

December 22, 2022

Dear Canton Public Schools Staff and Families,

As you are likely aware, the Canton School Committee and Canton Teachers Association (CTA) have been in the process of contract negotiations for the past year. Given the discussion in the community, we wish to provide you with an update on this work.

Throughout the process, the negotiating team has treated this matter with urgency, good faith and careful communications, and with all stakeholders in mind and will continue to do so.

Our teachers and education support professionals (ESPs) are essential to our students' success and we certainly believe they should be compensated fairly. The discussions we have had, concessions we have made and offers we have presented for more than a year all reflect our core goals of putting students at the center of our work, valuing the needs of our staff and being responsible stewards for the town's financial health.

As of October 19, we and the CTA have held over a dozen multi-hour negotiation sessions with both Unit A and Unit E members. We were able to reach common ground on many issues raised by the CTA. At the same time, the teams appeared to be stuck on several key issues and so the School Committee team sought the assistance of a mediator in hopes of expediting a reasonable resolution.

The first mediation session between the Canton School Committee and CTA took place this Tuesday, December 20, 2022. While we felt this session was productive and moved the negotiating process in a positive direction, we were disappointed that the CTA moved to a "work to rule" action on Wednesday, Dec. 21, 2022.

"Work to rule" means employees follow to the letter the terms of their existing collective bargaining agreement, whose terms essentially remain in effect until a new agreement is reached.

Since the CTA's decision to "work to rule," we have continued to work on issuing another offer to the CTA and will keep collaborating to address topics of CTA concern. As "work to rule" can sometimes impact school culture, we will work as a school community to ensure that students get a consistent and full learning experience throughout this process.

We understand that reaching a contract that best serves our students, families, staff and community can be a long and painstaking process.

We assure you that high-quality learning and student success remains our top priority as we continue working to find mutually beneficial solutions. We look forward to our upcoming mediation sessions with the CTA, and we will continue to participate in good faith and with an eye toward finding common ground.

Sincerely,

Canton School Committee
Canton Public Schools Administration