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AGREEMENT
BETWEEN
METHUEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE
AND
METHUEN EDUCATIONAL SECRETARIES
ASSOCIATION
2024 ~ 2027

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AGREEMENT

This agreement is made and entered into by and between the Methuen School Committee (his/hereinafter referred to as the “Committee”) and the Methuen Educational Secretaries Association (his/hereinafter referred to as the “Association”), this 24th day of June 2024.

ARTICLE ONE RECOGNITION

- 1.1 The Committee hereby recognizes, for the purpose of collective bargaining, the Methuen Educational Secretaries Association as the sole and exclusive representative for regularly employed persons in the following jobs: All regular full-time (including 40-hour and part-time) employees with the job titles Secretary, Senior Bookkeeper and Enrollment Specialist employed by the Methuen School Committee, including all permanent, provisional, temporary and temporary after certification, excluding managerial, supervisory, confidential, administrative and intermittent and all other employees employed regularly or from time-to-time by the Committee. Part time employees include both school year and calendar year employees who are expected to work at least fifteen hours per week.
- 1.2 The parties to this Agreement shall not discriminate against any employee because of race, creed, color, religion, nationality, sex, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status or physical handicap or by reason of the employee's membership or non-membership in the Association or by reason of any activity in, with and/or for the Association not in contravention of any provision of this Agreement or law.
- 1.3 It is recognized that the Methuen Public Schools is an Affirmative Action / Equal Opportunity Employer and service provider.
- 1.4 A list of officers and negotiating team members shall be provided to the Business Administrator annually prior to October 1st of each school year.
- 1.5 No reprisal (including reprimands, involuntary transfers and other/her forms of discipline) shall be taken by the Committee and/or any other/her Administrators against any member of the Association for the reason of that membership in or participation in activities of the Association. In the grievance procedure a grievant may be represented by no more than three (3) Association members. Work missed for any Association related business shall not be made up as over-time nor will substitutes be provided for this purpose.

ARTICLE TWO MANAGEMENT RIGHTS

- 2.1 It is recognized that the Committee reserves and retains and will continue to do so, whether exercised or not, the sole and exclusive rights, powers and authority to control, direct and manage the affairs and operation, in all its aspects, of the public schools of Methuen, Massachusetts. These rights, powers, and authority shall not be exercised in a manner inconsistent with the terms and provisions of this Agreement. No action taken by the Committee with respect to the exercise of such rights, powers, and authority other than as there are specific provisions herein elsewhere contained shall be subject to the grievance and/or arbitration provisions of this Agreement.

ARTICLE THREE GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

- 3.1 For purposes of this Agreement, a grievance is defined as a complaint by an employee, that as to him, there has been a direct violation of the express terms of a specific provision of this Agreement. All grievances must be in writing and signed by the grievant, setting forth in detail the nature of and all the facts giving rise to the grievance, the contract provision(s) alleged to have been violated and the relief requested. Said grievance must be processed in accordance with the levels, time limits and conditions set forth below in this Article. Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays shall not be counted in the computation of any period of time specified in this section.
- 3.2 Procedure for Processing a Grievance.
- A. Level One: The grievance shall be presented to the employee's immediate administrator within twenty (20) business days of the employee knowing, or should have known, of the act or condition on which the grievance is based. Said Administrator will meet with the grievant within three (3) business days of receipt of the grievance, and within five (5) business days following said meeting shall render his/her decision in the matter.
 - B. Level Two: If the grievant is not satisfied with the disposition of the grievance at Level One, or no decision is rendered within five (5) business days of the meeting with the grievant, the aggrieved employee may file the grievance in writing with the Business Administrator within five (5) business days of receipt of the decision or the allotted time period in which a decision shall be rendered. The Business Administrator will render his/her decision within ten (10) business days of receipt of the grievance or within ten (10) business days of meeting with grievant should such meeting become necessary.
 - C. Level Three: If the grievant is not satisfied with the disposition of the grievance at Level Two, or no decision is rendered within ten (10) business days of formal meeting with Business Administrator or of receipt of the grievance to the Superintendent within five (5) business days of receipt of the decision or the allotted time period in which a decision shall be rendered. Said submission shall be in writing. The Superintendent will render his/her decision within ten (10) business days of receipt of the grievance or within ten (10) business days of meeting with grievant should such meeting become necessary.
 - D. Level Four: If the grievant is not satisfied with the disposition of the grievance at Level Three, or no decision is rendered within ten (10) business days of formal meeting with the Superintendent or of receipt of the grievance, the grievant may elect to submit the grievance, the grievant to the School Committee within five (5) business days of receipt of the decision or the allotted time period in which a decision shall be rendered. Said submissions shall be in writing. The Committee shall render its decision within fifteen (15) business days of receipt of the

grievance or within fifteen (15) business days of meeting with grievant should such meeting become necessary.

E. Level Five: If the Association is not satisfied with the disposition of the grievance of Level Four, or no decision is rendered within fifteen (15) business days of receipt of the grievance, the Association may elect to submit the grievance to arbitration within five (5) business days of receipt of the decision or the allotted time period in which a decision shall be rendered. The Arbitrator shall be selected by mutual agreement of the parties. If the parties fail to appoint an Arbitrator s/he shall be selected from a list of Arbitrators supplied by the American Arbitration Association. The parties will be bound by the rules and regulations of the American Arbitration Association. The costs of said arbitration shall be shared equally by the parties. The decision of the Arbitrator shall be final and binding.

