

Norton Public Schools
Teachers and Paraprofessionals Negotiations
Status of Negotiations
October 17, 2025 (Off Record)

Highlights of District Proposal

- **Salary:**
 - New grid for FY26 which advantages most employees.
 - Identified 26 people who would have one-year expectancy increased by less than 2.5% will still receive on average over 5% when step increases are included.
 - New grid will include requested additional step 13 on M+15
 - After implementation of new salary scale in FY26, increases of 2.5% and 2.75% in FY27 and FY28
 - Proposal no longer requires 183rd day (District still willing to agree that if 183rd day is accepted year 2 salary will increase by 3.05% instead of 2.5%).
- **Stipends:**
 - Agree to 2.5%-2.5%-2.5% increases to activity and coaching stipends during the 3-year agreement.
- **Preps:** District agreed to guarantee 45 minutes consecutive for all teachers.
- **Paid Parental Leave:** District offering 10 paid days without using sick or personal leave.
- **Paraprofessional Family and Medical Leave:** extend additional leave benefits to Paras who do not qualify for statutory FMLA.
- **Parental Leave:** Allow right to extended parental leave beyond 12-weeks and guarantee right to return early under specified circumstances.
- **Class coverage:** increase coverage pay for certain coverage situations.
- **Sick Leave:**
 - Provide 6 advanced days for new employees and provide paraprofessionals with 3 additional days per year.
 - Increase buyback per diem by 25%.
- **Personal Leave:** eliminate restrictions on use of leave.

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NTA Proposals

Assn#	Art.	Proposal/Issue	Status/Response
1 (Set 1)	2-D	Part-time employee benefits	Withdrawn.
2 (Set 1)	4	No Strikes: NTA wants to delete this Article.	Withdrawn.
3a (Set 1) (Set 3)	7-A-1	45 consecutive minutes of prep.	Agreed to District language.
3b (Set 1)	7-A-2	Bell schedule: change “discuss” to “bargain”.	Agreed to District counter language attached.
3c (Set 1)	7-B	Lunch:	Withdrawn
4a (Set 1)	15-new-A	Paid Parental leave “PPL”	District (revised): after one year, 10 days paid parental leave annually with annual budget cap. See language.
4b (Set 1)	15-new-B	Use sick leave in addition PPL to pay the full 12 weeks of FMLA entitlement	District: keep status quo.
4c (Set 1)	15-new-C	FMLA for all paras irrespective eligibility;	Agreed to District counter language below (9/23).
4d (Set 1)	15-D	Delete limitations on sick leave for family illness and parental leave. Eliminate aggregation when both parents employed.	District: keep status quo.
4e (Set 1)	15-G	Extended leave beyond 12 weeks.	Agreed to District language below.
4f (Set 1)	15-G	Adverse circumstances: Right of return	Agreed to District language below.
5a (Set 1)	16-A	Personal leave: eliminate reasons	Agreed.
5b (Set 1)	16-A	Eliminate restriction on use to extend holidays or miss last 10 days of school.	Withdrawn as part of package with 5a and 5c.
5c (Set 1)	16-A	Personal days in half day increments	Mutual withdrawal with D#9a.
6a (Set 2)	5-B	Assignments: increase posting 5 to 14.	Withdrawn.
6b (Set 2)	5-C	Special notification of position on request	Withdrawn.
6c (Set 2)	5-C	Requirement to interview all qualified applicants. (Qualified=Certified)	District: status quo.
6d (Set 2)	6-D	All decisions by seniority and certification.	District: status quo.
6e (Set 2)	6-D	Involuntary transfer, employee may meet with Association representation.	District: status quo.

