



181<sup>ST</sup>

ANNUAL MEETING OF DELEGATES

MAY 8-9

Hynes Convention Center - Boston, MA

NBI 17

2026 FORM FOR NEW BUSINESS ITEMS

NBI Name	Date and Time
Contract Language for Academic Freedom in K-12 Settings	4/11/2026 15:35

Delegate Making the Motion Sheila Hanley	Cell 781 801 0487	Email sheilahanley4@gmail.com	Association Represented or Retired Retired
Delegate Seconding the Motion Nancy Stenberg	Cell 413-575-7886	Email nstenberg06@gmail.com	Association Represented or Retired Springfield Education Association

According to the MTA Standing/Special Rules:  
With the exception of items on the agenda, all substantive motions shall be submitted in writing to the Presiding Officer.

MOTION

MOVED:

MTA bargaining specialists will compile and provide model contract language related to greater instructional autonomy and academic freedom in K-12 educational settings. They will also provide guidance for creating MOA's on this topic for districts that are not currently engaged in contract negotiations.

SUBMITTER'S RATIONALE:

Compared to their peers in higher education, K-12 educators have fewer protections for determining content in their curricula areas. Meanwhile, continual efforts to suppress what and how K-12 educators teach threaten their professional autonomy and undermine best practices in their classrooms. These threats to teaching and learning are coming from not only the national government, but also from efforts at the state and local levels to set limits on how and what to teach. These efforts include everything from seeking to set limits for teaching about historical and contemporary topics such as Palestine-Israel to teaching students how to read. Massachusetts recently passed legislation that will dictate how reading is taught and limit which curriculum programs will be allowed in classrooms. It is more critical than ever that we bargain for language in our contracts to increase autonomy for educators, who have the expertise to determine what will work best for their students and subject areas. It is imperative we begin including contract language that recognizes and protects our members' professionalism and expertise. Contract language protecting educator autonomy will also help bring more equity to educators and students across the state since different districts place different pressures on educators. Some districts provide educators greater latitude and autonomy while others censor or limit instructional practices or content, which denies students opportunities to learn. Locals could all benefit from including such language in their contracts. Other states such as Minnesota and Colorado

have already developed model language.

SUBMITTER'S COST & STAFF TIME ESTIMATE:

Not sure

DUES IMPACT **(For MTA use only):**

\$0

MTA COST & STAFF TIME ESTIMATE **(For MTA use only):**

\$0, 20 hours