PRESS RELEASE

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AFT Amesbury

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**AFT Amesbury Executive Board Votes to Endorse State Union Coalition Plan for School Reopening**

*Ensuring student and staff safety should be a top priority*

AMESBURY, MASSACHUSETTS – JULY 24, 2020 – The local teachers’ union executive board in Amesbury has unanimously voted to endorse a statewide MTA/AFT/BTU proposal that calls for enhanced safety measures for school reopening. With growing safety concerns on the rise in the absence of a comprehensive plan from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, AFT Amesbury believes a phased in approach starting with remote learning is best.

A coalition of education labor organizations comprised of the Massachusetts Teachers Association, the American Federation of Teachers Massachusetts, and the Boston Teachers Union submitted a reopening proposal to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. The plan calls for a phased in reopening plan based on infection data, best practices for safety protocols including at least six foot social distancing measures, modifications to the school calendar to allow for professional development and planning time, and alternative staff and student assignments to ensure safety for all are among the proposals.

“With only weeks to go before our schools will be reopening,” AFT Amesbury President Cindy Yetman said, “it is imperative that local educational and elected leaders focus on doing what is best for Amesbury. A phased in approach would allow educators to finally be able to plan for the fall while simultaneously reducing unprecedented amounts of anxiety from students, parents, and staff.”

The teachers’ union in Amesbury urges local and state officials to take a nuanced approach to school reopening focusing on the health and well-being of our educators, students, their families, and our community.

Cynthia Yetman

President AFT Amesbury Local #1033/Vice-President AFT Massachusetts

MTA/AFT/BTU proposal: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/10uGececP0DsUfO9sOWxxksRTaeUxPy8p/view>