7a (Set 2)	7-C	Class coverage at per diem minute by minute regardless of whether teacher loses a contractual prep.	Agreed to District counter language 8/25.
7b (Set 2)	7-D	Limit HS teachers to 3 duties per week.	Withdrawn 8/25 and reasserted on 9/23. District rejects.
7c (Set 2)	7-E	Extra help: change "after school" to "outside contractual day".	Agreed.
7d (Set 2)	7-new-H	Fill positions to meet class size	Withdrawn 8/25 and reasserted on 9/23. District rejects.
7d (5)	7-new H.5	HS teacher course limitation	NTA: w/d H.5
7e (Set 2)	7-new-I	Caseload workload reviews, reports and required meetings to review and adjust caseloads throughout the year.	Agreed to District counter language below (9/23).
8 (Set 2)	9-A-2	Weingarten representative	Agreed: substitute the word "assisted" for "accompanied."
9 (Set 2)	10-C	Alter grievance definition to unlink it from contract and include practices.	District: status quo.
10 (Set 2)	12-C	Work year: reserve 4 hours of a PD day for unassigned time to set up.	District: status quo.
11 (Set 2)	14-B	Increase paras by 3 days. Give everyone upfront sick leave.	Agreed: Increase paras to 15 days, and during first year advance 6 days, and 1 per month thereafter. Any used unearned days would be recouped from final pay if they leave. <u>Language below</u> .
12a (Set 2)	24-A	Safe environment committee around employee injury from violence, incorporate state regs, create new forms and tracking, etc.	Agreed to NTA counter adding "or more" on 8/25. See agreed language below.
12b (Set 2)	24-new	Packing:	Withdrawn 8/25 and reasserted on 9/23. District rejects.
13a (Set 3)	App A	Teacher salary: FY26, \$8K + 2% stipends; FY27 8% (salary and stipends); FY28 8% (salary and stipends).	Dist: FY26: New scale with addition of M-15 step 13. FY27: 2.5% (or 3.05% with 183d day). FY28: 2.75%. Applies to salary only.
13b (Set 3)	App B	Para wages: drop 1 st 2 steps; FY26, \$3/hr; FY27, 8%; FY28, 8%	District: 2.5%-2.75%-2.75%; NTA (9/23): 3.25%-4.5%-3%/1% split (day 91).
14 (Set 3)	12-C-2	Add SLPs to provision that allows assignment of additional days.	Agreed.
15a (Set 3)	13-F	Teacher longevity	District: +\$100 per level. Effective year 1, not affected by COLA. Language below.
15b (Set 3)	13-G	Paraprofessional longevity	District: +\$100 per level. Effective year 1, not affected by COLA. Language below.
16 (Set 3)	14-G	Sick buyback: change from \$80 to current sub rate.	Agreed: increase to \$100.
17 (Set 3)	19-D	Long term subbing by para	Agreed to B-1 or daily rate based on hourly plus \$110, per below.
18 (Set 3)	App C	Stipends	NTA 9/23: 2.5-2.5-2.5. District agrees as part of OTR economics.
19		Reserved proposal on "Health Care"	Withdrawn
20		Norton University. Codify or renew the terms of the MOU on this subject.	5/1/25 Agreed to counter language below.

District Proposals

Dist#	Art.	Proposal/Issue	Status/Response
1	5-B	Coach notify Sept 1 to Oct 1	Agreed
2	7-C	Class coverage 1/7 to \$50	Withdrawn per package agreement.
3	7-G	Academic coordinators	Agreed to District language.
4	9-C	Para non-renewal to match teachers at 3 years.	District will withdraw this proposal if proposal 5 (RIF clarification) is accepted. NTA rejects (9/23)
5	11-E	RIF clarifications on teaching under license and best interest of students.	NTA rejects (5/1). District maintaining proposal. See 4 above. NTA rejects (9/23) .
6	11-H and J	RIF Recall from 18 to 12 months	Agreed to 15 months.
7	12-C	Work year +1=183 days	This is part of the District's Salary proposal for Teachers. See Assn #13a.
8a	13-B, 5-B	Clubs and activities	Agreed; see below for language.
8b	App C	Stipends: changes to schedule	District: see revised stipend schedule (5/22).
9a	14-D	Sick leave: eliminate ½ day use.	Withdrawn per U#5c.
9b	14-F	Change incentive day to \$ bonus	Agreed to District language.
10	25	Job share: See revised language provided.	Agreed: revised language provided below. Agreement reiterated on 8/25.
11	Various	Housekeeping: upon integration correct mutually identified errors.	General provision would be subject to implementation upon integration and would require agreement of the parties.
11a	21, 24-E	Delete Art 21 as duplicative with 24-E	District maintains this proposal. The intent is not to alter the language that remains.
11b	9, 20	Add reference in Art 9 to probation language in Art 20 for clarity.	Agreed to District language below (9/23)
12 new	18-new F	Reimbursement for specialized training if employee leaves within 3 years.	Withdrawn by District on 5/1.

