



August 22, 2023

Dear Newton School Community,

We write with an update on the collective bargaining process with the Newton Teachers Association (NTA).

On July 20, the School Committee asked the state to appoint a mediator, which is a standard component of the state process for assisting school committees and teachers unions when they have reached an impasse in contract negotiations. Yesterday, the state Department of Labor Relations appointed a mediator. The School Committee looks forward to working with the mediator and the NTA as part of this state process to reach an agreement on a fair contract that allows Newton Public Schools to operate responsibly, effectively, and sustainably, while very appropriately valuing its educators and staff.

Now that the mediation process has begun, we expect the school year to begin on time on Tuesday, September 5, 2023. Our new Superintendent and her team have worked hard to create a welcoming and inclusive set of activities to kick off a new year at all school levels. The School Committee will continue to work with the NTA to encourage a minimum of disruption to the school day and students' experiences.

It is possible that you may notice some differences in the school buildings and classrooms as we open school in the midst of these contract negotiations. For example, you may see educators demonstrating outside the buildings before and after the contractual school day. These, and other actions, often occur when contract negotiations are ongoing and are within union rights to do so. We share this with you so that you are not surprised.

As you know from recent communication, the district is moving forward with the new elementary literacy curriculum. We expect continued progress in grades K, 1 and 2, as designed, and will be in communication with the superintendent to ensure the rollout is going smoothly in the first months of the school year. Should the NTA take action that would hinder this process, and such action is considered by the School Committee to be a work stoppage or slowdown, we will take appropriate action, as required by law.

We will continue to update the community periodically as we work together toward a new contract with our union partners.

Sincerely,

Newton School Committee

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