

# NEWARK TEACHERS UNION UPDATE

## May 14, 2021



**John M. Abeigon**  
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Colleagues,

AFT President Randi Weingarten had a Facebook Live yesterday that focused on “Doing better than the old normal.” It is a great video that all our members should watch.

While many of the things she discussed were progressive, one specific item jumped out at me. She suggested that school districts should be working with the community on finding additional classroom space so we can ensure reduced class space and keep social distancing guidelines in place.

This sounded really familiar. Oh that’s right! NTU had said the exact same thing last July in the Star Ledger, NJ.com, and several other papers:

*We can expand our instructional and childcare square footage if our educational, political, corporate and community leaders sit down and start planning for this now. This will require well thought-out organization. For example: if we place two classrooms in a church basement, will it require additional security? Yes. Background checks and fingerprint processing takes time.*

*Newark has churches in every community. There isn’t a school neighborhood in Newark that doesn’t have at least two houses of worship within walking distance. If each has a basement, we just found additional instructional square footage.*

*In addition, Newark’s Arts & Entertainment facilities, including the Newark Public Library & Museum, NJPAC and Symphony Hall, all have additional space for public use. These areas should be made available, as they are not-for-profits.*

This pandemic gave us a unique opportunity to make some long needed changes to education. Reduced class sized, more focus on emotional, social, and health issues, and much more compassion for students and school staff. School staff should be driving these changes! And the NTU will continue to be at the forefront of these changes!

**In Solidarity,**

**John M. Abeigon**  
**President/Director of Organization**  
**Newark Teachers Union Local 481, AFT, AFL-CIO**

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## IT'S TIME FOR YOUR EVALUATION! SHOULD YOU WRITE A REBUTTAL?

**YES!** In so many cases, staff who receive ratings they disagree with choose NOT to write a rebuttal. This can be because of several reasons. It can be out of fear of an administrator. You are non-tenured and do not want to make waves. You are approaching retirement and do not want to make waves. It's only one observation, you'll pick it up next time, etc etc.

**WRONG.**

This rating is YOURS for your entire career. If it's an annual, it MAY result in a withholding of an increment (one of the worst penalties an educator can take, it impacts your salary for the rest of your career) It may also lead to a tenure charge (two years in a row of Partially Effective or Ineffective ratings can lead to you losing tenure and being fired). It can hurt your chances of transferring.

Without a rebuttal, there is almost no way to defend you from tenure charges. You are a professional, you went to school to do this job, and you should not want someone to mischaracterize your performance in a way you disagree with. **WRITE A REBUTTAL.** Click this link, [REBUTTAL WRITING TIPS](#), for our comprehensive guide to writing a Rebuttal.

Please **READ** and **FOLLOW** all instructions.

**Please make sure you click and complete the 2021 ANNUAL RATINGS SURVEY and let your NTU Building Rep know if you have received a PARTIALLY EFFECTIVE or INEFFECTIVE!**

**UPDATE! If you got your evaluation AFTER filling out the survey initially, please update your answers!**

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## Discretionary Funds

As announced last week, teachers will be getting \$300 in discretionary funds this year. The district was supposed to send out an update in this week's Teacher Talk about the extended deadline, and what these funds can be used from. Several of our members have told us that they did not see Teacher Talk this week, so this is the article.



*Dear Teachers, Nurses, or Academic Interventionist:*

*As per District policy, in order to be reimbursed in the amount of \$300.00 for items that supplemented and affected your work with pupils this school year and COVID-19 related expenses, you will be asked to complete and submit a District Discretionary Fund Certification.*

*All individuals requesting reimbursement will be required to scan and upload a copy of their 2020-2021 discretionary receipts as supporting documentation no later than June 1, 2021. Please see the attached memorandum for further instructions and to access the link.*

[Discretionary Fund Memo](#)

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## Non-Tenure Notice

By May 15, you should receive either a non-reoffering letter or a contract in the mail for the 2021-2022 school year from the Newark Public Schools.

### IF YOU RECEIVE A NON-REOFFERING LETTER:

If you are a non-tenured teacher who received a letter of non-reoffering, you need to reach out to the Newark Teachers Union immediately!