The School District reserves the right to modify or supplement its proposals and counterproposals at any time. All issue-specific tentative agreements are subject to final agreement on the entire contract. All School District proposals are intended to be prospective from the time of ratification of agreement by the parties. No proposal is a concession by the District of any existing limitation on its rights under the collective bargaining agreement or otherwise concerning the subject matter covered by the proposal.

Language Supplement

Union #3a – 45-minute consecutive prep period.

Revise Article 7, Section A, paragraph 1 to read:

1. The class schedule shall be determined in each building by the principal. All teachers have a total of at least 225 minutes of preparatory time each week. The District shall provide all teachers with at least 45 consecutive minutes for their prep period for all contractually guaranteed prep time (225 minutes per week).

Union #3b – Bell Schedule Consultation

Revise Article 7, Section A, paragraph 2 to read:

2. If the District plans to significantly alter the bell schedule in any building, it will do so in consultation with building educators on a committee of no fewer than 3 building educators chosen by the NTA with notice to the Association no later than March 15 of the school year prior to the school year in which the change is to take effect. The parties will meet, identify and discuss the impact of the new schedule.

Union 4a – Paid Parental Leave

Revise Article 15 by adding a new Section K to read:

K. Employer Paid Parental Leave Benefit.

1. The District will pay employees who have completed one full year of service for 10 school days of paid leave applied toward an approved FMLA parental leave (only for childbirth, adoption, or bonding).
2. The employer paid parental leave will be applied before other paid or unpaid leave and must be taken consecutively beginning immediately after the birth/placement of the child.
3. Employer paid leave will not be deducted from sick or other benefit time, and it does not extend the statutory allowance for leave (e.g., 12 weeks for FMLA).
4. Employer paid leave will be capped at a District wide cost of \$65,000 per fiscal year. In order to avoid exceeding the cap employees will initially be paid 65% of regular salary for the 10 days of leave (less lawful and customary deductions). At the end of the year, if funds remain under the cost cap, employees will receive those funds pro rata up to 100% of gross pay (less lawful and customary deductions).
5. If both parents are employed by the District, both are individually eligible for this employer paid benefit, however this will not affect the overall application of leave time which will be shared as described in the preceding section E.

Union #4c – Leave for Paraprofessionals not Eligible for FMLA leave.

Add New Section L to Article 15

L. Leave benefit for Paraprofessionals who do not qualify for FMLA Leave.

1. Paraprofessionals who are full-time, or regularly scheduled to work at least 0.8 FTE, and who have worked for the District at least 900 hours in the last 12 months, can qualify for up to 12 weeks of unpaid job protected leave as described in this section. This does not result in eligibility for Federal FMLA leave, and the leave under this section does not confer benefits beyond those specifically set forth in this section.
2. This leave may be taken for illness, family illness or parental leave, and will run concurrently with all other types of leave that may apply. Sick leave will be available only for the employee's own illness unless otherwise provided in the Agreement. The terms "serious health condition," "family member," and "parental leave" will be interpreted in accordance with FMLA regulations.
3. The 12 weeks will be measured on a 12-month rolling eligibility look-back basis. Intermittent leave will be available only subject to District approval. Health insurance at the employee rate will be available during the 12 weeks of leave provided that if the employee is on unpaid leave, and premiums are not paid timely, health insurance may lapse.
4. Eligibility for leave will be based on the documentation reasonably required by the District. For medical leaves, certification from a physician or similarly qualified provider will be required. The District reserves the right to require a second opinion from a provider of its own choosing at District expense. If the employee's and District's physicians disagree, the District retains the discretion to decide whether leave is granted.
5. Upon return to work, the employee will be reemployed as a paraprofessional, unless the employee's position was or would have been subject to a reduction in force during the leave. If the employee is

reemployed, no specific assignment is guaranteed. If the employee remains on leave for more than 12 weeks, reemployment is not guaranteed.

