

Agreement Between

the

Farmington River Regional District School Committee

and the

Farmington River Regional District Educators Association –

Educational Support Professionals

September 1, 2026 - August 31, 2029

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PREAMBLE

Recognizing that our prime purpose is to provide education for the students of the Farmington River Regional School District, and that cooperative effort is essential to the achievement of that purpose, we, the undersigned parties to the Contract, declare that:

- (a) Under the law of Massachusetts, the Committee, elected by the citizens of the towns comprising the Farmington River Regional School District, has final responsibility for establishing the educational policies of the public schools of the District. Except as abridged or modified by this Agreement or any supplements hereto, all of the rights, powers, and authority held by the Committee prior to the effective date of this Agreement are retained by the Committee.
- (b) The Superintendent of the District (hereinafter referred to as the Superintendent) or, in his/her absence, some person duly vested with similar authority, has responsibility for carrying out the policies as established by the Committee and those laws set forth in the General Laws of the Commonwealth.
- (c) Fulfillment of these respective responsibilities can be facilitated and supported by consultation and free exchange of views and information between the Committee, the Superintendent, and the professional teaching staff.

ARTICLE I CONTRACT

Pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 150E, 70 and 71 and applicable statutes under the General Laws of Massachusetts concerning matters of wages, hours and conditions of employment, this contract is made by the School Committee of the Farmington River Regional School District (hereinafter sometimes referred to as the "Committee") and the Farmington River Regional Educators Association, in affiliation with the Massachusetts Teachers Association (MTA) and the National Education Association (NEA), acting as the representatives for the Educational Support Professionals of said district (hereinafter sometimes referred to as the "ESP" or "Association"), shall be the sole bargaining agent for the life of this Agreement.

ARTICLE II RECOGNITION

- A. Committee recognizes the Farmington River Regional Educators Association for the purposes of collective bargaining as the exclusive representative of a unit consisting of all full and part-time paraprofessionals, cafeteria workers, van drivers and the Principal's secretary, but excluding substitutes, teachers and administrators.
- B. Unless otherwise indicated, the employees in the above unit will be hereinafter referred to as "the ESPs."
- C. The Committee agrees, for the life of this Agreement, that it will not negotiate with any individuals

covered by this Agreement other than the Farmington River Regional Educators Association – Educational Support Professionals on matters of wages, hours and other conditions of employment. The Farmington River Educators Association, in affiliation with MTA and NEA, shall be the sole bargaining agent for the life of this Agreement.

ARTICLE III ASSOCIATION RIGHTS

- A. There will be no reprisals taken against unit members because of his/her membership in the Association or participation in its activities.
- B. The Association will be provided a copy of the School Directory containing names, addresses and phone numbers of school personnel by 9/30 of each school year.
- C. There will be at least one (1) bulletin board reserved exclusively for the Association use in each school building.
- D. The Association may use prior scheduled school facilities and equipment for Association business in-so-far as such use does not result in extra payment to service persons employed by the Committee.
- E. The Committee authorizes the use of inter-school mail to distribute Association material. The Association headquarters will be considered as a regular inter-school mail stop.
- F. The representatives or agents of the Association shall be permitted to enter the school premises to carry on Association business providing it does not interfere with ESP duties.

ARTICLE IV MANAGEMENT RIGHTS

The Committee has the authority, rights and powers conferred upon it by the Laws of Massachusetts and the Rules and Regulations of any pertinent agency of the Commonwealth.

As to every matter expressly not covered by this Agreement, and except as expressly or directly modified by clear language in a specific provision of this Agreement, the Committee retains exclusively to themselves all rights and powers that it has or may hereafter be granted by law and shall exercise the same without such exercise being made the subject of grievance and arbitration provisions of this Agreement.

The Committee, in their exercise of the Management Rights Clause, recognize the Association rights under Article XDC (Just Cause).

ARTICLE V GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Purpose: The purpose of the grievance procedures set forth hereinafter is to produce prompt and equitable solutions to those problems which from time to time may arise which are within the definition of a grievance hereinafter set forth.

Definition: A grievance is a claim by an ESP or the Association that a violation, misinterpretation, or misapplication of the terms and conditions of this Agreement or any amendment or supplement may have taken place.

Time Limits: All time limits herein shall consist of school days. The time limits indicated hereunder will be considered maximum unless extended by mutual agreement in writing. In the event a grievance is filed which cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of the grievant or the Association prior to the termination of this Agreement, or beyond the successor agreement, using the normal time limits set out herein, the Association may submit the grievance directly to arbitration in accordance with Level Four of this procedure.

If at the end of thirty (30) school days from the grievant's or Association's first awareness, the above grievance shall not have been presented to Level Two, the grievance shall be deemed to have been waived; and any grievance in course under such procedure shall also be deemed to have been waived if the action required shall not have been taken within the specified time.

If a grievance is being processed in accordance with the provisions of this Article and the summer school vacation comes within the processing period of that grievance, it shall be processed as follows:

1. Prior to the close of the school year, the Principal at Level 1 or the Superintendent at Level 2 will meet with the grievant and/or Association at a time/date to be scheduled during the months of June and July. If the grievance is not resolved that meeting, then:
2. It shall be heard at an August regular meeting of the Committee, unless notification is given at the close of the school year that the grievant is unavailable due to prior travel plans, to attend the August meeting, in which case the grievance shall be heard at the September meeting.

Level One - A ESP and/or the Association with a grievance shall first verbally present the claim and evidence to the Principal in an effort to resolve the grievance informally. The Principal will have five (5) school days to respond.

Level Two - A ESP and/or the Association with a grievance will present the grievance to the Superintendent, in writing, either directly or through the Association.

The Superintendent then has five (5) school days to respond, in writing, to the grievance. In the event the Superintendent does not respond, the grievant or the Association may present the grievance to Level Three.

Level Three - If the grievance is not resolved to the satisfaction of the grievant or the Association at Level Two, the ESP the Association may present the grievance, in writing, to the School Committee within five (5) days.

The School Committee will respond in writing within three (3) days after the next regularly scheduled school committee meeting. Prior to a Level Three grievance hearing, either party may request the sequestering of witnesses. A majority vote of both committees will be necessary for sequestering to occur.

If, during the course of a hearing before the School Committee pursuant to this section, the Superintendent intends to discuss, refer to, or introduce any personnel files or information (including for purposes of this section any employee disciplinary records), unless the parties otherwise agree, all persons other than, for the School Committee, any or all members of the School Committee, the Superintendent, the school attorney, and the Superintendent's confidential secretary and, for the Association, the Association's officers, MTA representative, and the grievant shall leave the hearing room until such discussion, reference and introduction of personnel files or information is completed. However, nothing herein shall be construed to limit either party in calling witnesses to appear and testify in the course of its presentation to the School Committee concerning the grievance.

Level Four - If the grievance is not resolved to the satisfaction of the grievant and/or the Association at Level Three, the Association may by giving written notice to the school committee within twenty (20) school days, present the grievance for arbitration, in which event the Association shall forthwith submit the grievance to the Massachusetts Division of Labor Relations for deferral docket or other arbitration forum if mutually agreed.

The expense of such arbitration, if any, inclusive of per-diem cost of the arbitrator, actual and necessary travel, subsistence expenses, and the cost of the hearing room if not held at the school, shall be shared equally between the Committee and the Association. It is further understood that the cost of a participant's counsel, external advisor(s) or witness(es) shall not be part of shared expenses. Arbitration hearings shall be scheduled after normal school hours, when possible. Unless mutually agreed to the contrary, hearings will be held at the school building of the Farmington River Regional School District in which the grievance originated. The grievant and one (1) additional witness shall be released for up to three (3) days, with pay, to attend the grievance arbitration. Additional witnesses will be released provided the one released witness covers for them during their absence from the classroom.

The decisions of the arbitrator, if within his scope of authority, will be presented to the School Committee and the Association and shall be final and binding upon the School Committee and the Association and the aggrieved person or persons.

Arbitration:

The arbitrator so selected will confer with the representatives of the School Committee and the grievance representative selected by the aggrieved party, and hold hearings promptly and will issue his decision not later than thirty (30) days from the date of the close of the hearing, or if oral hearings have been waived, then from the date the final statements and proofs are submitted to him. The arbitrator shall be granted time extensions if necessary. The arbitrator's decision will be in writing, and will set forth his finding of fact, reasoning and conclusions on the issues submitted. The arbitrator shall have no power to add to, or subtract from, modify, or

amend any of the provisions of this Agreement, nor shall he override the duties and responsibilities of the School Committee granted by this law and this Agreement. Neither party will be permitted to assert any charges before the arbitrator, which were not previously disclosed to the other party. All grievants shall be required to perform the assignments and applicable rules and regulations of the School Committee while the grievance is being processed unless the actions are stopped by a court decision.

If either the employee or the Association is seeking to challenge an action or omission of the employer, and he or it has the ability to do so in forums other than arbitration, as well as arbitration, they must elect either arbitration or the other forum, but may not proceed in both. Filing a complaint, charge or claim in any other forum will immediately foreclose arbitration as a forum for the contested action or omission of the employer.

