



ZWIĄZEK NAUCZYCIELSTWA POLSKIEGO

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Warsaw, 8th April 2019

Dear Colleagues,

Thank you very much for your questions about our strike, thank you for your interest and the sympathy expressed in each conversation. I will briefly remind you of the development of the situation in recent months.

On January 10, 2019, the ZNP Executive Board adopted a resolution regarding a collective dispute. Our previous forms of protest for last three years: manifestations, marches, pickets and protest actions did not change the government decisions. Teachers' salaries, starting at PLN 1751 net, are still too low. The modest earnings of the school administration and service staff are still not growing. We demand a 1000 PLN increase in basic salaries! Our postulate will allow equating wages in education with an average wage in Poland. Today, beginner teachers often earn less than half as workers with much lower qualifications, who have completed basic or basic vocational training and whose work is much less responsible than that of a teacher.

For several weeks, the government did not respond to the preparations for the strike, apparently believing that pressure, disinformation and attacks on the union would discourage teachers from participating in the strike that would take place during the external exams. One example of the way in which the government, through its media, reports on the preparations for the strike and on the working conditions of teachers, was to put on the cover of one of the right-wing magazines a photograph of me with a Kalashnikov in my hands in classroom of students implying I am terrorist and I treat the students as hostages.

However, the determination of the community turned out to be stronger than pressure, more than 80 percent of schools took part in the strike referendum, and in some regions of Poland more than 90 percent, and several hundred thousand teachers confirmed their willingness to take part in the strike. Together with us, in dozens of schools and kindergartens, administration and service workers will be on strike, whose salaries, as I mentioned, are also dramatically low.

With of all this in mind, this week (1-7.04.), the Polish government has undertaken negotiations with ZNP regarding the pay increase. The aim of these talks was to develop solutions that could have prevented a national strike. Negotiations began on Monday and were continued until Sunday – for many hours quite every day. Unfortunately, despite the readiness to work out a compromise solution on the part of the trade union, these talks did not end with success. Therefore, the strike starts on April 8. The strike is indefinite and may also cover the duration of external examinations.

Today we need your support more than ever. A letter or sending a few words of greetings to our Polish colleagues in electronic form will give us the feeling that we belong to a large family of teachers and employees for whom the main purpose is the welfare of education, high quality of education and decent working conditions, because as we know - *It all starts with a good teacher*. We will be grateful to you for showing solidarity with us and our cause.

With kind regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Broniarz", written in black ink. The signature is positioned below the text "With kind regards," and above the printed name "Sławomir Broniarz".

Sławomir Broniarz
ZNP-President