Union #4e and 4f – Child Rearing Leave

Revise Article 15, Section G to read:

G. Child Rearing Leave. ~~With the approval of the Superintendent~~ An employee may take an unpaid child rearing leave to extend beyond FMLA or MMLA leave. The employee must apply in writing at least 30 days before the start of the extended leave (including paid or unpaid leave). The leave may not exceed the balance of the year in which the original leave (including FMLA or MMLA) commences. ~~With the approval of the Superintendent, the leave may extend beyond the end of the current year up to one additional full academic year. If an employee applies for a leave that extends beyond the balance of the current year, the return date is subject to agreement between the employee and the Superintendent (or designee). During any such leave, if adverse circumstances frustrate the purpose of the leave, the employee may terminate the leave early, with the precise return date and assignment subject to agreement between the employee and the Superintendent.~~

Union #7a – Class Coverage

Revise Article 7, Section C as follows:

[1. is the current language.]

2. Secondary staff (6-12) assigned to instruct an additional course, who lose a preparation period, will be compensated with 1.25 x 1/7 of their daily rate of pay while teaching the course. If the course is one that the teacher is not currently teaching, the teacher will also receive a one-time \$500 stipend. This does not apply to those who are teaching multiple sections concurrently.
3. If a K-8 teacher is required to provide full day classroom substitute coverage, such coverages cannot exceed 5 times in a 4-week cycle. The first three coverages will be done with no additional compensation. The fourth, and fifth, coverages will be compensated at 1/7th of their daily rate for each day that they are utilized as a substitute. Coverage excludes the following: state mandated testing, field trips and other school-wide events.

Union #7e – Caseload Review

Revise Article 7 to add a new Section H

H. Caseload Educator Workload. If a caseload educator has concerns regarding their caseload, they may request a meeting with the District regarding their caseload and notify the Association. The staff member and union representative will be able to meet with the employee's immediate supervisor. If the matter is not resolved, a meeting will be arranged with the Director of Student Services.

Union #11 – Sick Leave Accrual

Revise Article 14, Section B, effective start of school year following ratification by all parties.

B. Each Employee who has completed one school year of employment by the District shall be entitled to earn sick leave as of the first day of his/her work year. All employees earn 15 days per year. An Employee who has not completed one school year of employment will earn sick leave pro rata throughout the year. However, a first-year employee will have available for use 6 sick days on the first day of school with one day of sick leave added monthly. If an employee leaves employment having used more sick leave than accrued, the overage may be recouped in the final paycheck. Unused sick leave shall accumulate and be available for use in succeeding school years, except that no Employee shall be permitted to carry over for use in any succeeding work year an amount in excess of one hundred sixty-five (165) days. (Except that an employee who remains eligible for a payment under Section G or H may accumulate, in the work year of his/her retirement, up to one hundred eighty (180) days of sick leave solely for the purpose of that payment).

Union #12a – Safe Work Environment:

a. Revise Article 24, Section A as follows:

A. Safe Work Environment.

1. The District and the Association will cooperate to ensure that all employees have access to a safe working environment. Violence and threats of violence against educators are not tolerated and the parties shall take steps to ensure that such matters are reported and acted upon appropriately. The District and the Association agree to meet during the term of this agreement as needed to discuss specific ways of advancing these goals through policy changes, education, and other measures. Two or more NTA appointed representatives will be allowed to sit on the Norton Schools Safety Committee. In case of a serious incident of violence the Safety Committee will consult within 2 workdays to schedule a meeting date.
2. Employees will immediately report cases of assault in connection with employment to the District. The District and the employee will cooperate with any internal or external investigation of assaults subject to compliance with applicable law. [current language of Article 24-A]
3. During the 2025-26 school year, the Safety Committee will meet at least quarterly, and after that as needed. The Safety Committee will begin by reviewing the checklist from the Massachusetts Department of Labor Standards entitled "Worksheet to Prevent Employee Injury from Student Behavior at K-12 Schools."

**Union #15a and #15b – Longevity:
Revise Article 13, Sections F and G to read:**

F. Teachers with the requisite amount of continuous active service to the District will receive a longevity payment annually which shall be paid in the second payroll of September as set forth below.