General Provisions:

1. The Association and the School Committee shall have the right to use, in its own presentation at any level of their grievance procedure, any representative of its own choosing.
2. The School Committee acknowledges the right of the Association to participate in the processing of a grievance at any level.
3. No reprisals of any kind will be taken by the School Committee or the school administrator against any ESP because of his participation in the grievance procedure.
4. The School Committee and the administration will cooperate with the Association in its investigation of any grievance, and further agree to exchange with the Association such information as is required for the processing of any grievance.
5. All documents, communications and records dealing with the grievance will be filed separately from the personnel files of the participants.
6. All decisions rendered at Levels Two and Three of the grievance procedure will be, in writing, and will be transmitted promptly to the grievant, the Association, and, at Level Three, to the School Committee.
7. Provided the parties agree, Level One and/or Level Two of the grievance procedure may be bypassed, and the grievance brought directly to Level Three.

**ARTICLE VI
WAGES AND OTHER BENEFITS**

A. ESP Wage Scale

Step	2026-2027	2026-2027	2027-2028	2027-2028	2028-2029	2028-2029
	Hourly	Salary	Hourly	Salary	Hourly	Salary
1	\$20.28	\$22,084.92	\$ 21.78	\$23,718.42	\$23.03	\$25,079.67
2	\$20.76	\$22,607.64	\$ 22.26	\$24,241.14	\$23.51	\$25,602.39
3	\$21.26	\$23,152.14	\$ 22.76	\$24,785.64	\$24.01	\$26,146.89
4	\$21.77	\$23,707.53	\$ 23.27	\$25,341.03	\$24.52	\$26,702.28
5	\$22.28	\$24,262.92	\$ 23.78	\$25,896.42	\$25.03	\$27,257.67
6	\$22.82	\$24,850.98	\$ 24.32	\$26,484.48	\$25.57	\$27,845.73
7	\$23.36	\$25,439.04	\$ 24.86	\$27,072.54	\$26.11	\$28,433.79
8	\$23.92	\$26,048.88	\$ 25.42	\$27,682.38	\$26.67	\$29,043.63
9	\$24.49	\$26,669.61	\$ 25.99	\$28,303.11	\$27.24	\$29,664.36
10	\$25.08	\$27,312.12	\$ 26.58	\$28,945.62	\$27.83	\$30,306.87
11	\$25.68	\$27,965.52	\$ 27.18	\$29,599.02	\$28.43	\$30,960.27
12	\$26.30	\$28,640.70	\$ 27.80	\$30,274.20	\$29.05	\$31,635.45
13	\$26.93	\$29,326.77	\$ 28.43	\$30,960.27	\$29.68	\$32,321.52

Cafeteria Workers Wage Scale

Step	2026-2027	2026-2027	2027-2028	2027-2028	2028-2029	2028-2029
	Hourly	Salary	Hourly	Salary	Hourly	Salary
1	\$20.29	\$24,134.96	\$21.79	\$25,919.21	\$23.04	\$27,406.08
2	\$20.77	\$24,705.92	\$22.27	\$26,490.17	\$23.52	\$27,977.04
3	\$21.27	\$25,300.67	\$22.77	\$27,084.92	\$24.02	\$28,571.79
4	\$21.77	\$25,895.42	\$23.27	\$27,679.67	\$24.52	\$29,166.54
5	\$22.29	\$26,513.96	\$23.79	\$28,298.21	\$25.04	\$29,785.08
6	\$22.83	\$27,156.29	\$24.33	\$28,940.54	\$25.58	\$30,427.41
7	\$23.37	\$27,798.62	\$24.87	\$29,582.87	\$26.12	\$31,069.74
8	\$23.93	\$28,464.74	\$25.43	\$30,248.99	\$26.68	\$31,735.86
9	\$24.50	\$29,142.75	\$26.00	\$30,927.00	\$27.25	\$32,413.88
10	\$25.09	\$29,844.56	\$26.59	\$31,628.81	\$27.84	\$33,115.68
11	\$25.70	\$30,570.15	\$27.20	\$32,354.40	\$28.45	\$33,841.28
12	\$26.31	\$31,295.75	\$27.81	\$33,080.00	\$29.06	\$34,566.87
13	\$26.95	\$32,057.03	\$28.45	\$33,841.28	\$29.70	\$35,328.15

Van Drivers Wage Scale

Step	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029
	Hourly	Hourly	Hourly
1	\$20.28	\$21.78	\$23.03
2	\$20.82	\$22.32	\$23.57
3	\$21.35	\$22.85	\$24.10
4	\$21.89	\$23.39	\$24.64
5	\$22.42	\$23.92	\$25.17
6	\$22.96	\$24.46	\$25.71
7	\$23.50	\$25.00	\$26.25
8	\$24.03	\$25.53	\$26.78
9	\$24.57	\$26.07	\$27.32
10	\$25.10	\$26.60	\$27.85
11	\$25.64	\$27.14	\$28.39
12	\$26.17	\$27.67	\$28.92
13	\$26.71	\$28.21	\$29.46

B. Academic Differential

Degree	Per Hour
Associate	\$1.00
BA	\$1.50
MA	\$2.00

To qualify for the MA differential the degree must be in a discipline that DESE deems appropriate for licensure at the elementary level.

This stipend shall be paid in each of the 21/22 pay periods.

C. High Special Needs Stipend

Paraprofessionals from this point forward shall be entitled to additional compensation of \$2.00 per hour if they are classified as follows:

1. Who are required to engage in toileting/diapering students as a part of a student's written plan. (Note: this may or may not be an IEP. Ex: a written toileting plan)
2. Who are working with a student with a developmental disorder or another comparable disability entailing the possibility of a serious student behavior disorder.
3. For any other identified high special need(s) that are not contained in #1 or #2 above.

A determination regarding a Paraprofessional's entitlement to the differential amount shall be made by the Superintendent or his/her designee, and such administrative determination shall be final and shall not be subject to the grievance and arbitration provisions of the agreement unless said decision is arbitrary or capricious.

Once a Paraprofessional is assigned in such a capacity, they shall receive the stipend in accordance with their FTE proportion designated to the High Special Needs student(s) regardless of student(s) attendance.

It is understood that exigent circumstances (i.e. student moves away) may necessitate a reassignment/transfer of the assigned paraprofessional at any time. Additionally, the paraprofessional shall receive the stipend if the student(s) is absent and has not provided at least 24-hour prior notice.

Any ESP that substitutes for a person in a position with an extra stipend will be paid the stipend for each hour actually worked in that capacity.

D. Holidays

ESPs will receive the following holidays with pay:

Labor Day	Christmas Day
Columbus Day	New Year's Day
Veterans Day	Martin Luther King Jr. Day
Thanksgiving	Memorial Day
	Juneteenth (if the school year extends beyond the holiday)

Effective with the 2027–2028 school year, the day following Thanksgiving shall be added as a paid holiday for all members of the bargaining unit.

Effective with the 2028–2029 school year, Presidents' Day shall be added as a paid holiday for all members of the bargaining unit.

E. Mileage

Mileage incurred as part of the job-related responsibilities will be reimbursed per approved work mile at the current IRS-approved rate. The employee must submit, to the Business Manager, in writing, a mileage document stating the date(s), locations(s), miles round-trip, and the reason for the trip. Upon approval, the Paraprofessional will be reimbursed. The commuting mileage of the ESP from home to their regularly assigned worksite is not reimbursable.

F. Longevity

- A. ESP members who have completed service in the Farmington River Regional School District as indicated below will be entitled to the following annual longevity payment:

Years of Service	Longevity Amount
5-9	\$300
10-14	\$600
15-19	\$900
20-24	\$1,200
25+	\$1,500

Effective for the 2027-2028 school year the annual longevity shall be the following:

Years of Service	Longevity Amount
5-9	\$400
10-14	\$800
15-19	\$1,100
20-24	\$1,400
25+	\$1,700

Effective for the 2028-2029 school year the annual longevity shall be the following:

Years of Service	Longevity Amount
5-9	\$500
10-14	\$1,000
15-19	\$1,300
20-24	\$1,600
25+	\$1,900

- B. Employees who were employed within the first ninety (90) school days of the start of the school year shall have that school year counted towards years of longevity.

ARTICLE VII ABSENCES/LEAVE

A. Sick Leave

1. September 1st each ESP, including those who have reached accumulation, will receive fifteen (15) paid days sick leave. Part time ESPs will receive fifteen (15) paid equivalent days of sick leave. (Half-time = 7.5 days). Up to four (4) days of sick leave may be used in hourly increments. Any hourly sick leave used in excess of these four (4) days shall be taken in half-day or full-day increments.

2. A first year ESP will receive days or equivalent days if part-time as follows: 5 days September 1st and one additional day for each month worked.
3. In the 2026–2027 school year, the maximum accumulation will increase to one hundred thirty-five (135) days. In the 2027–2028 school year, the maximum accumulation will increase to one hundred fifty (150) days. In the 2028–2029 school year, the maximum accumulation will increase to one hundred sixty-five (165) days.
4. Sick days are to be used for the personal illness of the ESP or for illness of an employee's immediate family member, as defined in Article VI, §B, or for other dependents living within the employee's household. These days are for the expressed purpose of restoring the health of the ESP, caring for an illness of other individuals defined above or as otherwise specified in this contract.
5. A request to care for persons outside the employee's permanent home, and/or an extension of the above days due to critical illness, must be supported by a statement of circumstances attested by the attending physician, and provided the Superintendent/Principal who may approve leave days deemed necessary and deductible from accumulated sick leave. Efforts by the employee to secure alternative care will be a part of the statement of circumstances and the decision of the Superintendent will be non-arbitrable and non-grievable.
6. As per Article VII A.1. above, ESP that have accumulated the maximum number of sick days shall receive an additional fifteen days per year to use during the course of the school year. ESP shall be reimbursed for up to five of the fifteen days that remain unused by the end of the school year at a rate of \$80.00 per day. The rest of the unused sick leave above the maximum shall not be carried over to the next year, nor shall they be reimbursed.
7. To reward good attendance each year, ESPs will be given per diem pay as follows: If ESPs

have taken 0 sick days in a school year, they will receive 1 day's pay. If ESPs have taken one (1) sick day in a school year, they will receive one half (.5) day's pay.