- 3.3 The Arbitrator shall have the authority only to interpret, apply, or determine compliance with provisions of this Agreement as related to the grievant and specific alleged violation thereof, lack of which will constitute grounds for non-arbitrability of the grievance.
- 3.4 Grievances at Level One, Level Two and Level Three shall be held during the course of the normal hours of operation of the Central Business Office.
- 3.5 Any employee who is a grievant shall have the right to be represented by the Union at any step in the grievance process at the employee's request.

ARTICLE FOUR JOB POSTING

- 4.1 When a job becomes vacant, it shall be posted for five (5) working days when the vacancy occurs during the school year; ten (10) working days when the vacancy occurs during the summer.

The Building Principal will arrange an interview each finalist and upon completion of the interview process, the Building Principal will recommend a finalist to the Business Administrator. The Business Administrator will make a recommendation to the Superintendent of Schools. In filling of vacancies, the Committee shall consider the seniority of the respective candidates.

- 4.2 In the event only one (1) employee bids on a vacant position, he/she may be appointed to the position only if he/she meets the requirements of the vacant job classification. The unsuccessful candidate will be notified, in writing upon request, of the reasons for his/her non-selection.
- 4.3 At any time during, or at the completion of, a 30-day probationary period the transferred employee may elect to return to his/her former job and hourly rate of pay without

prejudice or penalty subject to the approval of the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee. Such reassignment or voluntary election to return to the former job shall not be subject to the grievance and arbitration provisions of this Agreement.

- 4.4 No permanent job transfer shall occur unless a job posting has been issued as herein provided except that the Superintendent may make job reassignments for a limited duration to meet exceptional, emergency, or special situations and said employee shall be compensated accordingly upon the completion of the second consecutive week of work if the temporary reassignment is of a higher rate of pay. No employee shall suffer reduction in his/her assigned hourly rate because of such job reassignment.
- 4.5 The employee will not be required to obtain a replacement for his/her position, should he/she be out of work due to vacation, sickness, personal time, bereavement leave, or other approved absence.
- 4.6 The positions of Student Activity Account Monitor should be posted annually during the first two weeks of August at its stipend rate. The job will go to the person with the most seniority and who meets the qualifications. The Student Activity Account Monitor working in the Central Administration Office will receive the larger stipend.
- 4.7 As the needs of the District dictate, the Superintendent will reduce additional positions from full year to school year only after posting the position internally in accordance with this Article as a full year position and receiving no qualified internal applicants. In the event that the Superintendent determines the position requires additional hours, he/she will have the discretion to return the position to a twelve (12) month position if necessary funding is available. A meeting will be held with representatives of the Union prior to the reductions in hours of any position under this section.

ARTICLE FIVE EMPLOYMENT POLICY

- 5.1 A calendar year Unit D member assigned to a permanent job shall be eligible for vacation leave as provided by this Agreement.

In the event of a school closing due to inclement weather, no Unit D member will be required to work the first day that school is closed and no accumulated leave will be charged for this day. If school is closed for two or more consecutive days due to inclement weather, Unit D members will be required to report to work on days two and beyond unless otherwise notified by the Superintendent or her/his designee.

Any Unit D member required to work who is called by the Superintendent or her/his designee on such a day that Unit D members are not required to report to work, will be compensated at time and one-half his/her regular pay unless all Unit D members are required to work that day.

In the event that the District determines that school will be delayed in the morning or released early in the afternoon due to inclement weather or other unforeseen events, the unit members' workday will begin 1.5 hours from his/her scheduled start time and no later than the 30 minutes after the official student release. Unit members who work at the Central Administration Building will be allowed to leave at 12:30 in the case of an early dismissal.

- 5.2 A School Year employee assigned to a permanent job shall work the established and assigned hours per day that school is open and in session.
- 5.3 The Superintendent or his/her designee may employ temporary personnel, from time-to-time, to fill vacancies or to meet exceptional and emergency conditions and requirements.
- 5.4 A regular employee, as defined in 5.1 and 5.2 above, shall be compensated for a full workday in the event his/her office is closed at a time earlier than the regularly scheduled closing hour.
- 5.5 Any member of the bargaining unit who is a candidate for a vacancy covered under this Agreement will be notified within five working days after an appointment to said vacancy has been made.
- 5.6 The seniority status of unit members shall be established by the below-listed criteria:
 - A. Seniority is defined as the length of continuous service in years, months, and days from the first day of employment for which compensation was received as a Unit D employee. In cases involving members who have identical seniority, preference for retention will be given to the member who, in the judgment of the Superintendent, is most qualified. The Superintendent may base his/her determination on such factors as professional training, experience, performance, and needs of the system. Seniority will continue to accrue during any time that an employee is on a paid leave of absence. An unpaid leave of absence, including time spent on the recall list, will not be credited toward seniority; however, such unpaid leave will not be considered a break in service.
 - B. A seniority list will be established each school year no later than November 1 of said year. The Superintendent shall forward to the Association the initial seniority list containing the names of all employees covered by this policy. Should the Association choose to challenge the accuracy of the seniority list, written notice detailing the challenge will be sent to the Superintendent within thirty (30) school days of receipt of the list. Within ten (10) days of the receipt of the challenge, the Superintendent will meet with the Unit D Chair/Co-Chairs to resolve the challenge. Challenges to subsequent annual seniority lists may be made only to the extent of the changes, if any, to the preceding seniority list.
- 5.7 Consistent with the terms of M.G.L. Chapter 71, Section 55A, no secretary shall be liable for damages as a result of any emergency first aid or treatment which he/she in good faith

renders to any student in the Methuen Public Schools. Further, the School Committee agrees to indemnify and save harmless the secretary in such situations.