#### 1. *IF YOU HAVE NOT REQUESTED A HEARING ALREADY*

Click this link: [CAUSE/HEARING REQUEST](#) to Request the Causes for non-reoffering and your Donaldson Hearing

- Print the letter and send it in certified/return receipt requested and save your receipt
- You have **TEN DAYS** from receipt/notification of non-reoffering to send this letter (make sure you CC the appropriate people as indicated)

#### 2. *AFTER YOU SUBMIT YOUR CAUSE/HEARING REQUEST*

Click and print this [DONALDSON CHECKLIST](#) and complete it as soon as possible

You will hear from us in the coming weeks for an important meeting that you must attend in preparation for your hearing. You will be required to bring your completed checklist and the materials.

### IF YOU RECEIVED A CONTRACT:

**Fill out your contract and send it back to the district accepting employment for next year!**

### IF YOU HAVE NOT RECEIVED A NON-REOFFERING LETTER OR CONTRACT BY MAY 15:

If you don't receive a non-reoffering or a contract for 2021-2022 school year BY MAY 15, [you should immediately follow the directions on the enclosed form.](#)

Please email [mmaillaro@newarkteachersunion.com](mailto:mmaillaro@newarkteachersunion.com) or call the NTU (973) 643-8430 with any and all questions you may have in regards to the 2021-2022 school year.

# NEWARK TEACHERS UNION UPDATE

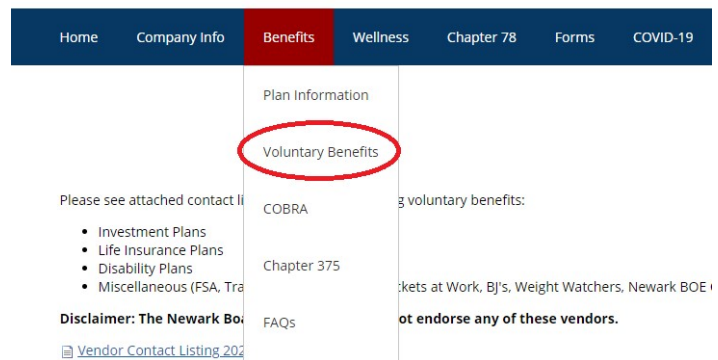
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## NBOE Approved Vendors

On the next few pages, we will be posting a list of vendors that are approved for payroll deductions by the NBOE.

These links are being provided for informational purposes only; they do not constitute an endorsement or an approval by Newark Teachers Union for any of the products, services or opinions of the corporation or organization or individual.

More information can be found in the Employee Self-Service in the NBOE Benefits tab. Go to Employee Benefits Portal, click on Benefits—Voluntary Benefits.



### MISCELLANEOUS

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <b>Benefit Express-Flexible Spending Accounts (health care &amp; dependent care)</b> | <b>Customer Service (877) 837-5017</b> | <b>www.myfsaexpress.com</b>                |
| <b>Legal Shield</b>  | <b>Customer Service (800) 972-9272</b> | <b>Jilletta Riley (908) 821-7678</b>       |
| <b>Tickets At Work (discounts to employees only)</b>                                 | <b>Ticketsatworks.com</b>              | <b>Company Code: NPSE18</b>                |
| <b>Transit Chek—commuter tax free benefits</b>                                       | <b>Customer Service (888) 618-2435</b> | <b>Company Code: RQ044</b>                 |
| <b>BJ's Wholesale Club Northern New Jersey Corporate</b>                             | <b>Don Dzikowski 201-696-0083</b>      | <b>ddzikowski@bjs.com</b>                  |
| <b>Weight Watchers</b>   | <b>Customer Service (866) 204-2885</b> | <b>https://wellness.weightwatchers.com</b> |
| <b>Newark BOE Credit Union-(NBEECU)</b>  | <b>Customer Service (973) 375-9182</b> |  |