B. Sick Leave Bank

1. The purpose of the Sick Leave Bank is to provide additional sick leave time to employees who have exhausted their personal sick leave as a result of a prolonged and/or catastrophic event due to an illness and/or injury. Applications must meet the above definition/standard.
2. All employees shall belong to the Sick Leave Bank ("Bank"), and shall, upon being employed by the Farmington River Public Schools, contribute one (1) sick leave day to the Bank in his/her first and second year of employment. Individuals employed as of September 1, 2023, shall each contribute one (1) sick leave day at the beginning of the 2023-2024 school year and at the beginning of each successive school year thereafter until the accumulation has reached at least eighty (80) days.

3. At any time that the total number of days in the Bank is reduced to eighty (80), each member of the bank shall contribute one (1) additional day.
4. The maximum number of days that may accumulate in the Bank is three hundred sixty (360).
5. If at any time a contribution is required and an individual(s) has no available sick leave days to contribute, the necessary contribution will be taken from the individual(s) allotment of sick leave days in the next school year.
6. In order to access the Sick Leave Bank, an employee must submit a written request to the Sick Leave Bank Committee. Said request must include a completed Family and Medical Leave Act form.
7. The Sick Leave Bank Committee shall consist of three (3) members as follows: the FRREA President or his/her designee, and two FRREA appointees, one (1) from the teacher unit and one (1) from the ESP unit, chosen by the FRREA President.
8. The Sick Leave Bank Committee shall review the employee's submission and the applicant's prior leave usage. The Sick Leave Bank Committee shall make a determination regarding whether to grant or deny the request within three (3) school days of the receipt of the request. A majority vote of the Sick Leave Bank is necessary to grant a request.
9. In the event the Sick Leave Bank Committee denies a request, the applicant may request reconsideration of said determination in writing within ten (10) school days of receipt of the denial. The applicant may attend the appeal meeting, and present additional information. A majority vote of the Sick Leave Bank Committee is necessary to reverse its prior determination.
10. The Sick Leave Bank Committee, by majority vote, can decide to allow an applicant, upon his/her return to work from a leave allowed by the Sick Leave Bank Committee, to borrow up to ten (10) sick days against the annual sick leave amount to be credited to the employee in the following year. This benefit can only be accessed one time during any given contract year. Any sick days that are not used by the end of the year shall be returned to the Sick Leave Bank. Any advanced sick days that are used shall be deducted from the applicant's following year annual allotment.
11. Any determinations of the Sick Leave Bank Committee pursuant to sections 7 and 8 above shall be final and binding.
12. No employee may use more than one hundred eighty (180) days from the Bank for each illness. Whether an illness is the same illness for purposes of this subsection shall be determined by satisfactory medical evidence.
13. No part of the sick bank is subject to arbitration or grievance except if the district does not allocate as directed by the sick bank committee.
14. The District shall be held harmless from any claim that originates under this provision.

15. No decision by the sick bank committee is binding on the district for anything, except for allocating sick days. The district is the arbiter of the determination of whether someone can stay away from work.

C. Bereavement Leave

Each ESP shall be granted up to five (5) working days paid bereavement applicable to the death of a spouse/partner, child, sibling and parent; three (3) paid working days for grandmother, grandfather, grandchild, father-in-law, mother-in-law; two (2) paid working days for uncle, aunt, niece, nephew or first cousin living outside the household of the ESP; one (1) paid working day for others subject to advance approval of the Superintendent or his designee, the latter to be non-grievable and non-arbitrable, all to be non-cumulative and non-transferable. All days above are to be days the employee would have worked and/or which the employee would not have been absent for any other reason.

D. Personal Leave

1. ESPs will be granted up to three (3) days leave for personal reasons. Those days are not to be deducted from sick leave. Up to one (1) day of personal leave may be used in hourly increments. Any hourly personal leave used in excess of this (1) day shall be taken only in full-day or half-day increments. For purposes of this section, a half-day shall be defined as one-half of the employee's regularly scheduled workday. No other fractional use of personal leave shall be permitted. Unused personal days shall carry over to the next year's accumulated sick days. In order to be eligible for payment for these days, at least twenty-four (24) hours' notice must be given to the Superintendent or his designee prior to taking such days when possible. Additional personal days may be granted at the sole discretion of the Superintendent and shall be deducted from accumulated sick leave.
2. Employees may use a "Personal Day" on the last workday preceding a holiday or vacation, or on the first workday following a holiday or vacation expressly under the conditions listed below.
 - a. The building principal will approve a Personal Day as referenced in this Section with a maximum cap of no more than two (2) employees.
 - b. The granting of Personal Days shall be in the order in which written requests for such days are received by the building principal, unless an employee making a request has requested the use of a Personal Day under this Section within the previous year. In such case, all employees who have not used a Personal Day under this Section shall receive first priority.
 - c. An employee may take no more than two (2) Personal Days referenced under this Section in any given school year.
 - d. An employee may not request a Personal Day referenced under this Section more than one calendar year in advance, except for an extraordinary or unique circumstance (i.e., wedding, family reunion, college graduation, certain types of travel, etc...). Documentation may be requested.

- e. In the Superintendent's sole discretion, the Superintendent may approve the use of personal days under this Section that would exceed the two (2) employee per day limit, or an additional day to an employee adjoining a holiday/vacation break under this Section.

E. Parental Leave

Employees shall be entitled to up to ten (10) workdays of paid leave under the Massachusetts Paid Family and Medical Leave Act ("MPLA") for the birth, adoption, or placement of a child, or to care for a newborn or newly placed child. Such leave shall be paid by the District and shall not be deducted from the employee's accrued sick leave, personal leave, or other paid leave balances.

In situations where both parents are employees of the District and are covered under this Agreement or another District collective bargaining agreement, the employees shall be entitled to a combined total of ten (10) paid workdays under this provision, to be allocated between them by mutual agreement.

F. Other Temporary Leaves of Absence

An ESP may be granted the following unpaid leaves upon application to and approval of the Superintendent. Benefits in effect at the time leave of absence starts, will be restored upon return. The ESP will be assigned to the same or an equivalent position if the position is not affected by economic conditions or other changes in operating conditions affecting employment during the period of leave.

1. Maternity Leave (FMLA) for up to (12) weeks or the length of the disability. ESPs may use accumulated sick leave and health insurance will remain in effect. When maternity leave expires, health insurance coverage will continue with the employee paying 100% of the cost. ESPs on approved extended maternity leave (beyond 12 weeks) shall maintain their portion of health insurances costs and the District shall continue to pay their portion of the premiums. The leave can be non-consecutive should a portion of the said leave fall during the summer vacation. An employer's obligation to maintain health benefits stops if the employee fails to return to work when the leave entitlement is exhausted.
2. Adoption Leave (FMLA) for up to (12) weeks or the length of the disability. ESPs may use accumulated sick leave and health insurance will remain in effect. ESPs on approved extended adoption leave (beyond 12 weeks) shall maintain their portion of health insurances costs and the District shall continue to pay their portion of the premiums. The leave can be non-consecutive should a portion of the said leave fall during the summer vacation. An employer's obligation to maintain health benefits stops if the employee fails to return to work when the leave entitlement is exhausted.
3. Child Rearing Leave for a child under 5 years, up to two (2) years with a September 1st return unless other arrangements have been agreed to by the Committee. Additional benefits will not accrue during the leave. Health insurance does not apply. Participation in the group plan can continue with the employee paying 100% of the cost.
4. The parties agree to abide by the Family Medical Leave Act of 1993, the National Defense Authorization Act, Massachusetts Parental Leave Act (M.G.L. c. 149, § 105D), Domestic Violence Leave Act (M.G.L. c. 149, s. 52E) and Small Necessities Leave Act (M.G.L. 149, § 52D).

G. Other Extended Leave

Extended leaves of absence, without pay, may be granted by the Committee. Such decisions of the Committee are non-grievable and non-arbitrable. Benefits in effect at the time leave commenced, exclusive of accumulated computation during the leave period, will be restored upon return and his/her assignment to the same or equivalent position will be restored if said position is not affected by economic conditions or other changes in operating conditions affecting employment during the period of leave. When a leave is unpaid, the ESP may continue health coverage, but must pay 100% of the premium.

H. Jury Duty

ESPs requested to serve on jury duty shall be paid the difference between compensation paid to the court and their regular salary, if such duty occurs on a normal workday. The difference paid shall not include mileage, nor shall the total exceed their regular rate of pay. Staff shall make every effort to schedule jury duty during non-school periods in the best interest of teaching continuity and student welfare.