- 5.8 Any current employee classified as a permanent civil service employee will be afforded the same protections under this agreement, as they would have had if they remained under Civil Service.
- 5.9 All unit members will be guaranteed an uninterrupted half-hour lunch period. If, for some reason, a unit member were requested to work his/her lunch period, then that unit member shall receive an overtime payment at the rate of time-and-one-half of his/her daily rate for the one-half hour worked.
- 5.10 If a unit member leaves the employ of the Methuen Public Schools and then provides written notice of interest to return to a Unit D position in the Methuen Public system and is rehired within one (1) calendar year, the District will restore, to the member, all previous benefits, including but not limited to vacation leave, seniority, sick leave, pay rate, etc.
- 5.11 All discipline and discharge shall be for just cause.
- 5.12 All observations of the work performance of a Unit D Employee shall be conducted openly and with the full knowledge of the employee. Each employee shall be evaluated once annually prior to June 30. This tool will be created collaboratively between the Superintendent and the President of the Association.
- 5.13 The Superintendent will have discretion annually to close school buildings for an undetermined number of days during the week of winter break with no days charged from members.
- 5.14 Members are expected to dress appropriately; business casual. No beachwear, flip flops (flip flops worn to beach/pool or in water) house slippers or ripped clothing. Clothing must be appropriate length and not excessively tight fitting. Members are typically the first contact person with the public and parents and need to present themselves appropriately.

ARTICLE SIX WAGE POLICY

- 6.1 Reference Appendix A for the applicable Wage Schedule and Policy.
- 6.2A A regular full time employee is one assigned to a permanent position and an established job, including provisional and temporary provisional, and who works an assigned job encompassing at least six (6) hours per day. These full time employees who are working under a grant can work up to thirty five (35) hours a week for a full year with a renewal letter from the Superintendent of Schools that is approved by the Unit D Chairperson –

providing that grant funds are available to support the position. In the event that grant funds are depleted, the employee will return to their originally assigned work schedule and shall not be allowed to "bump" an employee with more regular hours regardless of seniority.

- 6.2B A regular part time employee is one assigned to a permanent or temporary position that is normally expected to work at least fifteen hours per week. Part Time Employees (defined as an employee who works less than thirty (30) hours per week) will be limited to four (4) positions at any given time. If a part time position is moved to full time, it shall be posted. Part time employees shall accrue sick leave and vacation benefits on a prorated basis. Part time employees whose wages are funded by a grant can work up to thirty (30) hours a week for a full year with a renewal letter from the Superintendent of Schools that is approved by the Unit D Chairperson – providing that grant funds are available to support the position. These employees will be eligible for insurance benefits if they are regularly scheduled to work at least twenty (20) hours per week, provided the employer share of the health premium is paid from grant funds. In the event that grant funds are depleted, the employee will return to their originally assigned work schedule and shall not be allowed to "bump" an employee with more regular hours regardless of seniority." Should the employee's regularly scheduled hours drop below 20 hours/per week, they will no longer be eligible for insurance benefits.

ARTICLE SEVEN HOLIDAYS

- 7.1 A calendar year employee shall be eligible for the following holidays:

New Year's Day	Labor Day
Martin Luther King's Birthday	Columbus Day
President's Day/Washington's Birthday	Veterans' Day
Good Friday	Thanksgiving
Patriot's Day	Day after Thanksgiving
Memorial Day	Christmas Day
Independence Day	Day after Christmas
Juneteenth	

Unit members will be granted a ½-day release on the following days: Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve. All Unit D members will have a 5 hour day on the following days: day before Thanksgiving, either February or April vacation depending on Unit A and the last day of school.

- 7.2 A school year employee shall be eligible for the following holidays:

Labor Day	Day after Thanksgiving
Columbus Day	Christmas Day
Veterans' Day	Martin Luther King's Birthday
Thanksgiving Day	Good Friday
Memorial Day	Independence Day (only if work year extends

New Year's Day
Juneteenth

beyond this day)

All Unit D members will have a 5 hour day on the following days: day before Thanksgiving, either February or April vacation depending on Unit A and the last day of school.

- 7.3 A holiday occurring on either/her a Saturday or Sunday shall be celebrated on the next succeeding Monday or preceding Friday provided that the Methuen Public Schools are closed on said Friday or Monday.
- 7.4 An employee must work his/her assigned work day immediately preceding and immediately following the holiday in order to receive pay for the holiday; however upon good cause shown with reasonable time of notice, the Committee may waive the requirements of this provision so as not to disqualify an employee from receiving said holiday.

