

Monday, Jan. 22, 2024

## Mayor's Newton Update

I believe in collective bargaining but I don't support illegal strikes.

Our 11,600-plus students should be in classrooms learning while the union leaders and the School Committee negotiating team are at the table bargaining.



A Superior Court Judge issued contempt fines on the union starting today because of the illegal strike. (See more below.)

There is a reason that teachers strikes are illegal in Massachusetts. Being out of school really hurts children. Schools provide routine and consistency for students. Kids learn in school, have fun with friends. Students receive needed support from trusted and outstanding educators and staff.

For many parents who can't work from home or find child care, the disruption, now into a third day, translates into lost pay.

The School Committee is offering right now an agreement that will provide competitive wages and benefits to our teachers without requiring layoffs of essential city employees - including teachers - later.

As you can imagine, we are getting a lot of telephone calls and emails. Thank you for reaching out with your questions, comments and concerns. We listen to every call and read every email.

We've put together answers to the most frequently asked questions. They're posted at [newtonma.gov](https://newtonma.gov) and are being updated as more questions are raised.

\*\*\*\*\*

### What's Happening Right Now?

The Superior Court held a hearing on an emergency motion filed by attorneys for the Commonwealth Employment Relations Board (CERB) and the Newton School Committee at noon today.

The motion requested that fines be imposed against the NTA to compel them to follow the law and immediately end their illegal strike. The NTA did not appear in court, but was represented by attorneys from the Massachusetts Teachers Association.

A Superior Court Judge granted the motion and imposed the following fines against the NTA:

- \$25,000 fine for today if the NTA fails to end the strike by 8:00 p.m. tonight, Monday, January 22.
- \$50,000 fine if the NTA fails to end the strike by 8:00 p.m. tomorrow, Tuesday, January 23.
- \$100,000 fine if the NTA fails to end the strike by 8:00 p.m. Wednesday, January 24.
- \$200,000 fine if the NTA fails to end the strike by 8:00 p.m. Thursday, January 25.
- If the NTA's noncompliance continues after Thursday night, a hearing will take place on Friday, January 26 at noon "to discuss a more meaningful approach to ensuring compliance with the law."

The NTA must pay all fine amounts (which are cumulative) to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts per state law. Neither the Newton Public Schools nor the City of Newton receives any of the funds from the fines.

\*\*\*\*\*

The Newton School Committee has shared the message below:

*Dear NPS Families,*

*As Superintendent Dr. Nolin has already informed you, the NTA strike continues and schools will be closed again on Tuesday. This is detrimental to the health and well-being of our students and is particularly harmful to our most vulnerable students.*

*Tonight, we again asked the union to continue negotiations but to end the strike and let kids return to their lives tomorrow. The union rejected this. We further asked for partnership in crafting joint statements on the mediation process to be shared with the community. The union has not responded to this proposal.*

*We agree that our educators need a competitive wage. And we agree the district needs to provide mental health support and social work services to students. And we do need smaller class sizes, particularly at our high schools. We have been addressing these issues before this unnecessary strike.*

*Incremental funds negotiated with the City back in December already allowed us to plan the addition of five social workers in our elementary schools. It has allowed us to reduce our high school STEM class sizes next year. And it has allowed us to put forth a compensation package to our educators that is competitive with the most respected districts in the Commonwealth.*

*However, if we met all the current demands of the union, we would not be able to reduce our high school class sizes or add social workers in our elementary schools. Not only would the demands of the union consume our ability to improve programs or services, we believe we would have to lay off approximately 60 educators within a year and an equal amount over the following five years.*

*We need a contract that will allow the Newton Public Schools to provide the services our students require. We believe that the School Committee has put that proposal on the table. We will continue to work toward returning our students to the classroom as soon as possible.*

*Sincerely,  
Newton School Committee*

\*\*\*\*\*

Click [here](#) to read a message from Superintendent Anna Nolin.



Mayor Ruthanne Fuller | 1000 Commonwealth Avenue, Newton, MA 02459

[Unsubscribe jmulvey@newtonma.gov](mailto:jmulvey@newtonma.gov)

[Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)

Sent by rfuller@newtonma.gov powered by



Try email marketing for free today!