**ARTICLE VIII
WORK DAY/WORK YEAR**

A. Work Year

1. The work year of employees will begin no earlier than five (5) consecutive workdays prior to Labor Day. These days shall consist of the 180 student days and the days referenced in the first paragraph of Article XXVIII. The work year may start earlier provided there is mutual agreement. New personnel may be required to attend one (1) additional orientation session, not to exceed a total of 184 days. Days considered necessary for scheduling, training sessions, and/or opening and closing staff activities may be scheduled by the Administration within the above-specified framework, provided the Department of Education regulations have been met.

2. Days worked beyond the above limits may be authorized and, if so, shall be reimbursed at the ESP's regular hourly rate.

B. Workday

1. The workday of paraprofessionals within this contract will be 8:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. The workday for cafeteria workers within this contract will be 7:00 a.m.– 1:30 p.m.

2. Paraprofessionals may attend up to ten (10) faculty meetings, with pay, as they are duly called with 48 hours' notice; emergency meetings where the health and safety of students require an immediate response; and meet after school with parents on a scheduled basis as necessary. Faculty meetings will not be scheduled on Fridays or the day prior to a holiday. Cafeteria workers shall not be required to regularly attend faculty meetings; however, administration can require attendance with 48 hours' notice. Also, a cafeteria worker may request permission of the principal to attend a faculty meeting(s). In both instances will be paid at the employees regular hourly rate. Part-time ESPs who work only in the morning will be

encouraged to meet with the Principal to discuss faculty-meeting issues when not otherwise required to attend a meeting.

3. ESPs will be paid his/her regular hourly for additional work outside of the normal workday. If said hours accumulate sufficiently in a given work period the ESP will be paid the appropriate overtime rate. ESPs will be responsible to maintain a record/log of their hours.

4. ESPs, other than cafeteria workers, will be granted a thirty (30) minute, unpaid, duty-free period between 11:00 AM and 1:30 PM of each school day.

5. Cafeteria workers shall receive a paid fifteen (15) minute break to be taken at any time during his/her scheduled work day. It is understood that said break shall not interfere with the serving of lunch.

6. Paraprofessional may request to volunteer to do an assignment on planned half days. Request must be in writing, pre-approve by the Principal.

7. Part-time ESPs who attend any field trip that required full day attendance, with approval of the Principal, will be paid for a full day.

8. Any part-time ESP who is required to attend an in-service program that requires full day attendance will be paid for the full workday.

ARTICLE IX ASSIGNMENTS

On or before June 15th, the Administration shall notify each ESP, in writing, of his assignment for the next school year. If a change in assignment is necessary after June 15th due to unforeseen circumstances at the time of the initial assignment, the ESP will be informed in writing by the Administration of the change and the reason(s) no later than August 1st. The ESP may request to meet with the Principal within five (5) days of the receipt of the written change in assignment. The Principal, upon such a request, will promptly meet with the ESP. The ESP may have a representative of the Association present at the meeting. It is understood that any change resulting from the unscheduled departure of any staff member that necessitates realignment or reassignment will not pertain to this section.

ARTICLE X PERSONNEL RECORDS

- A. ESPs will have the right, upon request, to review and make copies of all records concerning them, or their work maintained by the Committee or any agent thereof.
- B. Material derogatory to an ESP's conduct, service, character or personality will not be placed in his personnel file unless the ESP has had an opportunity to review such material, by affixing his signature to the copy to be filed with the express understanding that such signature in no way indicates agreement with the contents thereof. The ESP will also have the right to submit a written answer to such material, and his answer shall be reviewed by the Superintendent and be attached with the file copy; such review shall not be interpreted to constitute agreement with said answer. Certified mailing procedures will be used when normal means of communication are unsuccessful.
- C. Oral complaints regarding an ESP and requiring administrative action, made to a member of the administration by a parent, student or other persons will be called to the attention of the ESP before action is taken. Written complaints directed toward an employee which are placed in his/her personnel file shall be called to the employee's attention within five (5) school days. Certified mailing procedures will be used when normal means of communication are unsuccessful.
- D. At the time of severance from the school system, an ESP will have the opportunity to indicate those documents and/or other records, which she/he believes to be obsolete or otherwise inappropriate for retention. Records, seven (7) years or more of age, will be destroyed, upon request, unless involved in an active or pending suit, or otherwise mandated by retention requirements, or felt to be of significant future importance by the Superintendent.
- E. The Superintendent shall ensure that records relating to ESPs are accurate.

ARTICLE XI VACANCIES AND TRANSFERS

A. Voluntary Transfers

1. **Definition:** The assignment of an employee to a different job classification, grade level, subject area, or building shall be considered a transfer. A voluntary transfer is a transfer requested by the employee.

2. **Notification of Vacancies:**

Posting - Upon knowledge of vacancies, the Superintendent shall deliver to the Association and post in all school buildings a list of vacancies which occur during the school year and for the following school year. Such notice shall be posted for at least ten (10) school days to allow an employee who has not previously filed a written statement of a desire for transfer to request a voluntary transfer to said vacancy. When occurring during the summer vacation (it) will be posted for ten (10) calendar days (non-school year).

Additionally, all before and after school duties shall be posted in the same manner as above. If there are no applicants for any individual posted position, the Principal shall have the authority to appoint a unit member to said position.

3. Filing Requests - An employee who desires a change in grade and/or subject assignment or who desires to transfer to another building may file a written statement of such desire with the Superintendent. Such statement shall include the grade and/or subject to which the employee desires to be assigned and the school or schools to which the employee desires to be transferred, in order of preference. Such requests for transfers and reassignments for the following year shall be submitted not later than May 1.

4. Procedure

- a) Requests for voluntary reassignment or transfer will result in a conference with the Superintendent prior to any decision on said request. Notice of the denial of a voluntary transfer request shall be delivered to the employee with a copy to the Association as soon as possible following the decision.

- b) If more than one (1) employee with the appropriate qualifications has applied for the same position, the determination as to which employee shall receive it shall be made on the basis of evaluated performance, length of service and qualifications: and when all the factors that constitute evaluated performance and qualifications are equal, length of continuous service shall prevail.

- c) Staff within the District may apply for posted new positions or assignments and will be interviewed by the Principal prior to the position being filled. A substitute or acting appointment may be affected by the Principal when deemed in the best interests of the District.

- d) Any vacancies that occur in the summer months shall be sent to each member of the bargaining unit who requests such notice and provides sufficient ESP addressed envelopes. Notice will be made simultaneously with the posting of the same.

- B. Involuntary Transfers

1. Definition - The assignment of an employee to a different job classification, grade level, subject area, building or District shall be considered a transfer. An involuntary transfer is a transfer not initiated by the employee's request.

2. Notice - Notice of an involuntary transfer or reassignment shall be given, in writing, to the affected employee with a copy to the Association as soon as practical but no later than June 15, except in cases of death, resignation or incapacitation.

3. Procedure - If an involuntary transfer or reassignment is necessary only employees properly trained and qualified in the subject/area and/or level to which the involuntary transfer is necessary, shall be transferred.

- a. If it is deemed beneficial to the District for an employee covered by this contract to be assigned to another location within the District, either permanently or temporarily, to perform the same job function, the employee shall be notified in writing by the Superintendent and/or Principal. Such changes may take place immediately and are non-grievable unless deemed arbitrary and capricious.
- b. The Principal will make every effort to restrict such transfers to no more than three (3) grade levels and shall be in the best educational interest of the School District. However, for good reason the Principal may transfer an employee beyond the three (3) grade level restriction above.
- c. If for economic, programmatic or other reasons related to the overall effectiveness of the District, the Superintendent and/or designee deems it appropriate to involuntarily transfer a member of the Association to another position that member shall retain his/her current pay, exclusive of stipends, unless appropriate.
- d. Whenever the Superintendent and/or designee deems it advisable to change the work assignment of an employee, notice shall be given to the employee or employees involved. If the involved employee wishes to discuss such change of work assignment prior to the effective date of the change of work assignment, the employee shall request a conference within five (5) workdays of the receipt of the notice of change of work assignment. The Principal shall confer with the employee within five (5) work days of receipt of such request and consider the employee's comments before implementing the change of assignment. Employee(s) may have present a Representative of the Association.
- e. When appropriate, employees covered by this contract will receive training for their new position as soon as possible.
- f. An employee whose work assignment is changed, may in writing, within three (3) workdays of the date of the conference with the Principal, request a conference with the Superintendent for the purpose of reviewing the decision. The Superintendent shall confer with the employee within ten (10) calendar days of receipt of such request for the purpose of said review. At the employee's request, the Association may accompany the employee in order to bargain the impact of the new work assignment. The decision of the Superintendent shall be rendered within five (5) workdays after said review and shall be final and binding upon all parties and not subject to either grievance or arbitration. The change of work assignment shall not be implemented until the Superintendent renders a decision.

C. Summer Positions

1. All summer program positions will be posted appropriately.
2. ESPs will be offered summer program positions before outside applicants are considered. Preference will be given to an ESP who currently holds the position during the school year. The district will make every effort to post known positions by May 15 and notify successful candidates by June 1.

ARTICLE XII REDUCTION IN FORCE

In the event it becomes necessary to reduce the number of employees included in the bargaining unit defined in its Article "Recognition," the Superintendent will take into consideration evaluated performance, length of service and qualifications; and when, in the opinion of the Committee, all the factors that constitute evaluated performance and qualifications are equal, length of continuous service shall prevail.