ARTICLE EIGHT VACATION LEAVE

- 8.1 A full time calendar year employee shall be eligible for the following paid vacation leave.

After 20 weeks - 5 days, one year anniversary 5 days
On July 1st of each year after completion of 1 full year of employment:

MORE THAN	BUT LESS THAN	LEAVE DAYS PER YEAR
One year	Five years	Ten days
Five years	Ten years	Fifteen days
Ten years	Fifteen years	Twenty days
Fifteen years	Twenty years	Twenty-five days

- 8.2 A full time school year employee shall be eligible for five paid vacation leave days provided he/she has worked at least twenty weeks during said school year.
- 8.3 An employee's last date of continuous employment shall be used to determine the length of employment service for the purpose of computing available vacation leave.
- 8.4 A school year employee who transfers to a calendar year position shall be credited for all immediately prior continuous employment service for the purpose of computing available vacation leave.
- 8.5 If an employee who was hired prior to the 1998 contract resigns or retires, they will not have their remaining vacation time pro-rated (since at the time they were hired, vacation time was not given until the completion of a full year of service).

- 8.6 Vacation carried over to a subsequent year shall be limited to the amount earned in that year.
- 8.7 When school is in session, school building secretaries will coordinate with Supervising Principals approved vacation or personal time to ensure that there is always one secretary in the school building.

ARTICLE NINE SICK LEAVE

- 9.1 A. An employee will be able to use ten days per school year from said eighteen days to care for a member of the immediate family who is ill and requires the attendance and care of the employee.
- B. Unused sick leave days may be accumulated from year to year to a maximum of two hundred and fifty (250) days for calendar year employees and two hundred and twenty-seven (227) days for school year employees.”
- 9.2 Each unit member shall be given a written statement by the first paycheck in August of the number of sick leave days s/he has to his/her credit.
- 9.3 The Superintendent may, at his/her discretion, require medical documentation or an examination by a physician, elected by the Superintendent at the Committee’s expense, for each absence in excess of ten cumulative days in a work year. The physician’s/physician’s assistant’s/nurse practitioner’s certificate must contain the following information:
 - a. The nature of the illness.
 - b. A statement indicating that the employee is unable to perform his/her duties.
 - c. A statement as to the duration of the disability.

The Superintendent reserves the right to require an employee to be examined by an independent physician for the purpose of rendering a second opinion at the expense of the School Department. The opinion of the independent physician shall prevail in a case where the independent opinion is different than that of the employee’s physician.

The Association reserves the right to require an employee to be examined by an independent physician for the purpose of rendering a third opinion the expense shall be shared equally by the Association and the School Department. The opinion of this independent physician shall prevail in a case where the independent opinion is different than that of the School Department’s physician.

Failure to comply with this provision could result in further disciplinary action by the School Department.

- 9.4 A regular employee shall be granted sick leave with pay for non-worked related illness or injury under the following terms and conditions:

Accrual-For Unit D members whose employment begins on July 1, 6 sick days will be granted and then a day a month thereafter will be accrued for the first 3 years of employment. If the employment begins after July 1, the 6 granted sick days will be pro-rated. After achieving 3 years experience, 18 days of sick leave will be posted to each person's account on July 1st for year-round secretaries and 15 days of sick leave on September 1st for the school year secretaries.

Accumulated sick leave is available for use in the following manner:

- 1) When it is established that a person is incapacitated for performance of his/her regular duties;
- 2) For medical, dental or optical examination or treatment;

Sick Leave Abuse Policy Sick Time Abuse

Both parties to this agreement believe that paid sick time is an important benefit for employees and that any abuse of sick time is detrimental both to the students of Methuen and the membership of the Association. While recognizing that only a small fraction of employees may abuse sick time, the parties agree that no abuse of sick time should be tolerated or condoned.

"Situations which suggest abuse" shall be defined as more than four (4) absences, which suggest a pattern, as for example, absences occurring on Mondays, Fridays and days immediately preceding or following holidays or vacation periods.

When the record of repeated absence reflects a pattern of abuse, the Principal/ Supervisor shall notify the Superintendent immediately and meet with the employee in order to determine whether the employee has a valid reason to justify such absences. The employee shall be informed that he/she may have a union representative present at this meeting.

The Principal/ Supervisor shall provide written notice within five (5) school days following such meeting to any employee whose excuse for absence was deemed unacceptable and subsequently may require a medical certificate.

Medical certification shall be defined as a written documentation of illness and/or inability to attend work, which details the medical condition within the limits of the law and treatment plan with periodic updates from a physician, nurse, chiropractor, dentist, or other health care provider.

In any situation, which persists to the point where the Principal/ Supervisor deems it necessary to consider disciplinary action against an employee for suspected abuse of sick time, the Principal/ Supervisor will immediately notify the Superintendent and the President of the Union/Association.

No action undertaken more than one year previously without recurrence of such abuse shall be considered in evaluating situations, which suggest abuse in subsequent school years.

In applying this provision, the employer recognizes that the purpose of this provision is not to interfere with legitimate use of sick time and agrees to reasonably interpret and apply this provision.

- C. Any employee covered by this agreement who is absent two or fewer sick and unpaid days per year will receive a bonus of \$500 by the last day of school in June.

