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**PROMISES AND PERILS OF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING  
FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT ARE PROBED IN COMPREHENSIVE VOLUME**

WASHINGTON, D.C., February 28, 2006—Harvard Education Press released today the most comprehensive analysis ever of the role of teachers unions in education reform—*Collective Bargaining in Education: Negotiating Change in Today’s Schools*—coedited by Jane Hannaway, director of the Education Policy Center at the Urban Institute, and Andrew J. Rotherham, cofounder and codirector of Education Sector and a senior fellow at the Progressive Policy Institute.

The new book offers a nuanced analysis of available research and varied perspectives on the role teachers unions have played in education reform, tackling the controversial implications of labor negotiations on advancing student achievement, a subject not widely analyzed or covered.

“When it comes to improving public schools, teachers unions are the proverbial elephant in the classroom,” said Rotherham. “They shape the way schools operate and have a major influence on whether students succeed, yet they are rarely mentioned away from the heat of negotiations and are little understood by those not at the bargaining table.”

Since collective bargaining began, the coeditors note, American education has contended with extraordinary challenges. *Collective Bargaining in Education: Negotiating Change in Today’s Schools* calls on educational and political leaders to discuss openly and consider deeply the role collective bargaining can and should play.

“Like the economy, education is at a critical juncture,” said Hannaway. “Schools, pressured to perform like never before, face national and state accountability requirements, a poor track record of student performance relative to other industrialized countries, and significant academic achievement gaps among different ethnic, racial, and income groups. These conditions create a far different playing field than that of 40 years ago, when teacher collective bargaining developed.”

Already, the book has received critical praise from educational and labor leaders.

“School districts and unions are among the most conservative institutions left in our country,” said Alan Bersin, California’s secretary of education. “Their reluctance to budge from the status quo and their fierce resistance to competition adversely impact student achievement, teacher quality, and fiscal equity. Hannaway and Rotherham confront the 800-pound obstacle to renewing public education and set the stage for a vigorous debate that is long overdue.”

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“It is unfathomable that, in light of recent efforts to close the student achievement gap, the body of research examining the impact of collective bargaining by teachers on public education is so scant,” said Andrew L. Stern, president of the Service Employees International Union. “What are the facts and how do we find them? Hannaway and Rotherham rightly raise the issue and put forth real alternatives.”

The book includes contributions from the following noteworthy education researchers, analysts, practitioners, and thinkers:

- Richard D. Kahlenberg describes how the adoption of collective bargaining in the 1960s changed the American Federation of Teachers and National Education Association from “sleepy organizations” to “the most powerful forces in education,” as well as potent actors in the national political arena.
- Henry S. Farber shows how the fortunes of private- and public-sector unions sharply diverged in recent decades.
- Frederick M. Hess and Andrew P. Kelly analyze the legal framework and dynamics of the bargaining process, as well as the agreements themselves.
- Paul T. Hill looks at the cost implications of collective bargaining and who bears those costs.
- Susan Moore Johnson and Morgaen L. Donaldson address the relationship between teacher quality and collective bargaining.
- Dan Goldhaber reviews the research literature on how collective bargaining affects student achievement.
- Paul Manna examines the relationship between teachers union interests and the federal No Child Left Behind Act.
- Leo Casey makes the case for why collective bargaining by teachers is beneficial in American education.
- Julia E. Koppich focuses on the promise and pitfalls of “reform unionism,” in which unions negotiate professional issues and not just those associated with traditional industrial unionism.
- Terry M. Moe argues that it is unreasonable to expect unions to reform themselves in ways that make education for children their priority.
- Jane Hannaway and Andrew Rotherham conclude the volume by focusing on the need for more analysis, greater transparency, and broader involvement in negotiations and the political process that surrounds it.

The book was made possible in part by generous support from The Broad Foundation, a venture philanthropy working to dramatically improve student achievement in urban school districts through better governance, management, labor relations, and competition.

The Urban Institute is a nonprofit, nonpartisan policy research and educational organization that examines the social, economic, and governance challenges facing the nation.

Education Sector, an independent, nonprofit education think tank, is both a dependable source of sound thinking on policy and an honest broker of evidence in key education debates.