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### VOLUNTARY PAYROLL VENDORS INVESTMENT PLANS

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <b>PENSERV 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Administrator</b>  | <b>Customer Service (800) 849-4001</b>   | <b>Fax (803) 791-5925</b>  |
| <b>EQUITABLE</b><br><i>403(b) &amp; 457(b) Annuities</i>                                 | <b>Sean Harvey (732) 452-7233</b><br><b>Marc Lichtman (732) 452-7244</b>                       | <b>Steve Battaglino (201) 681-3399</b><br><b>Jon Yasner (201) 755-8704</b>             |
| <b>Delaware Funds by Macquarie</b><br><i>403(b) &amp; 457(b) Mutual Funds</i>            | <b>Kevin Rodriguez (212) 563-2600 Ext. 205</b><br><b>Fousseni Baba (212) 563-2600 Ext. 335</b> | <b>Juanita Dudhnath (973) 474-0641</b><br><b>Matthew Nocco (212) 563-2600 Ext. 220</b> |
| <b>Lincoln Investment, Planning</b><br><i>403(b) &amp; 457(b) Annuities/Mutual Funds</i> | <b>James Burr (201) 424-2356</b>   | <b>John Natale (856) 596-4830</b><br><b>Michele Grvlin (856) 596-4830</b>              |
| <b>MetLife</b><br><i>403(b) &amp; 457(b) Annuities</i>                                   | <b>James Cunningham (732) 652-1334</b>   |  |
| <b>National Life Group</b><br><i>403(b) &amp; 457(b) Annuities/Mutual Funds</i>          | <b>Dorothy White (862) 252-3526</b>  | <b>Joseph Chasse (646) 932-0378</b>  |
| <b>New York Life</b><br><i>403(b) Only Annuities</i>                                     | <b>Dana Millmore (973) 647-2148</b>  | <b>Evan Hunt (917) 242-1212</b>  |
| <b>Invesco Oppenheimer Funds</b><br><i>403(b) Only Mutual Funds</i>                      | <b>Robert Mascia (201) 240-5995</b>  |  |
| <b>Valic/AIG</b><br><i>403(b) &amp; 457(b) Annuities</i>                                 | <b>Adam Desimone (908) 455-4248</b><br><b>Drea Coladarci (201) 841-6785</b>                    | <b>Lane Jerdal (410) 980-7864</b><br><b>Rick Gofsick (973) 902-8488</b>                |

### LIFE INSURANCE PLANS

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <b>American General (closed)</b>                       | <b>Customer Service (800) 532-3256</b> |  |
| <b>Chubb United</b>                                    | <b>Customer Service (800) 225-4500</b> | <b>Kelvin Tate (908) 688-9080</b><br><b>Robert Shebel (732) 343-3051</b> |
| <b>Colorado Bankers</b><br><i>(formerly Preferred)</i> | <b>Customer Service (800) 367-7814</b> |  |
| <b>New York Life</b>                                   | <b>Customer Service (800) 695-5312</b> | <b>Dan Giusti (609) 412-4165</b><br><b>Mike Valentine (215) 933-8506</b> |
| <b>Occidental</b>                                      | <b>Customer Service (800) 736-7311</b> |  |
| <b>Voya (formerly ING)</b>                             | <b>Customer Service (800) 537-5024</b> | <b>Clesia Thompson (862) 308-9030</b>                                    |

### DISABILITY PLANS

|                      |   |   |
|----------------------|---|---|
| <b>Aflac</b>         | <b>Customer Service (800)366-3436</b>   | <b>George Giamarino (201) 460-8670</b>  |
| <b>Colonial Life</b> | <b>Customer Service (856)983-9600</b><br><b>Taylor Maciow (856) 242-0293</b><br><b>Kyle Binder (856) 240-0499</b><br><b>Melissa Binder (609) 471-6273</b> | <b>Dan Giusti (609) 412-4165</b><br><b>Mike Valentine (215) 933-8506</b><br><b>Morgan Lade (856) 242-0292</b> |
| <b>UNUM</b>          | <b>Customer Service (800) 635-5597</b>  | <b>Kelvin Tate (908)688-9080</b><br><b>Robert Shebel (732) 343-3051</b>                                       |

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## Escrow Update

The district sent over the following information about enrolling and discontinuing your Escrow payments through Employee Self Service. The enrollment period is open until July 15th (September 15th for new hires). Click the image for more information!

### Escrow Enrollment and Discontinuation through ESS (Employee Self Service)

Newark Board of Education (NBOE) employees who are 10-month and 11-month full time employees can now self-enroll, discontinue and switch options in the Escrow Program; commencing with the 2021-22 SY during **Open Enrollment** effective **May through July 15<sup>th</sup>** of each year. The deadline for newly hired employees is September 15<sup>th</sup>. This is available to you by simply logging into ESS (Employee Self Service). We have made the process easy, quick, convenient and simple for you. We ask that you follow the steps below. **Note: You can discontinue from the Escrow Program at any time during the school year.**

The screenshot shows the Oracle Employee Self Service (ESS) dashboard. A callout box on the left contains the instruction: "1. Log into ESS and select the icon labeled NBOE Escrow Update". A blue arrow points from this callout box to the "NBOE Escrow Update" icon in the dashboard grid. The dashboard grid includes various service tiles such as "Benefits Open Enrollment", "Leave Accrual Balances", "Pay", "Direct Deposit", "Compensation History", "W-4 Tax Information", "View W-2/W-2c Forms", "Personal Details", "Kronos", "Careers", "NJ DOE Required Info", "NBOE COVID Test Upload", and "Classic Home".

