



## ANDOVER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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### SCHOOL COMMITTEE

*Shannon I. Scully- Chairperson*  
*Susan K. McCready- Vice Chairperson*  
*Lauren M. Conoscenti, Ph.D.*  
*Paul Murphy*  
*Tracey Spruce, Esq.*

Sheldon H. Berman, Ed.D  
Superintendent of Schools

August 31, 2020

### For Immediate Release

At its Monday, August 31<sup>st</sup> meeting, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to authorize the districts' legal counsel to petition the Massachusetts Department of Labor Relations (DLR), as required under [Massachusetts General Laws 150E, section 9A](#). This action is in response to the refusal of approximately 45% of the Andover Education Association membership to report to work in-person, as directed, for the first day of professional development that included in-person training on building wayfinding and safety protocols.

"This was not a decision the School Committee took lightly," says Chairperson Shannon Scully. "We have worked to ensure that our school buildings are safe for our students and staff, and we are well-positioned to enable in-person learning with the district's hybrid learning plan to start the school year. It is our responsibility under Massachusetts law to notify the DLR of the union's action."

Under MGL 150E, section 9A "No public employee or employee organization shall engage in a strike, and no public employee or employee organization shall induce, encourage or condone any strike, work stoppage, slowdown or withholding of services by such public employees." The statute further adds, "Whenever a strike occurs or is about to occur, the employer shall petition the commission [DLR] to make an investigation."

"Today was an important day for our educators to report to work in-person for professional development," adds Sheldon Berman, superintendent of Andover Public Schools. "The district was prepared to train our staff on the safety protocols, cleaning protocols and health mandates developed to maintain a safe environment in all our school buildings. It is a missed opportunity on the part of the AEA to see for themselves the precautions and care we have implemented on their behalf, and on behalf of our students."

The School Committee has, and will continue to meet, its bargaining obligations. Professional development for our educators will continue on Tuesday, September 1<sup>st</sup>.

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**About APS:** The mission of the Andover Public Schools, in partnership with the entire Andover community, is to educate by engaging and inspiring students to develop as self-reliant, responsible citizens who are thinkers, problem solvers, and contributors prepared to participate in an evolving global society.