

Update on June 23rd Negotiations Session Between the Haverhill School Committee and the Haverhill Education Association

On June 23rd, the Haverhill School Committee met with representatives from the Haverhill Education Association (HEA) for a scheduled negotiation session. As requested by the union, the Committee came prepared with written responses to all 60 proposals submitted by the HEA. The Committee reiterated its willingness to engage in negotiations on a number of key proposals and emphasized that many of the proposals have significant financial implications that cannot be negotiated in isolation from compensation.

The Committee again referenced its previously submitted wage proposal and expressed concern that many of the union's proposals would require substantial additional funding. To provide context, the Committee presented an analysis of the current funding environment for Haverhill Public Schools. This included:

- An outline of the School Committee's goals for these negotiations;
- A call for common ground and a balanced view of both past commitments and future sustainability;
- A financial overview showing that, based on current projections, **the HEA's proposal would cost \$22 million over the School Committee's proposal** and require either the elimination of approximately 100 teaching positions over the next three years or a Proposition 2½ override resulting in an average real estate tax increase of \$937.00 for the homeowners of Haverhill.

These fiscal challenges are not unique to Haverhill. All Massachusetts school districts face the prospect of tighter state and federal funding for the coming school years. Higher taxes and teacher layoffs are already being seen in neighboring districts that have recently settled contracts. The School Committee seeks to offer teachers stable employment and sustainable salaries to support professional careers in HPS.

While the Committee added clarity to its prior responses and proposals, the union expressed disappointment that the Committee's overall position remained consistent. The HEA did not come prepared to respond to the Committee's full proposal, which had been shared in detail at the previous session (May 13th) and includes language across a wide range of important items that merit further discussion.

Instead, the union chose to focus on topics the Committee maintains are outside the scope of collective bargaining—provisions that would inject the union into management decision-making, increase costs, and impede timely and efficient resolution of problems that would erode management rights and the district's ability to run the school system. The union concluded the meeting early and abruptly. Despite the Committee's effort to propose multiple negotiation dates

throughout the summer, the union declined to commit to any future sessions, and via email, stated that they will not meet again until September after the next school year begins.

The School Committee remains committed to continuing good-faith negotiations and will keep communication open to try and facilitate additional summer dates. It is the Committee's goal to reach a fair and fiscally responsible agreement before the start of the new school year.

Link to Presentation [HPS District Financial Environment](#)