

To the City Council:

The School Committee of Newburyport respectfully requests that you pass the full, nine month budget that was approved by the School Committee at our August 3rd meeting. That budget was the culmination of an effort, that began last fall, and engaged School Councils, staff, district leadership team and the School Committee.

A full budget for the balance of the school year will allow the District to focus on the work of safely reopening schools and bringing students back.

While many other districts are laying off staff, this budget funds several initiatives from our strategic plan- expanded world language at the Middle School, and later start times. Aside from extraordinary expenses due to the pandemic that are covered by additional grants from the state and the federal government, it will cover all ranges of options the district faces, from full remote, to full in person.

The possibility of the City Council failing to pass a budget for the remaining nine months of the year has immediate implications.

Failure to pass this full budget shuts school down on October 1, creating a cascade of issues, ranging from our inability to meet our legal obligations to serve children with special needs to the loss of state and federal support for the balance of the school year- shifting those costs directly to the City when school re-opens.

It will result in immediate layoffs.

We have done our due diligence in planning for the pandemic, and creating a budget to continue to move our schools back to in-person instruction.

We urge you to support the full school budget before you.

The Newburyport School Committee

Mayor Donna Holaday
Bruce Menin, Vice Chair
David Hochheiser
Sheila Reardon Spaulding
Brian Callahan
Steven Cole

Please note: School Committee member Sean Reardon has declined to support this letter