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Striking Newton educators to rally at 1 p.m. Friday

Following their overwhelming vote to go on strike, Newton educators will cap a day of picketing Friday with a rally at Newton City Hall starting at 1 p.m.

Members of the Newton Teachers Association (NTA) have been working without a contract since August and bargaining has been going on for more than one year.

The NTA is seeking a living wage for instructional aides and behavior therapists; social workers in every elementary school; humane and modern paid family leave for all educators; and fair cost-of-living adjustments for teachers.

Newton educators hope to be back in the classroom – with their students, where they want to be – as soon as possible. The NTA and School Committee are scheduled to resume bargaining today.

The NTA issued the following statement:

“Newton educators made the incredibly difficult decision to go on strike because Mayor Fuller simply was not listening to our concerns about fair pay for the educators working with Newton’s most vulnerable students and the growing mental health crisis we see in all of our schools.

“Mayor Fuller has been misleading in her public statements about what is being offered to teachers. Her claims about offering 6% pay raises are not true, nor is it true that the city needs an override to fund what we are seeking in a fair contract.

“More importantly, Mayor Fuller is ignoring what our students need. Our youngest students need mental health support at levels previously not seen. And as long as we keep failing to pay a living wage to behavior therapists and aides, student needs will continue to go unmet.

“We are deeply grateful for the community support for Newton educators and we remain hopeful that this contract can be swiftly settled.”