

SOUTH BURLINGTON EDUCATORS' ASSOCIATION

PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

South Burlington Teachers Reject Imposition

South Burlington Educators' Association members ask board to rescind its decision to impose and return to the bargaining table until a contract settlement is reached.

SOUTH BURLINGTON – The women and men who teach the city's children today voted to reject the employment terms imposed last week and urged the board to rescind its imposition and return to the bargaining table.

"It is unfortunate that the board chose to begin the new school year – literally the first day of the new year – by sowing seeds of disruption, uncertainty and chaos. It is especially unfortunate that they chose this path instead of one of healing that our community so desperately needs," said Noah Everitt, a special education teacher who serves as the association's spokesman.

The board last week became one of only seven in the history of Vermont to impose on its educators more than once. They are joined in that group by their neighboring board in Burlington, which voted to impose on its teachers last week.

"Our vote today should send a strong signal to the board that the women and men who teach the city's children prefer an approach that leads to healing and certainty," Everitt said. "We are calling on the board to rescind its imposed employment terms, and get back to the table until we agree on a settled contract for this school year. We will not begin negotiating for next year until the board agrees to return to the table for this year."

The chief areas of contention are the board's imposed terms on salary and health insurance cost-sharing. The board obliterated the salary schedule, ending 50 years of predictability and stability for teachers and the district. Salary schedules ensure that women are paid the same as men and that teachers with similar education, experience and loyalty to the district are compensated the same. On health insurance, the board went far beyond what even Gov. Phil Scott proposed.

“We urge the board to hear us. We urge the board to rescind the imposition and resume talking to us,” Everitt said. “And we urge the board to take this opportunity to reverse the course of last year and make this year one of healing and renewal for our district. Our students are counting on us to do so.”

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