

NEWARK TEACHERS UNION UPDATE

January 15, 2021

Message From President Abeigon



John M. Abeigon
jabeigon@newarkteachersunion.com

I received the below letter from the Red Cross for our involvement in setting up much needed blood drives throughout the city of Newark. The NTU has always been very active in the community, and during the current COVID-19 situation, we have been bringing donations of masks, face shields, and blankets to churches, community groups, and Newark hospitals.

Dear Blood Program Leader,

Thank you very much for your ongoing dedication to the American Red Cross. Every day, I am deeply moved by the kindness and generosity of spirit you bring to our vital mission. But it's times like these – times of great uncertainty – that I am truly in awe of your unwavering commitment.

As thousands of blood drives around the nation were cancelled due to the impact of COVID-19, please know that your drive protected the health and well-being of the most vulnerable among us – including accident victims, cancer patients, those suffering from chronic illnesses and many others.

From the bottom of my heart, thank you for stepping up to help collect and donate lifesaving blood, even as the circumstances of the coronavirus outbreak often made it difficult to do so.

To express my deepest gratitude for your tremendous service to the Red Cross and to our country, please accept this [Certificate of Outstanding Service](#) and an [honorary badge](#) for your social media profiles.

On behalf of those we serve, thank you once again for your tremendous efforts to strengthen and advance our Red Cross mission during this uniquely challenging time. We look forward to better times ahead, and to our continued partnership to save lives.

Sincerely,

Gail McGovern
President and CEO



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Mid-Year Evaluations



Michael Iovino

miovino@newarkteachersunion.com

We are in the middle of a global Pandemic, and Newark is one of NJ's epicenters. The Superintendent has made it clear that this is the primary focus right now, and admins who "get it" have been working to limit the workload to limit the stress of their staff.

MIDYEAR evaluations only count if you are on a CAP. You do not HAVE to do anything for your midyear except listen to your admin. It's, at best, a checkpoint showing you exactly where you would be on your evaluation should the year end at that moment.

IF you CHOOSE to actively engage in your midyear evaluation, it will give you EXCELLENT feedback as to what you need to do for the second half of the year. HOWEVER, if focusing on that, right now, brings a great deal of stress, then focus on classwork.

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READ THIS PART CAREFULLY: If your administrator is REQUIRING you to do something for your midyear, or you have been written up for not doing something related to a midyear, AND you are not on a CAP (Corrective Action Plan) then you need to inform your REP and/or us immediately at miovino@newarkteachersunion.com, and we will bring it to the attention of Supt. Leon.

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Reducing Strain of Computer Screens

From the American Academy of Ophthalmology—Are Computer Glasses Worth It?

The amount of radiation coming from a computer has never been demonstrated to cause any eye disease. A study reprinted by the National Library of Medicine found no measurable UVA or UVB radiation from computer monitors. UV radiation is the most harmful part of sunlight for eyes and skin. The Radiation Protection Program at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology summarizes current research about computer monitors' radiation by saying that "there are no data to suggest a health risk from exposure to the electromagnetic fields associated with the use of monitors."

Long hours staring at digital screens can cause eye strain, and decreased blinking associated with computer use can cause dry eyes. But these effects are caused by how people use their screens, not by anything coming from the screens.

You can protect your eyes from strain if you work with computers all day:

- Sit about 25 inches (arm's length) from the computer screen. Position the screen so you are gazing slightly downward.
- Reduce screen glare by using a matte screen filter if needed.
- Take regular breaks using the "20-20-20" rule: every 20 minutes, shift your eyes to look at an object at least 20 feet away for at least 20 seconds.
- When your eyes feel dry, use artificial tears to refresh them.
- Adjust your room lighting and try increasing the contrast on your screen to reduce eye strain.
- If you wear contact lenses, give your eyes a break by wearing your glasses.
- Many eye symptoms caused by computer use are only temporary and will lessen after you stop using the computer.

The Academy recommends that everyone get a baseline eye exam by the age of 40. Getting regular comprehensive eye exams from an ophthalmologist is critical to diagnosing any potential eye disease in its early stages.

The Academy also recommends that people over age 65 get an exam every one to two years, even if they have no symptoms of eye problems.

Where can I get a free Second Screen?

Donors Choose has set up a program called "[Two Screens For Teachers](#)" that matches school staff with donors willing to provide them with a second monitor to assist with remote instruction. It's a free program, and a few of our members have already reported success with it.

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NTU Retiree Chapter

Thinking of retiring or maybe you just have questions?



Contact our Retiree Chapter Coordinators Rita Messing and Margaret Calabrese at RETIREES@NEWARKTEACHERSUNION.COM to schedule an appointment or get the answers to questions that you may have concerning your retirement.

Executive Board Meetings

Tuesday, January 26, 2021—3:30 PM

Tuesday, February 23, 2021—3:30 PM

Tuesday, March 23, 2021—3:30 PM

Tuesday, April 20, 2021—3:30 PM

Tuesday, May 25, 2021—3:30 PM

Tuesday, June 22, 2021—3:30 PM

NTU Executive Board

Under the NTU Constitution, Executive Board Meetings are open to the membership, except for when in Executive Session. [Currently, the NTU is doing virtual meetings, so we are asking members who wish to attend the meetings to fill out the attached information, and we will send you a link to the meeting.](#) All requests must be in by close of business on the day before the meeting (for our January 26, 2021 meeting, that means all requests must be in by 5:00 PM on Monday, January 25).

For security reasons, please use your NBOE email, and you must be an NTU member to receive a meeting link.

We will set aside some time at the end of the meeting for members who would like to address the Executive Board.

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SAVE THE DATE

- **Monday, January 18—Dr. Martin Luther King Jr Day (School Closed)**
- **Tuesday, January 26—Newark Board of Education Business Meeting, 6:00 PM**
- **Tuesday, January 26—NTU Executive Board Meeting, 3:30 PM**
- **Wednesday January 27—NTU Building Rep Meeting, 3:30 PM**
- **Thursday, January 28—Newark Board of Education Meeting, 6:00 PM**

Please note that January 15 and January 19 are the work days before or after a holiday. To ensure that you get paid for the holiday weekend, you must take a personal day if you are going to be absent on any of those days.

You can take a sick day on those days as long as it is part of an approved medical leave. Unless it is part of an extended FMLA, you must submit a medical certificate to NBOE Office of Administrative Services within 3 days of your return to work.

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MEMBER SERVICES

NTU Members should never hesitate to communicate with us by phone, email, etc regarding any of the issues we handle at the Newark Teachers Union.

- Planning for Retirement
- Pension & Buy Back Issues
- ER+D Staff Development
- Health and Supplemental Benefits
- AFT Membership Benefits
- FMLA and other leaves of absence
- Assistance with Evaluations and Observations
- Disciplinary Hearings
- Labor Relations & Payroll
- Legal Representation
- Workers Comp
- Tuition Reimbursement



Under the current situation, it is vital to stay informed! If you have changed your address, phone number, or location, please reach out to sscreven@newarkteachersunion.com to let us know. Also, if you don't get our weekly updates, send an email to mmailaro@newarkteachersunion.com to make sure you are on our mailing list.

Don't forget to follow us on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/NewarkTeachersUnion481/>) and Instagram (https://www.instagram.com/newark_teachers_union/?hl=en)

NTU Education Resource Center

Unfortunately, the NTU's Education Resource Center will not be available this school year. There was no way to reopen following CDC Guidelines. We will send out updates if and when the situation changes.

NEWARK TEACHERS UNION

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Chris Canik

Jennifer Ramos

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