- 9.5 Sick Leave Buy-Back will be granted at a rate of \$35 per day, out of accumulated sick leave, for the first 100 days and \$50 per day for the accumulated sick time over 100 days up to a maximum of 250 days for calendar year employees, and 220 days for school year employees. In order to qualify for this benefit, secretaries will not be allowed to exceed fifteen days of absence due to illness during their last year of employment. However, the Superintendent at his/her discretion may grant an exception to this fifteen day limitation for physician documented serious illness extending fifteen days or more in length, i.e., extensive surgery or hospitalization

Notice of intent to retire must be provided by the employee no later than January 15th of the school year prior to the school year at the end of which he/she intends to retire.

ARTICLE TEN SICK LEAVE POOL

- 10.1 The Committee and the Association agree to establish a Sick Leave Pool for the members of the bargaining unit which shall be administered by the Superintendent, or his/her designee, according to the following guidelines:
 - A. Each secretary may voluntarily become a member of this Sick Leave Pool for Secretaries.
 - B. As requirement of membership in the Sick Leave Pool, each participating member shall voluntarily donate one day per year from their own sick leave entitlement to the pool, which shall be effective on the first day of school of a school year. After five (5) years of membership in the pool, members will no longer need to donate annually unless the pool of available days drop below 100.
 - C. An individual shall not lose membership in the pool should that participating member be out for an extended period of time.

- D. Before accessing the Sick Leave Pool, the unit member must have exhausted all other available paid time off. Each sick leave pool member may receive a Sick Leave Pool benefit of up to a maximum of ten days in a school year. All requests for access to the Sick Leave Pool must be approved by the Association's Officers before submitting the Sick Leave Pool request form to the Business Administrator. The Business Administrator will submit the Sick Leave Request to the Superintendent for approval, both the Superintendent and the Association Officers must approve the sick leave request.
- E. The existence of the Sick Leave Pool is a privilege rather than a convenience, therefore, days will be granted from the Pool only in cases of serious injury or illness verified by a physician's certificate which demonstrates a genuine disability and includes clarification of what the patient can do or cannot do in relation to assigned duties.
- F. The use of the Sick Leave Pool is limited to one hundred eighty-two days maximum per illness, and limited to employees who have been employed five years or more in the Methuen Public Schools. Employees, who have been employed less than one year, are not eligible for days from the Sick Leave Pool. Employees who have been employed more than one, but less than five years, will be entitled to only fifty days from the Sick Leave Pool.
- G. Each party agrees to allow the emergency granting of ten (10) days from the sick leave pool if approved the chair/co-chairs and the Superintendent in order to not interrupt paychecks for an individual. Once the member has submitted all the proper documentation, the member can apply for more sick leave pool days should the member show a need.
- H. All participating members shall sign an affidavit indicating their desire to join the pool. Continued membership from year to year shall be automatically assumed as long as the participating member is employed as a member of the bargaining unit. A participating member shall sign an affidavit indicating their termination of membership in the Sick Leave Pool if the individual will be continuing as a member of the bargaining unit but desires not to continue voluntary participation in the Sick Leave Pool.
- I. Procedures:
 - a. Obtain a Sick Leave Pool Request Form from the personnel office (Business Administrator). Fill out this form providing all information requested and attach physician's certificate, which explains: (1) the nature of the illness and (2) the expected number of days requested to be out of work.
 - b. Return the Sick Leave Pool Request Form and the physician's certificate to the personnel office (Business Administrator) with a copy to the Methuen

Educational Secretaries Association. A second medical certificate may be requested from a physician approved by the Methuen Public Schools.

- c. A doctor's certificate may be required upon return from an absence of three or more days. The employee must notify his/her Supervisor on or before the first day of the absence informing the Supervisor as closely as possible when the employee expects to return to work. The employee is expected to keep his/her Supervisor informed during his/her absence as to the expected duration of such absence. If deemed to be in the best interest of the Superintendent or his/her designee, a physical examination of the employee may be required, such examination to be administered by a Committee selected physician and without charge to the employee.
- d. An employee shall not suffer any loss of sick leave accumulation during any period of absence from work due to any injury arising out of and in the course of the performance of assigned duties for a period of one calendar year from the date of said injury. It is understood that while there shall be no loss of sick leave accumulation during said period, there shall be no additional accumulation of said leave during said period.

ARTICLE ELEVEN PERSONAL DAYS

- 11.1 An employee may be allowed up to and including three days of leave with pay each school year subject to the approval of the Superintendent for the purpose of transacting or attending to personal matters, which require absence during school hours. Except in emergencies, the employee taking leave shall give his/her Supervisor written notice of his/her desire to take such leave and reasons this/therefore, at least three days prior to the proposed absence.
Any unused personal leave days on June 30 of a given year, will be added to the employee's accumulated sick leave.
- 11.2 Personal days cannot be used the first or last day of the school year, the day preceding or following a holiday or two days in a row unless an explanation is provided to and approved in advance by the Superintendent.

ARTICLE TWELVE BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

- 12.1 Employees covered by this agreement will be allowed time off without loss of pay for up to five (5) working days following a death in the immediate family. The immediate family shall be defined as husband, wife, domestic partner, son, daughter, mother, father, brother, sister, mother-in-law, father-in-law, sister-in-law, brother-in-law, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, grandparents and grandchildren.

