

Wednesday, Jan. 31, 2024

Mayor's Newton Update

Tomorrow will be the tenth day with our youngsters' classroom doors shut by the NTA.

And I have a question for the union tonight: Where is your sense of urgency?

At 11:30 yesterday morning, the Newton School Committee negotiating team put forward an increased offer – a meaningfully increased offer, a highly competitive offer, a sustainable offer. The offer we proposed would continue to make Newton one of the highest paying school districts in the state.

The union took 26 hours to respond in full.

What happened in those 26 hours?

Our kids were stuck at home. Our parents and caregivers were struggling, making alternative arrangements, paying a lot for childcare, depending on family and friends to fill in, and missing work again.

Meanwhile, the union found time for boisterous rallies, celebratory music and listening to speeches today at the Newton Education Center (where bargaining was supposed to be happening) from the President of the Massachusetts Teachers Association and the President of the National Education Association headquartered in Washington, D.C.

Let me repeat the question:

To the leaders of the NTA – Where is your sense of urgency?

This strike, this illegal strike, is hurting our children.

Below is the message the School Committee sent tonight:

Negotiations are continuing this evening. The School Committee and Newton Teachers Association have come to agreement on many issues, but compensation remains unresolved.

The two parties remain approximately \$15 million apart on our proposals, of which approximately \$12 million is related to Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA). Yesterday, with additional funding from the Mayor for the last year of the contract, the School Committee offered a COLA for all employees that would increase salaries by a minimum of 12% over four years.

The School Committee continues to focus resources on Unit C aides as we have heard from the NTA that this is their greatest concern. We recognize that the job of an aide in the Newton Public Schools is a tough job as the increased level of student needs is real. It is a harder job today than it has ever been. That is why we have proposed raising the COLA for many of those valued employees by more than 15% over the life of the contract. Many of our Unit C aides would see their compensation rise by more than 40% over four years.

The School Committee remains focused on reaching an agreement that is competitive and sustainable. Signing a contract we cannot afford is not going to improve outcomes for students, and will consume resources that our teachers are asking for to reduce class sizes and add mental health supports.

We are still negotiating and doing the hard work every day to settle this contract. We again ask the NTA to let our kids go back to school.

*Sincerely,
Newton School Committee
schoolcommittee@newton.k12.ma.us*

Staffing Update Related to FY25 Budget

Social Emotional Supports for Students

The Superintendent has committed to adding staff to address high school class sizes and 5.7 social workers to ensure that all elementary schools, the preschool and the high schools all have social workers. Student support at middle schools is delivered differently - by guidance counselors and others. The chart linked below shows the district's total mental health staffing as of today (before the positions budgeted for next year) so the community can understand the large amount of staffing support our students already have.

[Social Emotional Support Staff for Students \(current - before additions for next year\)](#)

School Committee Meeting Calendar Discussion

Given the extended NTA strike, the School Committee has scheduled a meeting on Thursday, February 1, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. to begin discussions about when the days will be made up to meet the state mandated 180 school days. Meeting login information is here:"

[School Committee Meeting Login Webpage](#)

Here is a [memo](#) from Superintendent Nolin, which explains the options. The calendar makes a provision for 9 days of a strike. We are now at 10 days so the School Committee will include this new information in the discussion.

The meeting on Thursday will be an initial discussion with a vote to follow in future meetings.

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



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 hr@newtonma.gov powered by



Try email marketing for free today!