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**Did you get your vaccine?**

**WEAR YOUR BUTTON!**

In our efforts to both promote the vaccine and instill confidence in our return to in-person instruction (for our visual learners), the NTU has produced buttons for NTU members who have gotten their vaccines! Send an email with your name, address, and proof that you are vaccinated (vaccine card or email confirmation) to [sscreven@newarkteachersunion.com](mailto:sscreven@newarkteachersunion.com), and we will get one out to you!



**SAVE THE DATE**

- Tuesday, May 25—NTU Executive Board Meeting—3:30 PM
- Tuesday, May 25—Newark Board of Ed Business Meeting—6 PM
- Wednesday, May 26—NTU Building Rep Meeting—3:30 PM
- Thursday, May 27—Newark Board of Ed Meeting—6 PM
- Monday, May 31—Memorial Day (School Closed)

Please note that May 28 and June 1 are 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.



# AFT Announcements

## **Register for AFT TEACH 2021**

It's time! Registration is now open for AFT's signature biennial conference--to be held virtually July 6-10. A powerful way to engage leaders and members, this conference features more than 50 plenaries and workshops focused on ensuring students' freedom to thrive. Sessions will address key areas including rebuilding academically from the COVID-19 pandemic, creating anti-racist classrooms, civics throughout the curriculum and more. Don't miss this important union-hosted professional learning event. Learn more and register now at [www.aft.org/teach](http://www.aft.org/teach).



## **Virtual Zumba: An Exercise Party for Your Body, Wednesday, May 19, at 6 p.m. EDT**

Glenda Macal, Zumba and Zumba Plate instructor, and president of the Fort Bend AFT in Texas, returns for an energizing virtual Zumba class—exclusive to the AFT Share My Lesson community. This class is so fun, you'll think you're at a party! You'll have a blast and a guaranteed break from any of the worries weighing you down.



## **Strengthening Mind and Body: Standing Poses and Chair Yoga, Wednesday, May 26, at 6 p.m. EDT**

Join Eleanor Harris, a classroom teacher in the Austin (Texas) Independent School District, and a health and fitness professional, for another motivating virtual yoga session. This session will focus on standing poses and chair yoga. Participants should have space to stand and sit, and either a yoga strap or belt.

## **Resources for Fighting Anti-AAPI Racism**

Here are resources from Share My Lesson to help you celebrate this month with your students, including recognizing the achievements and contributions of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in America, exploring never-more-relevant concepts of anti-racism and multiculturalism, and seeing the AAPI history in our country with fresh and appreciative eyes.

## **How Schools Can Help Kids Heal After a Year of 'Crisis and Uncertainty'**

The pandemic has been stressful for millions of children. If that stress isn't buffered by caring adults, it can have lifelong consequences. Schools can do a lot to keep that from happening.

## **Teaching Profession Playbook**

The Teaching Profession Playbook was produced for the Partnership for the Future of Learning by the Learning Policy Institute and the Public Leadership Institute in collaboration with 26 organizations and several individual experts. This guide provides tools for advancing a stable and diverse teaching profession and ensuring that every student in every school is taught by a fully prepared teacher. It builds on decades of research into effective practices for recruiting, preparing, supporting and retaining teachers; provides examples of local and state-level policies and initiatives; and includes model legislation and other helpful resources.

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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](mailto:sscreven@newarkteachersunion.com) to let us know. Also, if you don't get our weekly updates, send an email to [mmaillaro@newarkteachersunion.com](mailto:mmaillaro@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](https://www.instagram.com/newark_teachers_union/?hl=en))

[If you are not an NTU member, make sure you fill out a membership application on our website!](#)

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## 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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## Executive Board

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Silvia Pereira

Cristina Balboa

Marisa Rodriguez

Chris Canik

Jennifer Ramos

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Ryan Sandor

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Kristyn Faison

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Kathleen Murphy-Butler

Catia Nascimento