Bereavement leave of two (2) day shall be allowed for the death of a relative of an employee who is the employee's aunt, uncle, great grandparent, niece or nephew. Said bereavement day shall be the day of the funeral and the time so granted for the purpose of attending said funeral.

At the discretion of the Superintendent of Schools, this leave may be extended.

ARTICLE THIRTEEN PARENTAL LEAVE

- 13.1 A regular employee, upon becoming pregnant, shall furnish the Superintendent or his/her designee with a report of examination from his/her physician stating expected date of delivery and indicating her ability to continue the performance of her job in a safe and effective manner. The Superintendent or his/her designee may require that the employee, prior to the taking of and/or upon returning to work, following a parental leave of absence, be examined by an employer designated physician whose fee shall be paid by the Superintendent or his/her designee for the purpose of establishing, to the satisfaction of the Superintendent or his/her designee, the employee's ability to perform her assigned responsibilities in an effective and safe manner.
- 13.2 A unit member expecting the adoption, placement, or birth of a child who is not pregnant his/herself will be entitled to the same parental leave offered to all unit members. The unit member will not be required to comply with the provisions of Article 13.1 but is required to comply with all other notice requirements and is permitted to use accrued and unused vacation or sick time during the parental leave of absence.
- 13.3 A parental leave of absence without pay may be granted for a period of up to one year commencing from the time the employee is absent from her employment for the purpose of giving birth adopting, or experiencing the placement of a child provided the employee has completed the probationary period as herein established, and has given two weeks notice of anticipated date of departure from her employment, or provided reasonable notice if two weeks' notice is not reasonable. Though said leave itself will be without pay, the employee may use any of her accumulated sick leave for said period of time for which he/she will be disabled as a result of said pregnancy. Available vacation may be used at the option of the employee at any time prior to going on, or during said leave.
- 13.4 The employee on parental leave of absence shall give at least thirty days notice to the Committee stating her intention to return to her position to insure that her return to work will cause the least amount of disruption to the orderly and effective operations of the Committee.

ARTICLE FOURTEEN JURY DUTY

- 14.1 A leave of absence shall be granted to an employee selected for and ordered to perform jury duty. The employee shall be paid the difference between his/her then assigned regular rate of pay and the pay, which he/she receives from the Court for such service. In order to effectuate this, the employee will turn over the pay received from the court and the verification of jury service within three (3) weeks after the completion of his/her jury service.

ARTICLE FIFTEEN INSURANCE

- 15.1 The Committee, through the City of Methuen, shall assume the same share of the cost of the premium for each regular employee eligible for and electing participation in any City Medical Insurance plan as paid to all other City and School System employees.
- 15.2 The Committee, through the City of Methuen, shall pay fifty percent (50%) of the cost of the premium for each regular employee eligible for and electing participation in the life insurance program adopted and maintained by said City.

ARTICLE SIXTEEN TUITION WAIVER FOR EMPLOYEES' CHILDREN

Any Unit D members who are not residents of Methuen, and who begin employment in the Methuen Public Schools by September 2, 2011, may enroll their children as long as:

1. There is an available slot.
2. The parent/unit member provides for the transportation of the student to and from Methuen Public Schools
3. The student is not and does not become a discipline problem
4. The student does not require any special services, programs, or otherwise cause Methuen Public Schools to incur any expense.
5. If any of the conditions in paragraph 1 and/or 2 are not met, and/or the conditions in paragraph 3 and/or 4 exist, any obligation of the Committee under this article shall cease.

Requests under this Article must be renewed each year in writing to the Assistant Superintendent of Student Services on or before May 15th.

The requirement above that the employee begin employment by September 2, 2011 may be waived at the sole discretion of the Superintendent.

Decisions of the School Committee in regard to the terms of this article shall neither be grievable or arbitrable

ARTICLE SEVENTEEN

NO STRIKE – NO LOCK OUT

- 17.1 The Association agrees that there shall be no strike, work-stoppage, en mass quit, slowdown, or any other interferences with the usual and customary conduct of the educational and business affairs and activities of the Methuen Public Schools or any of its employees by the Association or any of its agents or members, and that neither the Association nor any of its agents or members will initiate, condone, sanction, or participate in any of the foregoing acts.
- 17.2 The Committee agrees that there shall be no lockout of the employees from their employment during the term of this Agreement provided the employees continue in the faithful performance of their assigned and directed duties and responsibilities.

ARTICLE EIGHTEEN

EFFECT OF AGREEMENT

- 18.1 This instrument constitutes the entire Agreement of the Committee and the Association arrived at as a result of collective bargaining negotiations.
- 18.2 The parties acknowledge that during the negotiations which resulted in this Agreement each had the unlimited right and opportunity to make demands with respect to any subject matter not removed by law from the area of collective bargaining, and that the understanding and agreements arrived at by the parties after the exercise of that right and opportunity are set forth in this Agreement. Therefore, the Committee and the Association for the life of this Agreement each voluntarily and unqualifiedly waives the right, and each agrees to the other shall not be obligated, to bargain collectively with respect to any subject matter referred not specifically referred to or covered in this Agreement even though such subjects or matters may or may not have been within the knowledge or contemplations of either or both parties at the time that they negotiated or signed this Agreement.