"Qualified" means that the ESP has on file with the office of the Superintendent evidence that he possesses the necessary qualifications or can obtain said qualifications by the effective date of his layoff. "Seniority" means an ESP's continuous length of service in years, months and days in the professional employment of the Farmington River Regional School District. ESPs shall be credited for seniority purposes with all time spent on any leave of absence provided for in this Agreement. In cases of ESPs who have identical seniority, preference for retention or recall shall be determined by drawing the name(s) out of a hat. The administration shall conduct the drawing in the presence of the Association leadership.

ESPs who are to be affected by reduction in staff will be notified, in writing, no later than June 15. Notice shall include the reasons for layoff.

ESPs who have been laid off shall be entitled to recall rights, for a period of time equal to the length of continuous service on the effective date of their respective layoffs, but under no circumstances more than two (2) years. During the recall period, ESPs shall be notified by certified mail to their last address of record and given preference for positions as they develop in the inverse order of their respective layoff; and all benefits to which an ESP was entitled at the time of layoff shall be restored in full upon re-employment within the recall period. During the recall period, ESPs who have been laid off shall be given every consideration for substitute work, if they so desire and express such desire in writing. ESPs called on to substitute will receive the same remuneration and benefits afforded other system substitutes.

The employee shall, within fourteen (14) calendar days following receipt of notice of recall by certified mail to the last address of record file acceptance through return of a signed form provided by the employer, of his/her intention to return or not return, by certified mail. If such acceptance is not received by the Superintendent's office by the end of the (14) calendar days following receipt of notice of recall by certified mail, it shall be considered a declination on the part of the employee. A refusal of two (2) positions within the two (2) year period

will result in said ESP being considered a new applicant for any future vacant or created position.

A list specifying the seniority of each member of the bargaining unit shall be prepared by the Committee and forwarded to the President of the Association no later than October 30 of each school year. Challenges to the list must be made by the Association prior to November 30 of each school year or the list will automatically become effective for the remainder of the school year. Provisions enumerated in the above Reduction-in-Force article apply to staff with professional status only except as addressed in paragraph #3.

ARTICLE XIII

DISCHARGE, DEMOTION, SUSPENSION

Discharge, demotion, suspension or reduction of salaries of ESPs, shall be as provided under Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 71, as amended.

ARTICLE XIV

RETIREMENT

An ESP who has sufficient sick time will, upon retirement, receive six (6) days of sick day pay for every five (5) years of service in the District, up to a maximum of thirty (30) days.

ARTICLE XV

PERSONAL INJURY

- A. ESPs shall report any injury to the Administration in writing within twenty-four (24) hours of its occurrence. The Administration will make every effort to assist ESPs in handling children who lose control and are violent.

Emergency procedures for handling such incidents will be set up in the school system for the protection of ESPs and children involved.

- B. This report will be forwarded to the administrator which will comply with a request from the ESP for information in its possession relating to the incident or the persons involved, and will act as liaison between the ESP, the police and the courts.
- C. ESPs eligible for Workmen's Compensation shall be paid the difference between their normal salary and Workmen's Compensation benefits as applicable to the Workmen's Compensation laws, provided they have sick leave days accrued. Deductions from accrued sick leave days shall be in proportion to the percentage of school district compensation. In the event a ESP has none or exhausts sick leave accrual, no differential above Workmen's Compensation shall be paid.

ARTICLE XVI INSURANCE

- A. The District shall provide 100% of the cost of a \$10,000 term life insurance policy, inclusive of accidental death and dismemberment insurance for the life of this Agreement. The District will further provide payroll deduction supporting optional coverage benefits. Said additional coverage to be paid solely by the employee.
- B. A plan under IRS Code Section 125 will be offered to employees, which reduces gross income, by insurance premium amounts for a lower net taxable base. The cost of establishing such a plan, if any, will be shared by the Association and the Committee.
- C. The District will provide Workman's Compensation, per statute and in accordance with the conditions of this agreement.
- D. The District and employees shall pay the following percentages herein provided for the cost of the following types of health insurance plans for the duration of this agreement.
 - (a.) Seventy Nine percent (79%) of the premium cost for a group HMO Blue New England Plan (HMO) and employees shall pay *twenty one* percent (21%) of the premium cost.
 - 2. Sixty Nine percent (69%) of the premium cost for a group PPO Blue New England Plan 2 (HMO) and employees shall pay *thirty one* percent (31%) of the premium cost.
- E. The Summary Plan Description for Each Plan Design is attached as Appendix E.
- F.
 - 1. The District may from time to time select and implement health insurance plans, select and discontinue health insurance plans and modify and change the provider, benefits, and all other provisions of all health insurance plans as allowed by law. No changes may be made to the percentage contribution set forth in D above. The District shall maintain plans that have substantially equivalent benefits to plans currently in existence. Changes may be made prior to bargaining the implementation and impact of the changes. However, after implementation, bargainable subjects relating to health insurance plans shall be bargained, if within six months of implementation the Association requests bargaining in writing.
 - 2. Notwithstanding the foregoing, if the Commonwealth of Massachusetts enacts legislation affecting health insurance provided by the District for its employees which prohibits continuation of one or more of the aforementioned health insurance plans, then upon written request by either party to the other party within six months of the enactment of such legislation, the parties shall collectively bargain health insurance, increases to wages and other economic provisions of this collective bargaining agreement.
- G. Health Insurance Plans Premium Surcharge: For any year in which any health insurance plan premium increases more than 12%, a surcharge is added to the amount payable under paragraph D, by the enrolled employees in said health insurance plan. The surcharge is equal to one half of the dollar increase in excess

of the 12% increase in premium. A surcharge can affect subsequent year rates, as a maximum increase of 12% per year is the only amount that the rates in paragraph D. apply to. If there are increases of less than 12%, then the rate would eventually revert back to the rates of paragraph D. (See example attached as Appendix A).

- H. A written description of the plans offered including coverage and limits will be available in the District Office. The District may, but need not, select and put into effect without further bargaining, such record plan(s) having such benefits and through such purchasing groups as the District shall from time to time elect to offer its employees.

ARTICLE XVII PAYROLL DEDUCTION

The Committee will perform payroll deduction services as follows:

1. (a) Chapter 32B Insurance, Medical and Life Insurance, ESPs Retirement System and Social Security, Association Dues, Annuities, IRA's and an agreed Plan under IRS Code Section 125.

(b) The Association will endeavor to limit the number of agencies used for deduction purposes, as enumerated in (a) above.
2. Payroll deductions may be made for other types of benefits required by statute or approved by the School Committee.
3. The Association agrees to indemnify and to hold the Committee harmless against any and all claims, demands, suits or other forms of liability that shall or may arise out of, or by reason of, any action taken by the Committee for the purposes of complying with the provisions of Section 1 above.
4. Payroll deduction authorizations, changes thereto, will be affected through the District Administration offices from 9/1-10/1 each work year. Modifications as a result of changed marital status, new hire, loss or gain of a dependent, may be affected on the next subsequent payroll warrant with sufficient notice.
5. Each ESP shall receive annually, no later than October 1st, a salary statement which will indicate column placement, step, credits, annual salary and accumulated sick leave.

ARTICLE XVIII
SUBSTITUTE ESPs

- A. To the extent possible, all absences will be filled by substitutes.
- B. The Paraprofessional who works in the classroom that is in need of a substitute will receive the first right of refusal to fill the substitute role.
- C. If all efforts to procure a substitute prove futile, the administration will distribute absentee assignment needs within the ESP staff.
- D. ESPs as Substitutes:
 - 1. When a Paraprofessional is directed by the Principal to substitute for a classroom teacher for a full day, the Paraprofessional will receive \$50.00 for their assignment in addition to their regular daily earnings for that day. The Paraprofessional will still carry out the lunch/recess duties they would normally have that day, unless it conflicts with the teaching schedule of the teacher for whom they are substituting. This shall also apply to a Cafeteria Worker who substitutes for the Cafeteria Manager.
 - 2. When a Paraprofessional is directed by the Principal to substitute for a classroom teacher for a half day, the Paraprofessional will receive an additional \$25.00 for their assignment in addition to their regular daily earnings for that day. The Paraprofessional will still carry out the lunch/recess duties they would normally have that day, unless it conflicts with the teaching schedule of the teacher for whom they are substituting. Additionally, if a Paraprofessional accumulates three (3) hours of substituting over multiple days, the Paraprofessional shall receive an additional \$25.00 in addition to their regular daily earnings in the next pay period. This shall also apply to a Cafeteria Worker who substitutes for the Cafeteria Manager.
 - 3. When a Paraprofessional with a Bachelor's or Master's Degree is directed by the Principal to substitute for a classroom teacher for an extended absence of more than ten (10) consecutive school days and the Paraprofessional is preparing all of the lesson plan and performing all of the tasks that the teacher would normally perform, the Paraprofessional will be paid THE DAILY STEP RATE OF STEP 1 BACHELOR'S OR MASTER'S LEVEL of the current year of the Teachers' Contract, for the duration of the extended assignment. If a paraprofessional is certified and has previous experience, s/he will be placed on the step of the teacher salary schedule that is appropriate to the individual's previous experience. NOTE: All wages are subject to state and federal taxes and lawful deduction

ARTICLE XIX GENERAL

An ESP signing a contract with another school system shall provide notice to the Superintendent within five (5) calendar days of signing and shall continue in their assignment for up to thirty (30) calendar days unless a suitable replacement is secured, in which event a mutual release date must be agreed to by the Superintendent and the ESP.