Completed Years of Service	Annual Longevity Compensation
10	975-1075
15	1400 1500
20	1550 1650
25	1700 1800
30	2800 2900

G. Paraprofessionals with the requisite amount of continuous active service to the District will receive a longevity payment annually which shall be paid in the second payroll of September as set forth below.

Completed Years of Service	Annual Longevity Compensation
10	900 1000
15	1000 1100
20	1550 1650
25	1700 1800

Union #17 – Long Term Sub by Para Modify Article 19,

Section D to read:

D. When a paraprofessional is assigned as a Long-Term Substitute (performing all duties of the classroom teacher for three weeks or more), beginning after three weeks the District will compensate the paraprofessional at the greater of Bachelor Step 1 on the Teacher pay scale, or a daily rate based on their hourly rate for the day plus \$110 per day, for the remainder of the assignment. The paraprofessional will remain a member of the paraprofessional unit unless appointed into the teachers unit by the District. All leave and other benefits shall be provided at paraprofessional rates. The decision to assign a paraprofessional as a long-term substitute and the decision to remove a paraprofessional from such an assignment shall be at the discretion of the District.

**Union #20 Norton University
Revise Article 18, Section E as follows:**

E. Norton U – In District Credits. The purpose of Norton U is to provide all staff members with the opportunity to earn credits towards advancement on the salary scale while participating in high quality professional learning at the district level. The following criteria apply to Norton U credits.

1. A maximum of nine in-district credits may be applied towards a lane change.
2. The request for district credits for professional learning must meet the following:
 - Norton Public Schools Strategic Plan Goals
 - School Improvement Plans
 - An activity supportive of Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks
 - Is research-based
 - Is not an event subject to any compensation, stipend, or contractual obligations
 - May not be used in conjunction with graduate credits awarded by another educational institution
 - Is initiated after approval by the Superintendent/NTA President
3. All course offerings require pre-approval by the Professional Learning Committee. A course is typically conducted over the length of a semester or school year. Courses require outside preparation and an original product which will be assessed by the course instructor. 1 district credit = 15 contact hours and 5 to 10 hours of outside work. There is a maximum of 3 district credits per course for participants. Credit for instructors will vary and will be subject to the Superintendent's approval.
4. Compensation for Course Instructors:
 - i. The instructor shall be given the option of receiving either Norton U. credits or pay if funds are available.
 - ii. Credits, up to a maximum of 3, are earned based on 8-10 hours of work per credit to include class time and preparation time.
 - iii. If pay is approved, the tutoring rate shall be paid for reasonable hours worked up to a maximum of 30 hours.
 - iv. All hours worked must be recorded in a log and submitted to the District.

District #3 – Teacher Leadership Positions

Revise Article 7, Section G to read:

G. Teacher Leadership Positions

1. Academic Coordinators

Academic Coordinators assigned by the District will teach four (4) classes at the high school and will have a work year of 185 days. Academic Coordinators will not have assigned "duties" except in an emergency. Every effort will be made to avoid having the Academic Coordinator serve as a substitute teacher. Academic Coordinators will be paid a stipend in accordance with the attached schedule.

2. Team Leaders and Curriculum Coordinators

Team Leaders and Curriculum Coordinators assigned by the District will work the same work year as other teachers and will be paid a stipend for additional time, duties and responsibilities. The stipends for teacher leadership positions will be set forth in the stipend schedule.

District #8 (Clubs and Activities)

a. Revise Article 13, Section B as follows:

B. Stipends for Additional Duties.

1. Stipends paid for additional duties are set forth in Appendix C. Stipends for full-year activities will be paid as follows: 50% of the stipend will be paid half-way through the period during which the work is performed; and 50% will be paid at the end of the activity. Stipends may be pro-rated if the job is not completed or to reflect time in the role. Class advisors and advisors of other student activities shall be paid on the next scheduled payday following December 1 and May 31. Coaches will be paid in two payments on the next regularly scheduled payday following halfway through and at the end of each regular season, if all coaching duties and responsibilities are completed to the satisfaction of the District (e.g. turn-in of all school owned uniforms and equipment). Stipend assignments shall be made annually by the District based upon an application process as determined by the Superintendent. All positions that the District intends to fill will be posted. The District shall have discretion to determine whether to fill any stipend position and shall have discretion over the selection and management of individuals filling those positions.

