



For Immediate Release
March 16, 2020

NEARI Statement of Action During the Coronavirus COVID-19 Crisis

The National Education Association Rhode Island (NEARI) recommends the following items in an effort to ensure the health and safety of our students, our members and our communities:

1. NEARI recommends that all public employees and private higher education faculty and staff continue to be paid their regular salary and benefits during the crisis.
2. NEARI recommends that all teachers and education support professionals NOT be required to enter any school buildings while they remain closed to students.
3. NEARI recommends that all custodial staff receive and use proper safety gear while cleaning.
4. NEARI recommends that all mandatory standardized testing be suspended for the remainder of the school year.
5. NEARI recommends that all K-12 teacher evaluations be suspended for the remainder of the school year.
6. NEARI recommends that all professional development requirements be suspended for the remainder of the school year.
7. NEARI recommends that all teacher certifications scheduled to expire in 2020 be extended until 2021.
8. NEARI recommends that all higher education faculty evaluations be suspended for the remainder of the spring semester.
9. NEARI recommends that all local presidents and employer representatives maintain regular communication during the crisis to keep lines of communication open.
10. NEARI recommends that with the suspension of April vacation, employers work with NEARI local presidents to find a time before the end of the school year where teachers can access time for a break from work with their families.
11. NEARI recommends that any educator(s) working with students covered under an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan be held harmless for any provisions of IEP/504 plans that cannot be met as a result of the ongoing school closure and for any period of remote learning.
12. NEARI recommends all employers who are party to an existing and/or expired collective bargaining agreement with a NEARI local union engage in effects bargaining on any change or proposed change in working conditions as a result of the school closure and/or remote learning initiatives. The timing of such effects bargaining should be consistent with preserving the health and safety of all participants.