Upon being hired, ESPs new to the system will be given a copy of the current collective bargaining contract by the FRREA.

The District shall pay for all costs related to mandatory fingerprinting for current employees on record as of the time of ratification for one time only.

Recognizing the need for flexibility in scheduling of hours and other conditions of employment, the parties hereto agree that during the lifetime of this Agreement proposals may be exchanged from time to time which, if mutually acceptable, would be reduced to writing and implemented on a temporary basis until successor contract negotiations would deal with such matters on a permanent basis.

No employee will be disciplined, suspended, or discharged without just cause.

Adverse criticism of an employee by the employer or its agent shall be made in confidence and not in the presence of students or parents nor in other public gatherings. An administrator who receives criticism which they believe is valid shall call it to the attention of the employee as soon as possible.

APPOINTMENTS

Appointment to all positions will be made without regard to race, creed, color, religion, union activity, nationality, sex, gender identity, age, or marital status. CLASSROOM VISITATION

When parents or guardians request the opportunity to visit a classroom to observe a student, the scheduling of such visitation shall be through the building principal, following consultation with the affected employee.

ARTICLE XX PLACEMENT

A. Initial Placement:

Any employee covered by the contract who is employed by the District during the term of this agreement shall be advised in writing of the Step at which he/she is first employed at the commencement of his/her employment, and such employee shall be placed upon that Step commensurate with the employee's relevant experience for the particular position and educational degree(s). However, no new unit members shall be compensated at a level higher than an existing member(s) with comparable experience in the respective positions, except when, in the judgment of administration, the position requires special skills or licensure. Prior to a new unit member being

hired at a compensation rate equal to or higher than an existing unit member, a meeting between the hiring administrator and the FRREA President or his/her designee will occur to explain the rationale for the placement. All hiring notices will be sent to the FRREA President via school email as soon as practicable. B. System Entrance:

ESPs who enter the system at other than the beginning of the school year will be credited for a full year provided that the ESP has worked for a minimum of ninety-five (95) days in the school year.

C. Probationary Period:

The first three months of employment shall constitute the probationary period for all new paraprofessionals. During this time, performance shall be evaluated in writing by the principal and supervisor(s), using the regular evaluation form. At the completion of this evaluation, the employee shall meet with the Principal and supervisor(s) to discuss his/her progress. At the conclusion of the three-month probationary period, the Principal will make a decision to continue employment or to terminate.

ARTICLE XXI IMPACT BARGAINING

- A. The Committee will notify the Association of the intent to adopt a policy that may impact the wages, hours, and working conditions of employment.
- B. The Association may request a meeting within ten (10) days of such notice to discuss concerns such policy has on wages, hours and conditions of employment.
- C. The Committee, through designated persons, will meet as soon as possible, with the Association to negotiate the impact said policy has on the wages, hours and conditions of employment, if unable to resolve concerns at the discussion level (#2).
- D. Any Agreement reached by the parties as a result of this Article will be reduced to writing and will be signed by the Committee and the Association and will become an addendum to this Agreement.

ARTICLE XXII NO STRIKE CLAUSE

In consideration of this Agreement and its terms and conditions, the Association and its officers, representatives and members shall not, during the term of this Agreement, engage in or condone any strike, slow-down, or work stoppage.

**ARTICLE XXIII
PAST PRACTICE**

The wages, hours and other conditions of employment are subject to the provisions of this contract and will be applicable as expressly stated and agreed within the context of said contract.

**ARTICLE XXIV
LEGALITY OF PROVISIONS**

- A. If any provision of this Agreement or any application of this Agreement shall be found to be contrary to law, then such provision or application shall not be deemed valid, and subsisting, except to the extent permitted by law, but all other provisions or applications of the Agreement will continue in full force and effect. The parties will meet not later than fifteen (15) calendar days after any such finding for the purpose of renegotiating the provision or provisions affected.
- B. It is agreed and understood by the Committee and the Association that this Agreement has been entered into in good faith between the parties operating under the General Laws of Massachusetts. In executing this Agreement, neither party to this Agreement has waived any rights accorded it under the General Laws of Massachusetts.

**ARTICLE XXV
NEGOTIATIONS PROCEDURE**

- A. During negotiations, the Committee and the Association will present and exchange relevant data, and points of view, and make proposals and counter proposals. Neither party will be restricted in the use of professional or lay consultants to assist in the negotiations.
- B. If the negotiations described in Article 27 have reached impasse, the procedure described in Chapter 150E of the Acts of 1973, as amended from time to time, will be followed.

**ARTICLE XXVI
SUCCESSOR AGREEMENT**

The Committee and the Association agree to enter into negotiations over a successor agreement by November 1, of the year prior to the successor agreement. If a successor agreement is not reached before the expiration date of the existing contract, the existing contract shall remain in force and effect until the successor agreement has been reached, reduced to writing and signed by the Committee and the Association.

ARTICLE XXVI I DURATION

- A. This Contract constitutes agreement in respect to ESPs wages, hours and other conditions of employment and the School Committee will carry out the commitments contained herein and give them full force and effect.
- B. The provisions of the Agreement will be effective as of September 1, 2026 and will continue to remain in full force and effect until August 31, 2029.
- C. This Agreement shall be amended at any time by mutual consent of the Committee and the Association.

ARTICLE XXVIII PROFESSIONAL IMPROVEMENT

- A. The parties acknowledge that quality professional development is essential to maintaining a properly trained and efficient workforce. To that end, ESPs will be required to attend and participate in all professional development days offered by the District.
 - Van Drivers will attend the PD day before the start of school for state mandated training. They will complete state-required professional development to maintain their 7D license at district expense.
 - Cafeteria Workers will attend the PD day before the start of school for state mandated training. They will complete ServSafe Training at district expense.

In order to meet the time requirements set in the first paragraph of this section and provide the necessary flexibility needed for the specific positions, in addition to the PD day before the start of school, Van Drivers and Cafeteria Workers will have three (3) days of six (6) hours each or the equivalent hours (18 hours) of professional development. This time may or may not occur on the professional development days offered by the District. The time will be within the regular workday of the District/position.

The District shall provide support to employees for required training related to 7D licensure and for the uploading and submission of required documentation to the Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV).

B. Workshops/Conferences: The District will support individual attendance at workshops that help maintain curriculum currency and other relevant job skills. These workshops must have prior administrative approval.

Each year the budget will contain money for professional development which will be set aside for workshops.

Workshops/conferences must be in an appropriate field or topic and receive advance approval by the Superintendent of Schools on a form to be provided and maintained in each individual's personnel file.

ESPs will be reimbursed for estimated expenses detailed and approved in advance by the Superintendent, such to include registration fees, mileage, workshop materials deemed critical to participation, meals that are an intricate part of the conference/workshop schedule, lodging when said attendance exceeds 75 miles one way from the assignment site and participation continues beyond day one or multiples thereof. The County-wide Professional Development Day will be excluded from the above reimbursement.

C. Employees assigned to operate a 7D van transporting high special education needs students shall receive an additional stipend of two dollars (\$2.00) per hour for all hours worked in that assignment. Determination of whether a route or assignment involves high special education needs students shall be made by the Director of Student Services or designee.

D. The District shall reimburse employees for the cost of required licensing and renewal fees associated with their position, including the ParaPro examination (upon successful passage), ServSafe certification, and 7D licensure, including applicable renewal fees. Reimbursement shall be made upon submission of proof of payment and, where applicable, proof of successful completion or passage.

ARTICLE XXIX EVALUATION

The purpose of evaluation is to help improve the quality of the services rendered by ESPs.

Each ESP will be evaluated during each academic year. Evaluations will be in written form and be conducted openly and with full knowledge of the ESPs.

All evaluations will be prepared in two (2) copies using the form found in Appendix B. Each ESP will receive one (1) copy of the evaluation during a post evaluation conference with his/her evaluator within five (5) school days of receipt of the evaluation. Evaluations will be conducted and prepared by a member of the administration and, where applicable, either a unit member-supervisor or a division head.

Evaluations will be completed, and copies will be provided to each member of the ESP staff by June 1 of each academic year. The evaluation of June 1 will make a specific recommendation on continued employment.

ESPs will have fifteen (15) days from the receipt of the evaluation to make any written comments regarding their evaluation. Any such comments will be attached to the evaluation and placed in the personnel file.

ESPs will be given the opportunity to sign any evaluation given, with the understanding that their signature does not imply agreement with the contents of the evaluation

ARTICLE XXX HEALTH AND SAFETY

The School Committee recognizes its responsibility to provide a safe and healthful workplace, free from hazards or conditions which cause, or which are likely to cause accident, injury or illness to the teaching staff.

To this end, the School Committee agrees that it will take appropriate action to inform the Association and all affected ESPs of hazards or conditions which cause or which are likely to cause accident, injury or illness, and that it will make a good faith effort to correct such hazards or conditions.

The parties further agree that no member of the bargaining unit will be subject to restraint, interference, coercion, discrimination or reprisal for filing a report or for attempting to ameliorate an unsafe or unhealthy working condition.