2. Middle and High School Clubs. The District may establish and modify club offerings and stipends based upon student interest, feasibility, and alignment with school priorities. Stipends will be set by the District based upon the number of sessions per club, along with other advisor workload requirements attendant to the activity, and the available budget.

3. Club Advisory Committee (“CAC”). A committee made up of interested teachers and students at the High School and at the Middle School will review current club offerings and requests for new clubs and will make recommendations to the school principal regarding how club funds should be allocated.

4. The school principal will notify the staff of the number of available half year club opportunities (“Flex Clubs”) by October 15. Staff members will have until October 31 to submit proposals for Flex Clubs to the CAC, which will make recommendations to the Principal. Thereafter, the Principal will make final determinations and fill Flex Club assignments as soon as practicable.

b. Revise Article 5, Section B as follows:

B. All vacancies that the District intends to fill shall be posted via school email and may also be posted publicly by other means to include the internet. Postings will indicate: the person to whom applications should be forwarded; the closing date (at least 5 days after the posting date); the qualifications, duties and rate of compensation for the position. Applicants will be notified when the position is filled. A vacancy that occurs on or after August 25th and before the following June 1st may be filled on a temporary basis without regard to the requirements of this Article, provided that the position will be posted after June 1 if the District intends to fill it for the following year. Except for activities governed by Article 13, Section B, supplementary compensation positions will be posted with an application deadline of May 15, Applicants will be notified of the status of their applications by June 20, except applicants for Spring coaching positions will be notified by September 1. The District reserves the right to decline to fill any position. If the qualifications, duties or pay rate for a position change materially between the time a position is posted and when it is filled, the District will post an amended posting and extend the closing period if needed to ensure that at least 5 days remain before the closing date.

District #9b – Sick Leave Bonus

Revise Article 14, Section F to read:

Employees shall be paid a bonus based on use/non-use of sick leave (rounded up to the nearest day) during the work year as follows: 0 sick days used, \$750; 1 sick day used, \$500; 2 sick days used, \$250. The bonus will be paid in the last payroll of the year or by the end of July .

District #10 (Job Sharing)

Revise Article 25 as follows:

ARTICLE 25 JOB SHARING

1. Job Sharing means two teachers sharing one full-time teaching position on terms determined by the District and by the participating teachers as a condition of continuing the job-sharing arrangement.
2. All job-sharing arrangements shall be on a voluntary basis for the teachers involved and are subject to the District’s discretion regarding whether the establishment or continuation of the job-sharing arrangement benefits the students. A job-sharing assignment must be requested by April 1 of the year preceding the start or continuation of the job-sharing arrangement. Inability to find a job-sharing partner by July 1, or loss of a job-sharing partner, will result in the position reverting to full-time.
3. The school principal, in consultation with the job-sharing participants, will develop a schedule setting forth how the duties will be split and what activities are mandatory for each participant (or both participants) based on relative FTE. The schedule should address attendance at school events such as parent conferences and open house, as well as attendance at meetings such as IEP meetings.

4. The principal in consultation with the participating teachers will determine how absences will be covered and how coverage will be compensated. If one of the job-sharing teachers covers a day for the absent teacher, the regular day substitute rate will be paid. With the Principal's prior approval, the teachers may also trade days.
5. In all situations where one job-sharing teacher is working with a substitute, daily or long term, the teacher will be responsible for all lesson plans.
6. Leave Benefits will be prorated.
7. If either partner is unable or unwilling to complete the school year, the remaining partner agrees to assume full-time responsibility for the position for the remainder of the year.
8. If the job-sharing program is discontinued, the job-sharing teachers shall return to open positions for which they are qualified on the basis of current contract language. An open position is one that is not held by any teacher with or without professional teacher status and otherwise would be posted as a vacancy.

District #11 – Housekeeping Upon Integration

- a. **Delete redundant dues language in Article 21.**
- b. **Reference Article 20 (Probationary Period) in Article 9 (Discipline).**

Revise Article 9, Section to read:

D. Probationary Employees

The discipline of probationary employees (see Article 20) shall be committed to the sole discretion of the District.