



Press Release

January 12, 2021

APEA Taking Steps to Provide In-Person Learning for Specific Groups

On January 11, the APEA Representative Council voted unanimously to explore a limited return to in-person learning. A proposal to that effect was sent to the ARPS School Committee on the same day. The APEA approved two “side letters” to the negotiated MOA, one dealing with Intensive Needs Students and the other with preschool students. The side letters offer the possibility of allowing staff who work with these specific, high-needs populations to volunteer to work with them in-person.

The APEA recognized that COVID numbers are still rising, and some staff and families will not feel comfortable re-entering school buildings. However, the APEA also recognizes that some staff who work with specialized programs like the Intensive Needs and preschool programs wish to return to in-person teaching.

The APEA Representative Council met Monday to review the results of an APEA survey of school staff taken in late December. They reported that based on the information from this survey, they do not have a mandate from their membership to reopen negotiations. However, the APEA membership strongly supports in person learning for intensive needs and preschool at this time and is in majority agreement about the need to take steps to support those students. APEA would like to explore possible next steps to safely meet the needs of other learners for whom remote instruction is not working.

The Executive Board, with approval from the Representative Council, is currently in communications with the School Committee. The two groups met on Thursday, January 7, and plan to meet again in order to work toward creative solutions and improved communication.

At the Representative Council meeting on Monday, APEA also called attention to Governor Baker’s proposed pooled COVID testing for schools, and urged the district to take advantage of the program.

For media inquiries, please contact: apea-exec-board@googlegroups.com

