

Monday, March 10, 2025

This evening, the Haverhill School Committee (HSC) initiated discussions with the Haverhill Education Association (HEA) Teachers' group. The collective bargaining agreement for the teachers is scheduled to expire on June 30, 2025.

The session began with the HEA bargaining team requesting to engage in negotiations in open sessions, which they stipulated as their sole request within the framework of the ground rules. The HSC respectfully declined this request. Additionally, the HSC communicated its intention to reserve the right to propose ground rules in future sessions.

At the table, the HSC received the HEA's comprehensive written proposals, which included 60 items for our consideration, along with a condensed PowerPoint presentation. The HSC conveyed their appreciation for comprehensive proposals and the HEA's presentation, noting that it provided a foundation for further discussions.

The HSC's bargaining team proposed to hold meetings weekly and to schedule topics for meetings in advance to reach an agreement before the commencement of the new school year in August. The HEA requested biweekly meetings and declined to agree to topics beyond the next meeting. The School Committee team expressed concern that the process proposed by the HEA would require negotiations to go into the summer after the current contract's expiration; however, the HEA did not share their concern.

The subsequent three sessions are planned at the end of March and April, with the presentation topic designated for March 24th by the HEA. It was the HSC's hope to set agendas for the next three sessions in order to prepare for the discussions and facilitate agreement. The HEA stated that they will share the subsequent agenda item at the next session and not in advance. The HSC is scheduled to present its initial set of proposals at the meeting on March 24th.

The HSC bargaining team is making a successor contract with the HEA a priority and conveyed a willingness to meet more frequently to achieve that goal before the current contract's expiration. The HSC is committed to fostering thoughtful and respectful discussions concerning all proposals in every session while simultaneously championing the interests of the district, students and Haverhill taxpayers.

Session one began at 5:30 p.m. and ended at 7:25 p.m.