

**Newton School Committee Statement on the Status of Negotiations Friday
January 26, 2024**

The Newton School Committee has been at the Education Center since 9:00 a.m. this morning prepared to bargain. The Committee had been waiting for a response to its Time and Learning proposal, as well as its proposal to increase Unit C hours, both of which were shared with the union yesterday. The Committee's updated parental leave proposal, shared on Wednesday, increased the number of paid family leave weeks to 12 from the original proposal of nine weeks. The union rejected this and failed to offer a counteroffer.

Around noon, we received word from the mediator that the union would not further discuss the Time and Learning agreement until agreements have been reached on the union's priorities of elementary prep time, volunteer status, increased Unit C hours, and parental leave.

We are asking the NTA to compromise and collaborate. The School Committee has made multiple revisions and restructured its proposals in response to NTA requests. In fact, we will soon submit an affidavit to the Superior Court verifying our good faith participation in the mediation every day. This affidavit, submitted under penalty of perjury, affirms that we have been bargaining in good faith every day and have been moving proposals forward to the NTA within the mediation process.

By contrast, the NTA has not moved from its original positions on major issues. We are also asking them to focus on the negotiations and meaningful discussions with real compromise and partnership. The time, energy, and attention they have spent on organizing rallies at City Hall, the Education Center, and the State House is impeding the speed with which we can settle this contract.

Finally, every day, we have asked the union to end the strike while we continue negotiations. They have refused.

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