

**Proposed Amendments to the MTA Resolutions
Recommended by the Resolutions Committee
on Feb. 7, 2023**

Resolutions Committee Members:

Matthew Bach, Andover, Chair

Carissa Becker, Lexington

Thomas Estabrook, UMass Lowell Grant and Contract Fund Employees

Amy Morin, Lexington

Staff

Mary MacDonald, Staff Consultant

Laura Mullen, Staff Assistant

2023 Proposed Amendments to Resolutions

MTA Resolutions are the association's statements of principle on issues relating to members, public education, the welfare of students and human and civil rights.

Resolutions may be submitted by any member to the Resolutions Committee by the second Friday in January. The committee may also propose resolutions.

All resolutions submitted are considered by the committee, and those approved by a majority vote of the committee are recommended to the Annual Meeting delegates, after having been presented to the Board of Directors. To become an official position of the MTA, a resolution must be adopted by the Delegates at the Annual Meeting. As a result of a change to the MTA Standing Rules that was approved in 2021, proposed resolutions may no longer be submitted for the first time at the Annual Meeting of Delegates.

The proposed revisions below were recommended by the Resolutions Committee. The Board voted on Saturday, March 18 to recommend passage by the delegates.

A section of the current resolution that has a line through it is proposed for elimination; a section that is underlined is a proposed addition.

Proposed Revised Resolution C-6

HEALTHY AND SAFE SCHOOLS

The Massachusetts Teachers Association believes that staff and students deserve to be in a healthy and safe learning environment. The MTA believes that measures should be taken to guarantee that physical conditions of buildings are maintained so as to conform to the highest possible standards for health and safety, in full compliance with all building codes and safety regulations of the state.

The MTA urges that school committees and boards of trustees must improve school mechanical ventilation systems to assure that school spaces' air quality is sufficient to diminish as much as possible the risk of airborne infections from indoor pathogen from any source (viral, bacterial and molds), and bring them in line with best practices and current scientific recommendations. As of 2023~~2~~, this would require mechanical ventilation systems (Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning, HVAC), which must be mechanically driven from Air Handling Units (AHU) that provide a supply of clean outside air. At least five Air Changes per Hour (5 ACH) must be achieved in each school space. The outside air could be complemented by recycled air filtered through at least MERV 13 rated filters to achieve the minimum 5 ACH. Appropriate exhaust flows out of each school space must be balanced with the supply air into the rooms. Portable HEPA Ventilation units could also be provided to complement and maximize air cleansing.

The MTA recommends that contract bargaining language require formation of Health and Safety Committees composed of school personnel, parents, and school committee members and that they have regularly scheduled meetings designated to improve the health and safety of the school environment.

The MTA further urges that school committees provide for safe usage, proper storage and transfer and disposal of all toxic and/or hazardous substances used in school buildings and on school grounds.

The MTA strongly supports the enforcement of the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) on behalf of all employees in the public sector.

The MTA believes that all educational facilities must be safe from all environmental and chemical hazards, including lead from water pipe systems within schools, inadequate ventilation and climate control, particulate pollution, mold and sick-building syndrome.

The MTA urges that dangerous asbestos be removed immediately from the schools and that the Commonwealth provide funds for its removal and other related expenses.

The MTA also strongly supports the state's school immunization requirements. These requirements exist to protect students, staff and members of the wider community from serious diseases that can be prevented by vaccines. (75, 77, 79, 82, 84, 85, 88, 01, 03, 07, 19, 23)

Proposed Revised Resolution C-7

SCHOOL FACILITIES: DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION AND FUNCTION

The Massachusetts Teachers Association believes that school facilities must be conducive to teaching and learning. The physical environment must allow for a variety of needs, including the number of students, physical characteristics of students, changes in teaching methods, presentation of instruction, and an increased use of school facilities. The MTA also believes that all school facilities must be well constructed, safe, energy-efficient, aesthetically pleasing, accessible, functional and adaptable to persons with disabilities.

The MTA supports ecologically conservative facility designs including heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems.

The MTA believes that the community, parents/guardians and education employees should play an advisory role in designing these facilities.

The MTA also believes that stable and sufficient funding must be provided for the design, construction, maintenance and operation of the school facility.

The MTA believes that one of the most effective means to prevent the risk of airborne infections to students and educators (viral, bacterial and molds) is a well-designed mechanical ventilation system that is in line with best practices and current scientific recommendations. As of 2023, this would require a system that provides for at least 5 Air Changes per Hour (5 ACH) based on outside clean air. Well-tempered outdoor supply air should be designed-in for every school indoor space. Temperature and relative humidity extremes should be avoided – by design – in new schools while conforming with at least 5 ACH ventilation rates as a design criterion as described in MTA Resolution C-6 Healthy and Safe Schools.

These principles should apply equally to preK-12 schools and buildings used by public higher education institutions. (11, 23)