ARTICLE XXXI DUES DEDUCTION

- A. The Committee agrees to deduct from the salaries of its employee's dues for the Paraprofessionals and Cafeteria Workers of the Farmington River Regional School District, a Union of the Farmington River Educators Association – MTA/NEA as said paraprofessional or cafeteria worker individually and voluntarily authorize the Committee to deduct and to transmit the monies promptly to the Association.

Educational Support Professional authorization will be in writing on the form set forth in Appendix C.

Any such authorization may be withdrawn by such paraprofessional or cafeteria worker by giving at least sixty (60) days' notice in writing of such withdrawal to the District Business Office. The Association will be notified promptly.

- B. The Association will certify annually and in writing to the Committee the current rate of its membership dues. The specific amount of the current dues of the Association will be certified to the Committee by the Association treasurer on or before September 15th of each school year.
- C. Deductions will be made in equal installments from the first and second paychecks in each month beginning with the first paycheck in October and ending with the second paycheck in June.

ARTICLE XXXII PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Professional Development Committee (PDC)

- a. The members of the Farmington River Regional Educators Association and the Farmington River School Committee believe it is in the best interest of the Farmington River Public School Community for the teaching staff, educational support professionals (ESPs), and administration to work collaboratively in order to determine activities that best reflect the needs of individual teachers/ESPs, the instructional needs of the students, and areas of need as identified in the school and district improvement plans and other measures of school and district effectiveness.
- b. The PDC will be formed each academic year consisting of professional and ESP staff that must include FRREA representation, school administrators, and the Superintendent or designee. It will convene as needed to examine research and data, discuss training needs, and design/modify the annual and long-range strategic plans for the district. The PDC shall ensure that sufficient time needed to complete the state, District, and any other mandatory training shall be provided to bargaining unit members for

professional development time during the workday. They shall also develop and implement an evaluation instrument to be used to assess the professional development programs presented. The recommended plan shall be developed with input from the PDC in collaboration with the Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development. Prior to implementation, the Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development shall send the final proposed Professional Development plan to the PDC for review. The District shall make the final determination concerning the content of Professional Development.

- c. The PDC will ensure that the District will provide PDP Certificates for all Professional Development Workshops that staff attend during District provided training. These certificates will be issued within thirty (30) days of the completion of the training and in no case later than the end of the school year.
- d. There shall be at least four (4) meetings, beginning with the 2023-2024 school year, and the first meeting shall be scheduled within the first six (6) weeks of school. The meeting schedule for the year shall be established at the first meeting.
- e. Staff membership on this committee will be organized by the FRREA. Staff participation will be completely voluntary.

SIGNATURE PAGE

In Witness Whereof, the parties set their hands and seals this day, _____.

FOR THE FARMINGTON RIVER REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE:

Dennis R. Hardie

Chairperson

30 September, 2026

Date

FOR THE FARMINGTON RIVER REGIONAL EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION:

[Signature]

Co-Chairperson

September 30, 2026

Date

Co-Chairperson

Date

APPENDIX A
Hypothetical Table Demonstrating
The Health Insurance Surcharge Calculation

THE STARTING PREMIUM AND PERCENTAGE
INCREASES ARE MADE UP!

Hypothetical Example of an HMO Family Plan:

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
2002	10%	8000	8000	6800	1200	0	0	0	6800	1200	85/15
2003	18%	9440	8960	7616	1344	480	240	240	7858	1584	83.2/16.8
2004	14%	10762	10035	8530	1505	727	364	364	8894	1869	82.6/17.4
2005	6%	11408	11239	9553	1686	169	84	84	9637	1770	84.5/15.5
2006	6%	12092	12092*	10278	1814	0	0	0	10278	1814	85/15

The amount in Column D will never exceed that in column C. When they are equal the ratio is back to the amount agreed to without a surcharge.

Column: A = The Fiscal Year-In this case FY03 is the first year with an increase over 12%. Until FY03, C=D.

B = The total %age increase for each year.

C = The total annual premium for the plan in dollars.

D = This is the non-surcharged portion of the insurance premium and is limited to no more than a 12% increase over the amount in column D from the previous year. This number is not a 12% increase of the prior year's total premium (column C). Prior years (Column D) x 1.12 or the number in column C whichever is lower.

E = The District's share of the amount in column D. (column D amt.) x .85 for an HMO or .75 for the PPO

F = The Employee's share of the amt. in Column D. (column D amt.) x .15 or .25 as above.

G = The amount of premium not in column D. Subtract column D from column C.

H = The district's share of Column G (column G) x 0.5 (50%)

I = The employee's share of Column G (column G) x 0.5 (50%)

J = The district's total premium payment column E + column H

K = The employee's total premium amt. Column F + Column I

L = The percentage amounts for that particular year Column J/Column C and Column K/Column C

The amount in columns G, H, and I are the surcharge amounts. This is the amount above a maximum annual 12% increase in insurance premium.

APPENDIX B

Farmington River Regional School District Paraprofessional Evaluation			
Name:			
COMMITMENT TO TOTAL PROGRAM	S	NI	NO
Shows interest and enthusiasm in the work			
Is willing to put in essential time & effort			
Is punctual			
Attends regularly			
Willingly accepts and carries out assignments			
Performs routine tasks efficiently			
RESPONSIVENESS TO PUPILS	S	NI	NO
Interacts positively with the pupils			
Shows concern for pupils' health & safety			
Accepts individual differences in pupils			
Shows resourcefulness in helping provide for pupils			
Treats all pupils fairly and respectfully			
DUTIES	S	NI	NO
Assists with office responsibilities			
One on one tutoring			
Supervision of large groups			
Supervision of small groups			
Is efficient and competent in carrying out assigned tasks			
Demonstrates initiative and resourcefulness in performing assigned tasks			
Maintains confidentiality and professional behavior			
STAFF RELATIONS	S	NI	NO
Accepts guidance & suggestions from supervising personnel			
Is supportive of supervisory staff and is an advocate for the larger school community			
Has a friendly working relationship with other Paraprofessionals and staff members			
Is a cooperative team member			
PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS	S	NI	NO
Has a neat, clean appearance			
Uses acceptable English in a clear and pleasant voice			
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	S	NI	NO
Shows evidence of professional training			
S - Satisfactory NI – Needs Improvement(verbal explanation provided) NO – No Opportunity to Observe			
Please Check One:			
☐ Recommend for Rehire	☐ Do Not Recommend for Rehire	☐ Recommend for Rehire on Probation	
Evaluator's Signature:			Date:
Paraprofessional's Signature:			Date:

(The Principal, Dir. Of Student Services, and Early Childhood Coordinator will complete and sign the final evaluation form which will be placed in the Paraprofessional's personnel file. A signed copy will be given to the Paraprofessional.)

Revised 5/23/08

Self Evaluation (optional)**General comments:**

Professional development (past, present, future):

Paraprofessional Signature:	Date:
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Comments from supervisor (optional)

(May include a plan for improvement with additional training.)

Supervisor Signature:	Date:
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Response to evaluation (optional)

Paraprofessional Signature:	Date:
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APPENDIX C

DUES DEDUCTION FORM

Educational Support Professional's authorization will be in the format set forth below:

"Dues Authorization"

Name _____

Address _____

I hereby request and authorize the Farmington River Regional School District Committee to deduct from my earnings and transmit to the Farmington River Educators Association an amount sufficient to provide for the regular payment of membership dues as certified by the Farmington River Educators Association.

I hereby waive all rights and claims for said monies to be deducted and transmitted in accordance with this authorization and relieve the Farmington River Regional School District Committee and all its officers from any liability whatsoever.

Educational Support Personnel's

Signature _____

Dated _____

Any such authorization for a subsequent school year may be withdrawn by such educational support personnel by giving at least sixty (60) days' notice in writing of such withdrawal to the Superintendent or his/her designee, who will promptly notify the Association.

The Association will certify annually and in writing to the Committee the current rate of its membership dues. The specific amount of the current dues of the Association shall be certified to the Committee by the Association treasurer on or before September 30th of each school year.

Deductions will be made in equal installments from the first and second paychecks in each month, beginning with the first paycheck in October and ending with the second paycheck in June.

APPENDIX D

APPENDIX F

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT RETIREMENT HEALTH INSURANCE

The Farmington River Regional School District and the Farmington River Regional Teachers Association hereby agree to the following:

The Farmington River Regional School District will vote, prior to September 1, 1999, the appropriate sections of Chapter 32B to provide for retirement health insurance for district employees. This retirement insurance will be at the rate in force in the district at the time that a person retires and provide for family coverage if the employee has family coverage at the time of retirement. The Farmington River Regional Teachers Association agrees that teachers will work 184 days in the school year 1999-2000, but be compensated for 183 days.

FARMINGTON RIVER REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

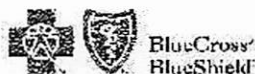
By Juan Valero Title Chair

Date 4-24-99

FARMINGTON RIVER REGIONAL TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

By Charles Leitch Title HTA President

Date 4/28/99



SUMMARY OF BENEFITS



Network Blue New EnglandSM \$300 Deductible

With Hospital Choice Cost Sharing
Plan Year Deductible: \$300/\$900



This health plan option includes a tiered network feature called Hospital Choice Cost Sharing. As a member in this plan, you will pay different levels of cost share (such as copayments and/or coinsurance) for certain services depending on the network general hospital you choose to furnish those covered services. For most network general hospitals, you will pay the lowest cost sharing level. However, if you receive certain covered services from any of the network general hospitals listed in this Summary of Benefits, you pay the highest cost sharing level. A network general hospital's cost sharing level may change from time to time. Overall changes to add another network general hospital to the highest cost sharing level will happen no more than once each calendar year. For help in finding a network general hospital (not listed in this Summary of Benefits) for which you pay the lowest cost sharing level, check the most current provider directory for your health plan option or visit the online provider search tool at www.bluecrossma.com/hospitalchoice. Then click on the Planning Guide link on the left navigation to download a printable network hospital list or to access the provider search page.



