

# Dedham Public Schools

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - October 24, 2019

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## **Dedham Public Schools Respond To Strike Decision**

The Dedham Public Schools are disheartened to have been made aware that the Dedham Education Association (DEA) has voted to proceed with a strike, effective on Friday, October 25, 2019. Unfortunately, the ones most hurt by this decision are the students and their families.

With all District decisions, the security and emotional well-being of our PreK - 12 students is of foremost concern. As a result of this vote, the Dedham Public Schools will conduct a District In-Service Day on Friday October 25th.

There will be no school for PreK - 12 students in the seven district schools on Friday, October 25, 2019. All Dedham Public School employees and educators are expected to report to work.

At every point of this process over the last 21 months, the District has urged that educator contract negotiations not seep into the classroom and distract our students from their education. New offers from the Dedham School District, provided to the DEA for consideration as most recently as yesterday, in attempts to bridge differences and avert any larger actions, have been rejected outright by the DEA. "We take the concerns of our educators seriously and have worked over the course of the last 21 months of negotiations to offer consideration and negotiated agreement to dozens requests presented by the DEA at the outset of negotiations," notes Superintendent Michael Welch.

This vote to strike comes just weeks before both sides are scheduled to meet with an independent arbitrator for a fact finding session, in attempts to reach a fair and equitable contract.

"As a district, we are saddened that our educators have chosen to consider this drastic and harmful action," said Welch. "We wholeheartedly appreciate and support our wonderful educators. They have shown unwavering enthusiasm and engagement in the classroom, and they have been propelling the incredible advancements we've made in our schools over the last few years, despite this ongoing difficult contract process."

When it comes to finding a resolution that is agreeable to all, the Dedham School Committee would continue to remind our educators, parents and community that as elected officials, we are charged with finding a balance between what our budgets can sustain year over year and what our teachers so rightfully deserve.

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