ARTICLE NINETEEN

SEVERABILITY

- 19.1 If any provision of this Agreement or any application of the Agreement to any employee or group of employees shall be found contrary to law, then such provision or application shall not be deemed valid and shall be without force and effect except to the intent permitted by law, but all other provisions or applications of this Agreement shall continue in full force and effect.

ARTICLE TWENTY REDUCTION IN FORCE

- 20.1 If the Superintendent or his/her designee undertakes to effectuate a reduction in force amongst *unit members, including any unit members* governed by Chapter 31 of the Massachusetts General Laws, said reductions shall be accomplished consistent with the provisions thereof.
- 20.2 In the event the Superintendent deems it necessary to reduce the number of Unit D members at the end of the school year, the order of reduction shall be based on seniority in Unit D as outlined in Article 5.6. The position, which the Unit D member holds, may or may not be eliminated as part of this reduction in force. Notification of reduction in force will be given by June 1st.
- 20.3 Unit members will be considered for recall for fifteen (15) months following said layoff. During this period, the District will notify each laid off unit member in order of seniority and offer any open position(s). After the fifteen (15) month time period, if a unit member has not been recalled, the unit member's placement on the list expires and his/her name will be removed from the recall list."

ARTICLE TWENTY-ONE JOB TRAINING

- 21.1 If the Superintendent or his/her designee, in his/her sole discretion, requires that an employee undergo additional training to become proficient as the result of the implementation of new equipment, and/or procedures, said employee must be provided with comprehensive training. If training on a new program or new equipment cannot be done during the course of a regular school day, training will be provided after hours and employees will receive their hourly rate of pay at time and one-half.
- 21.2 Any employee covered by this Agreement who possesses an associate's degree from an accredited institute of higher education shall receive an annual stipend of three-hundred (\$300.00) dollars payable in the last pay period of the school year. Any employee covered by this Agreement who possesses an bachelor's degree from an accredited institute of higher education shall receive an annual stipend of four-hundred (\$400.00) dollars payable in the last pay period of the school year.
- 21.3 Alternately, any such employee who possesses a diploma or certificate from an accredited institution or higher education, indicating successful completion of at least a one year course of study or a prescribed equivalency of the same in the areas of secretarial, clerical, or business skills, shall be eligible to receive a stipend of two hundred (\$200.00) dollars in the last pay period of the school year. Award of the above stipends require the submission, prior to October 1 of a given school year, of an official transcript from the awarding institution, which dates and documents the degree, diploma, or certificate awarded, and the courses completed leading to such an award.

- 21.4 The parties agree that on an annual basis on-the-job training programs for Unit D members shall be provided at the discretion of the District.
- 21.5 The parties agree that Unit D members may be provided cross-training in order for members to perform similar roles/duties within the District. The purpose of this cross-training would allow for members to provide short-term temporary coverage when needed. Temporary coverage will be assigned on an equitable basis.
- 21.6 The district will facilitate one day a year, voting day in November, in which Unit D professional development will occur and the whole unit will meet together. The members will not be permitted to take a vacation day on this day. If a member misses this day, they are responsible for the information and executing any new tasks that result from the professional development.

ARTICLE TWENTY-TWO LONGEVITY

22.1 Longevity:	
Years of Service	Amount
5 Years	\$400
10 Years	\$600
15 Years	\$750
20 Years	\$900
25 Years	\$1,100
30 Years	\$1,300
40 Years	\$1,600

Any member hired on or after July 1, 2019 will not be eligible for longevity under the current collective bargaining agreement.

Longevity payments will no longer be directly tied to the employee's hire date. Payment of longevity checks will occur as of the first pay date in December. In order to provide for equitable treatment of all personnel, every current employee will receive credit for the entire school year in which they are hired, regardless of the month or day when this occurs.

ARTICLE TWENTY-THREE GENERAL

- 23.1 Unit D shall have five (5) days per Co-Chair, or a total of five (5) days for a sole Chair, to use for Association business during the work year including but not limited to association business, conferences, or conventions.

ARTICLE TWENTY-FOUR DURATION

- 24.1 This Agreement shall continue in full force and effect extending from July 1, 2021, through June 30, 2024, and shall terminate automatically upon that date.
- 24.2 If a successor Agreement is not in place at the time of termination of this Agreement, then all terms of this Agreement shall be deemed to continue in full force and effect until such successor Agreement shall be ratified by both parties.
- 24.3 This Agreement is subject to ratification by the Methuen School Committee and the Methuen Educational Secretaries Association.

ARTICLE TWENTY-FIVE JOINT LABOR/MANAGEMENT

A joint labor/management committee will be established whose sole purpose is to develop updated job descriptions, an instrument for the supervision and evaluation of Unit D members, and evaluation language. This committee will begin its work no later than March 1, 2017.