This health plan meets Minimum Creditable Coverage Standards for Massachusetts residents that went into effect as of January 1, 2014, as part of the Massachusetts Health Care Reform Law.

An Association of Mutual Life Insurance Companies (A-MLIC)

Your Care

Your Primary Care Provider.

When you enroll in Network Blue New England, you must choose a primary care provider (PCP) who is available to accept you and your family members and participates in our network of providers throughout the New England states. For children, you may designate a participating network pediatrician as the PCP.

For a list of participating PCPs or OB/GYNs, visit the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts website at www.bluemas.com, consult the Provider Directory, or call our Physician Selection Service at 1-800-821-1388. If you have trouble choosing a doctor, the Physician Selection Service can help. We can tell you whether a doctor is male or female, the medical school(s) he or she attended, and if any languages other than English are spoken in the office.

Referrals You Can Feel Better About.

Your PCP is the first person you call when you need routine or sick care (see *Emergency Care—Wherever You Are* for emergency care services). If you and your PCP decide that you need to see a specialist for covered services, your PCP will refer you to an appropriate network specialist who is probably someone affiliated with your PCP's hospital or medical group. You will not need prior authorization or referral to see a JMO Blue New England network provider who specializes in OB/GYN services. Your providers may also work with Blue Cross Blue Shield concerning referrals, and the Utilization Review Requirements, which are Pre-Admission Review, Concurrent Review and Discharge Planning, Prior Approval for Certain Outpatient Services, and Individual Case Management. Information concerning Utilization Review and services requiring referral from your PCP is detailed in your benefit description.

Your Cost Share.

This plan has two levels of hospital benefits. You will pay a higher cost share when you receive certain inpatient services at or by "higher cost share hospitals". See the chart on opposite page for cost share amounts.

Please note: If your PCP refers you to another provider for covered services (such as a specialist), it is important to check whether the provider you are referred to is affiliated with one of the higher cost share hospitals listed below. Your cost will be greater when you receive inpatient services at or by these hospitals, even if your PCP refers you.

Higher Cost Share Hospitals.

The Massachusetts hospitals listed below are the hospitals in which your cost share will be higher. Blue Cross Blue Shield will let you know if this list changes.

- Baystate Medical Center
- Boston Children's Hospital
- Brigham and Women's Hospital
- Cape Cod Hospital
- Dana-Farber Cancer Institute
- Fairview Hospital
- Massachusetts General Hospital

- North Shore Medical Center – Salem
- North Shore Medical Center – Lynn
- South Shore Hospital
- Sturdy Memorial Hospital
- UMass Memorial Medical Center – M
- UMass Memorial Medical Center – U

All other network hospitals will carry the including network hospitals outside of MA

Your Deductible.

Your deductible is the amount of money each plan year before you can receive a under this plan. If you are not sure when contact Blue Cross Blue Shield. Your de member (or \$900 per family).

Your Out-of-Pocket Maximum.

Your out-of-pocket maximum is the maximum during a plan year for deductible, copay for covered medical services. Your out of medical benefits is \$2,500 per member. Your out-of-pocket maximum for passer \$1,000 per member (or \$2,000 per family).

Emergency Care—Wherever You

In an emergency, such as a suspected heart poisoning, you should go directly to the or call 911 (or the local emergency phone deductible, you pay a \$100 copayment room services. This copayment is waived the hospital or for an observation stay.

Service Area.

The plan's service area includes all of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, State of Vermont, State of Connecticut, State and State of Maine.

When Outside the Service Area

If you're traveling outside your service or emergency care, go to the nearest appropriate facility. You are covered for the up visit and one follow-up visit while away. Any additional follow up care must be a. Please see your benefit description for r

Dependent Benefits

This plan covers dependents until the month in which they turn age 26, regardless dependency, student status, or employment. See your benefit description (and rider coverage details).

Your Medical Benefits

Plan Specifics	
Plan-year deductible	\$300 per member \$900 per family
Plan-year out-of-pocket maximum	\$2,500 per member \$5,000 per family
Covered Services	Your Cost
Preventive Care Well child care visits	Nothing, no deductible
Routine adult physical exams, including related tests	Nothing, no deductible
Routine GYN exams, including related lab tests (one per calendar year)	Nothing, no deductible
Routine hearing exams	Nothing, no deductible
Routine vision exams (one every 24 months)	Nothing, no deductible
Family planning services—office visits	Nothing, no deductible
Hearing Care Routine hearing exams, including routine tests	Nothing, no deductible
Hearing aids (up to \$5,000 per ear every 36 months)	All charges beyond the deductible
Other Outpatient Care Emergency room visits	\$100 per visit after deductible (copayment waived if for observation stay)
Mental health and substance abuse treatment	\$20 per visit, no deductible
Office visits • When performed by your PCP, OB/GYN, network nurse practitioner, or nurse midwife • When performed by other network providers	\$20 per visit, no deductible \$60 per visit, no deductible
Chiropractors' office visits (up to 20 visits per calendar year for members age 18 or older)	\$20 per visit, no deductible
Short-term rehabilitation therapy—physical and occupational (up to 30 visits per calendar year for each type of therapy)	\$20 per visit, no deductible
Speech, hearing, and language disorder treatment: speech therapy	\$20 per visit, no deductible
Surgery and related anesthesia in an office • When performed by your PCP or OB/GYN • When performed by other network providers	\$20 per visit*, no deductible \$60 per visit*, no deductible
Diagnostic X-rays and other imaging tests, excluding CT scans, MRIs, PET scans, and nuclear cardiac imaging tests	Nothing after deductible
CT scans, MRIs, PET scans, and nuclear cardiac imaging tests	\$100 per category per session
Oxygen and equipment for its administration	Nothing after deductible
Durable medical equipment—such as wheelchairs, crutches, hospital beds	Nothing after deductible
Prosthetic devices	Nothing after deductible
Home health care and hospice services	Nothing after deductible
Surgery in an ambulatory surgical facility, hospital outpatient department, or surgical day care unit	\$950 per admission after deductible
Inpatient Care (including maternity care) • In other general hospitals (as many days as medically necessary) • In higher cost share hospitals (as many days as medically necessary)	\$275 per admission after deductible \$1,500 per admission after deductible
Chronic disease hospital care (as many days as medically necessary)	Nothing after deductible
Mental hospital or substance abuse facility care (as many days as medically necessary)	\$275 per admission, no deductible
Rehabilitation hospital care (as many days as medically necessary)	Nothing after deductible
Skilled nursing facility care (up to 45 days per calendar year)	20% coinsurance after deductible

* Maximum applies when the term "short-term therapy" is included as part of coverage when hospital care is for the treatment of an acute condition or event.
 * Copayment waived for preventive care, services and supplies for treatment of a health condition, emergency therapy for members over age 18 for treatment of a health condition, or a health condition.
 * The copayment applies to the health administration program benefit.

Prescription Drug Benefits	Your Cost
Plan-year out-of-pocket maximum:	\$1,000 per member \$2,000 per family
At designated retail pharmacies (up to a 30-day formulary supply for each prescription or refill)	No deductible \$10 for Tier 1** \$30 for Tier 2 \$65 for Tier 3
Through the designated mail service pharmacy (up to a 90-day formulary supply for each prescription or refill)	No deductible \$25 for Tier 1** \$75 for Tier 2 \$185 for Tier 3

* Cost share for generic and preferred brand-name drugs.

** Cost share for brand-name drugs.

Get the Most from Your Plan.

Visit us at www.bluecrossma.com/membercentral or call 1-800-782-3675 to learn about discounts, savings, special programs like those listed below that are available to you.

Wellness Participation Program Reimbursement for a membership at a health club or for fitness classes. This fitness program applies for fees paid for privately owned or privately-sponsored health clubs or fitness facilities, including individual health clubs and fitness centers; YMCAs; YWCAs; Jewish Community Centers; and municipal fitness centers. (See your benefit description for details)	\$150 per
Reimbursement for participation in a qualified weight loss program This weight loss program applies for fees paid for a qualified hospital-based weight loss program or a Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts designated weight loss program. (See your benefit description for details)	\$150 per
Blue Care Line[®] A 24-hour nurse line to answer your health care questions—call 1-888-247-BLUE (2583)	No add'l

Questions? Call 1-800-782-3675.

For questions about Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts, visit the website at www.bluecrossma.com. Interested in receiving information from Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts via e-mail?

Go to www.bluecrossma.com/email to sign up.

Limitations and Exclusions: These pages summarize the benefits of your health care plan. Your benefit description and riders (conditions in greater detail). Should any questions arise concerning benefits, the benefit description and riders will govern. Some of the exclusions include cosmetic surgery, cosmetic dentistry, most dental care, and any services covered by workers' compensation. For a complete list of limitations, benefit description and riders.

Please note: Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Massachusetts, Inc., administers claims payment only and does not assume financial risk.

