

NEWARK TEACHERS UNION UPDATE

January 8, 2021

Reopening Update



John M. Abeigon
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Colleagues,

The following communication was sent to the Superintendent on Wednesday, and it has not been contradicted or corrected by him. In fact, he told us that he intends on providing further clarity to his Executive Staff and Leadership Team.

“Thanks Supt León for making the right decision and sharing it in a timely manner. Although, some of your administrators don’t understand the meaning of “stay the current course.” It means status quo, and that means you’re going to continue doing what you are doing now. If you are a teacher voluntarily teaching from a school you may continue to do that. If you are voluntarily doing in-person counseling or providing other related services to students voluntarily you may continue to do that.”

We understand the frustration when you are getting mixed messages and feel pressured by your administrator to go against the Superintendent’s orders. We continue to work closely with the district to try and limit that in the future. We shall not stop fighting to achieve the ultimate goal—universal, clearly-written directions!

Status quo, people, status quo.

In Solidarity,

John M. Abeigon

President/Director of Organization

Newark Teachers Union Local 481, AFT, AFL-CIO

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Mid-Year Evaluations



Michael Iovino

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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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Reflecting on January 6 Insurrection

From Kelly Booz, Share My Lesson, AFT:

January 6 was a sad day for our country and for our democracy. Shortly out of college, I worked on Capitol Hill roaming the same halls captured in the photos by the domestic terrorists who stormed the Capitol. Later, I taught civics for the Close Up Foundation, bringing middle and high school students from across the country to Capitol Hill weekly to meet with their representatives. During our walking workshops, we would explore the Senate and House office buildings, finding quiet and peaceful hallways to discuss checks and balances, separation of powers, and the rule of law. Twice, I've worked a Close Up presidential inauguration where we could discuss the peaceful transfer of power, even if students didn't agree with the election outcome.

Watching the events unfold on Capitol Hill was devastating, and there is a lot to unpack. From the erosion of the democratic principles we stand for—such as those same constitutional principles that I taught to so many students—to a complete penetration of the pro-Trump mob in the Capitol Building. One can only imagine the response had the mob been black or brown instead of white.

But even before we unpack and reflect on the events of Jan. 6, we need to make sure our students are OK. The AFT Share My Lesson team has been updating our content to help you talk with your students and community with resources on:

- Supporting social and emotional needs of your students;
- Facilitating meaningful discussions; and
- Unpacking and understanding unprecedented historical events.

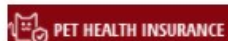
First, my colleague Lisa Thomas put together an excellent blog with [strategies on how to talk to your students](#) about the events on January 6. She helps us think through some useful, constructive ways to help students make sense of and navigate unprecedented historical events in their lifetime.

Second, this [Today's News, Tomorrow's Lesson](#) via PBS NewsHour Extra, provides three ways to discuss the insurrection at the Capitol, including a media literacy response comparing the law enforcement response to Black Lives Matter protests versus the mob at the Capitol.

Third, we are continuing to update our [Foundations of Democracy](#) resources with content from many of our great partners and SML members. We have content to discuss the events from January 6, the Electoral College, the peaceful transition of power, how democracy is supposed to work and how representation of all citizens needs to be a priority.

So where do we go from here? We must use the events of January 6 as a temperature check on the work that must be done. Educators, as we all know and love, are collaborative by nature. We will continue to update Share My Lesson with the latest resources and will depend on you to share your thoughts and resources with us as well. Teachers are essential defenders of democracy and help prepare future generations to be civically active and inclusive.

Membership has it's privileges....



"Union Plus"



Get Your New Pet Protected

Did you add a puppy or kitten to your family during the holidays? While a new pet is incredibly fun and cute, unexpected veterinary bills are not. Be prepared by enrolling in a pet insurance plan.

The Union Plus pet insurance program, provided by Pets Best, reimburses pet parents like you up to 90% on eligible veterinary bills.¹

As a union member you can save up to 10% on a pet insurance plan.²

Get flexible accident, illness, and routine care coverage customized to your pet and your budget. Like the budget friendly Accident Only plan for \$10 or less per month!³

START MY QUOTE

Plus, all Pets Best customers get free access to the 24/7 Pet Helpline staffed by veterinary experts, to answer any pet health or pet behavior concerns.

¹ Select a plan that reimburses 70%, 80%, or 90% of the cost of eligible veterinary treatment. Limited to covered expenses.

² 5% Group Discount plus 5% Weblink Discount applies to BestBenefit plans; available in most states; Weblink Discount applies to first policy term only. Additional 5% discount applied if insuring more than one pet. The 5% multi-pet discount is available in all states on the BestBenefit Accident and Illness Plans only; and in WA state it is available on all plans. Maximum allowable discount is 12%.

³ Accident Only plan is \$7/month for cats and \$10/month for dogs in Washington state.

Pet insurance coverage is offered and administered by Pets Best Insurance Services, LLC and is underwritten by American Pet Insurance Company, a New York insurance company. Please visit www.americanpetinsurance.com to review all available pet health insurance products. Terms and conditions apply. See policy for details.

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Quarantine Days Vs “COVID” Days

On December 31, many provisions of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) expired including the provision related to “requiring certain employers to provide their employees with paid sick leave or expanded family and medical leave for specified reasons related to **COVID-19.**”

BUT, it is important to know OUR CONTRACT HAS A PROVISION ABOUT QUARANTINE DAYS!

ARTICLE X - LEAVES / RETIREMENT

SECTION 4 EXISTING LEAVE POLICY

No deduction of salary of a regular employee shall be made for absence as follows:

C. QUARANTINE

Quarantine as defined by Newark Board of Education’s Health Services Office and the employee’s physician.

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If you are or were under quarantine as per state and CDC guidelines and your doctor’s orders, make sure that your clerk is putting your days in as Quarantine Days. Also make sure your documentation is sent down to the Health Office of the Newark Board of Education.

SAVE THE DATE

- **Wednesday, January 13—Staff Development Day**
- **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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