ARTICLE TWENTY-SIX DISCIPLINE

- 26.1 The evaluation procedures do not preclude an administrator from using employee discipline to deal with a situation in which the Superintendent determines that an employee's actions are unacceptable. Progressive discipline will be followed (i.e., oral reprimand, written reprimand, suspension without pay, dismissal); unless the Superintendent determines that the seriousness of the employee's actions warrants discipline beyond an oral reprimand.
- 26.2 No employee covered under this Agreement will be reduced in compensation, denied a salary increase or step increment, disciplined, reprimanded, or discharged by any member of Administration or by the Committee without just cause. It is expressly understood that this Article will not apply to probationary employees. Those individuals who have been employed by the Methuen Public Schools for 90 days or less will be considered probationary.
- 26.3 Any written complaint regarding any Unit D member made to the Superintendent or any other administrator or to the Committee by any parent, student, teacher, administrator, or other person will be promptly called to the attention of the employee involved.
- 26.4 No material derogatory to a Unit D member's conduct, service, character, or personality will be placed in the personnel file unless that employee has had the opportunity to

review the material. The unit member will be given the opportunity to sign the material noting only that s/he received it. If the unit member declines to sign the material, whomever else is in the meeting where the material is presented will sign it affirming that it was given to the unit member. The Unit D member will also have the right to submit a written reply to such material to be reviewed by the Superintendent and attached to the file copy.

ARTICLE TWENTY-SEVEN PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS

The Committee shall provide that, whenever duly authorized by any unit member on a form or forms approved by the Superintendent, payroll deductions on behalf of such unit shall be made and paid over in accordance with such form or forms for any or all of the following purposes:

- Credit Union (Methuen and/or MTA)
- Blue Cross/Blue Shield or other Health Insurance Center
- United Fund
- Insurance(s) available through school system and/or city
- Retirement
- Tax Sheltered Annuities
- MEA/MTA/NEA dues
- United States Savings Bonds
- V.O.T.E.
- Health and Dental Insurance
- Flexible Spending Accounts
- Disability Insurance
- 403b Accounts
- Long Term Care

APPENDIX A Salary Schedule

All Bargaining Unit Members will work forty (40) hours with the exception of the position funded by the Adult Education Grant

Effective July 1, 2024

(retro payments shall only be on hours actually worked, i.e. the District will not have to pay retro on the increase in work hours that have not been set in place prior to ratification of this agreement) Any new employees to the bargaining Unit must be placed no higher than step 5 of the salary schedule.

FY 24-25 3% increase, drop step 1

FY 25-26 3% increase, add new step at top with a 2% increase over previous step

FY 26-27 3.25% increase, add 2nd step at the top with a 2% increase over previous step

Step	FY'24 Rate	FY'25 Rate	Fy'26 Rate	FY'27 Rate
1	\$23.50	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.0
2	\$24.98	\$25.73	\$26.50	\$27.36
3	\$26.55	\$27.35	\$28.17	\$29.08
4	\$26.67	\$27.47	\$28.29	\$29.21
5	\$26.77	\$27.57	\$28.40	\$29.32
6	\$27.09	\$27.90	\$28.74	\$29.67
7	-----	-----	\$29.31	\$30.27
8	-----	-----	-----	\$30.87

STEP MOVEMENT

All school year employees shall advance to the next highest step on the Salary Schedule, effective the first payroll period of the new school year provided that the employee had been employed for the Methuen School Department for ninety-two consecutive workdays or more during the preceding school year.

All calendar year employees shall advance to the next highest step on the Salary Schedule effective July 1st of each year, provided that they had been employed by the Methuen School Department for ninety-two consecutive workdays or more during the preceding school year.

METHOD OF PAYMENT

Year round Secretaries shall be paid their salaries in twenty-six bi-weekly payments on Thursday. If a holiday occurs on a Thursday, Secretaries shall be paid on the last workday before the holiday. This provision took effect on July 1, 1994.

School year Secretaries shall be paid their salaries in twenty-one bi-weekly payments on Thursday, commencing on the second Thursday after Labor Day. If a holiday occurs on a Thursday, Secretaries shall be paid on the last workday before the holiday. The last payment of the work year (21st check) shall be no later than the last workday of the year.

A.1(a) The Superintendent or his/her designee may employ temporary and/or provisional employees from time to time compensating said temporary and/or provisional employees at a rate up to but not more than ninety percent of the base rate of said job.

A.1(b) An employee appointed to a permanent full-time position shall be on probation for the first thirty (30) days of employment. Release of such employee from his/her employment during

this probationary period shall be at the discretion of the Superintendent or his/her designee and not subject to the grievance and arbitration provisions of this Agreement. If the employee is retained beyond the thirty (30) days probationary period, he/she shall commence receiving the benefits of this Agreement (including sick, personal and holiday leave) shall thereafter become effective.

A.1(c) The Superintendent or his/her designee may employ individual employees and place them on the salary schedule, Appendix A1, according to their work experience on the appropriate step for the probationary period.

A.2 An employee directed to work a higher hourly rated job than his/her current regular assignment shall receive for all continuous hours so worked in excess of forty (40) continuous hours on said higher rated job it's then assigned hourly rate of pay.

Except as amended hereby, said Agreement, between the Methuen School Committee and the Methuen Educational Secretaries Association, shall remain in full force and effect, subject to all of the terms and conditions set forth therein for the period of July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2027

(Date)

FOR THE METHUEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE:

Lauri J. Keegan

Deid P. Brumby M.

John Willette

Julie J. De

Marybeth Annunzio Gian

John J. De

Kristen Maxwell

FOR THE METHUEN EDUCATION ASSOCIATION- UNIT D

Manner C. O'Connell

Paul H. Harte
