

August 31, 2026

Dear Tumwater School District Staff and Families,

I am writing to provide an important update regarding negotiations with the Tumwater Association of Paraprofessionals (TAP) and the potential impact on the start of the school year.

Our bargaining teams worked throughout the weekend and will continue meeting as we work toward an agreement. While we have not yet reached a tentative agreement, I remain hopeful that we can do so before the scheduled start of school.

TAP has announced its intent to begin a strike at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, September 1, if an agreement is not reached. Because paraprofessionals serve critical roles throughout our schools, a strike would significantly impact our ability to open schools and provide the safe and appropriate learning environment our students need.

For that reason, I want families to be aware that the scheduled start of school on Wednesday, September 2, could be impacted if an agreement is not reached. This includes the start of classes for our middle and high school students and Strong Start conferences scheduled for elementary students Wednesday through Friday.

No decision to delay the start of school has been made at this time. Our focus remains on bargaining, and our teams will continue working toward an agreement.

At the same time, we recognize that families and staff need adequate notice to make plans. We have established **3:00 p.m. Tuesday** as the point by which we will make a decision regarding school on Wednesday and **communicate that shortly thereafter**. If an agreement is reached before then, we will communicate that as quickly as possible.

Open houses and orientations scheduled for Tuesday will continue as planned unless families hear otherwise from their school.

I want to reiterate that our paraprofessionals are an essential part of our schools, and we deeply value the work they do each day in support of students and staff. The district remains committed to reaching a fair and sustainable agreement that recognizes their important contributions while supporting the long-term financial stability of the district.

I recognize that even the possibility of a disruption to the start of school creates uncertainty for families, particularly around work schedules, childcare, transportation and other responsibilities. I wanted to provide this information now so that families are not surprised should we need to make a difficult announcement tomorrow.

We are continuing to work toward the outcome we all want: an agreement that allows us to welcome our students back as scheduled on Wednesday morning. Thank you for your patience and understanding. We will keep you informed as negotiations continue.

Sincerely,

Kevin Bogatin, Superintendent
Tumwater School District