive meeting which agreed a revised programme of Industrial Action which will be more effective in putting pressure on Colleges whilst better supporting students in the difficult months ahead. The Executive also agreed a strong programme of campaigning activity and resources to increase publicity and support for our dispute

## WE DESERVE BETTER

**Industrial Action to do list next week:**

**Resulting boycott continues**

**Strike days on Tuesday 10th and Wednesday 11th suspended**

**Strike day Thursday followed by rally outside the Scottish Parliament**

**Continue to leaflet students and encourage them to contact their MSPS**

**Rally Parliament Thursday 12th**

**Transport will be provided by the EIS**

**Speakers will be invited**

**Please bring Branch banners and placards from the picket lines**

**Students are welcome**

**Live broadcast on facebook :**

**EIS FELA Honour the Deal**

**Live tweets : @EISFela**



## Why We Have Changed the Schedule of strikes.

The original schedule was designed to pressurise management to make a reasonable offer promptly. We had hoped that they would seek to avoid the damage that could be irreparable for some if 3 days strike action were to be taken next week. However, the news that management are refusing to meet us before next Thursday (12<sup>th</sup> May) is a clear indication that the interests of the students are not their priority. It is obvious that that their primary concern is to inflict a defeat on the unions.

They are calculating that anxiety over loss of 3 days earnings coupled with members reluctance to harm the students long term interests, something they constantly exploit, will cause the strike to crumble. That's why they are making a point of refusing to attempt to resolve the dispute before next Thursday, the last day of the action. Nice try. Too bad. We spotted it.

It would be a mistake for us to play into management hands by continuing with 3 days strike action next week now that we know that the action will not bring management back to the table with *any* improved offer let alone one that is likely to be acceptable. Instead, we need to adopt tactics more appropriate to the situation we are now in.

It is now clear that to get a fair settlement we are going to have to extend the strike days over a longer period of time and to maximise the effects of the action short of strike action. This means reducing the number of strike days per week and escalating later in the year. This will have 3 effects. Firstly, it will make the strikes more financially sustainable for members without losing their impact in the longer term. Secondly, it will not damage the students interests in the long term. It will allow us to mark assessment and communicate outcomes to students. We will only be withholding results from the management until a fair settlement has been reached. Thirdly, if the management don't quickly change their attitude and start negotiating sensibly we can escalate in June, which will make it more difficult for management to try and bully members into entering results before a fair settlement and the industrial action has been called off.