

Easton School Committee Package Proposal

EEA Negotiations

for March 5, 2025

Basic Overview

The School Committee team appreciates the EEA's initial proposal for a financial package, as it appears to recognize the financial constraints faced by the Town, particularly in light of the limited increases in state aid the Town has faced over many years. The EEA's proposal also appears to recognize the positive impact an override would have on the School Department for the 2025-26 school year and beyond.

At this point, the Town financial constraints will result in a decrease to the school budget for the 2025-2026 school year that will result in a reduction in the number of positions in the range of 40 to 50 district-wide. The exact number, of course, depends on such factors as the costs associated with individual salaries and insurance benefits, unemployment payments, and any across-the-board increases granted to employees.

Despite these anticipated reductions, the School Committee is proposing a one-year package for an-across-the-board increase for both the teacher unit and professional unit. Some factors to be considered:

- Guarantees increases for these units for 2025-2026, whether or not an override passes. This is important in supporting staff and in remaining competitive with neighbor districts.
- This package matches the EEA's across-the-board increase for 2025-2026, and recognizes the EEA's particular focus on increasing the paraprofessional hourly rate, a priority shared by the School Committee. This proposal further makes use of the \$100,000 held in reserve by the School Committee for the intended use of paraprofessional increases.
- The parties will delay negotiation over a contract for 2026-2027 (and beyond), thus allowing the parties to consider the dollars actually available in light of whether the override passes, and whether additional reductions in positions are necessary—or whether those eliminated can and should be restored.

PROPOSAL FOR TEACHER UNIT: The School Committee proposes a package for a one-year contract, such package to be accepted or rejected as a whole. If rejected, the package is withdrawn. The provisions are as follows:

Continue the current Collective Bargaining Agreement through August 31, 2026, with the following amendment: Increase each cell in the Legacy Salary Schedule and the New Salary Schedule by 2%.

As part of this package, both the School Committee and EEA agree to withdraw all other proposals to amend the contract for the period of September 1, 2025 – August 31, 2026.

PROPOSAL FOR PARA PROFESSIONAL UNIT: The School Committee proposes a package for a one-year contract, such package to be accepted or rejected as a whole. If rejected, the package is withdrawn. The provisions are as follows:

Continue the current Collective Bargaining Agreement through August 31, 2026, with the following amendment: Paraprofessionals who are employed as of the date of ratification of the new contract shall receive an hourly increase of 85 cents, retroactive to September 1, 2024. Effective September 1, 2025, each cell of the wage schedule shall be increased by an additional \$2.15 per hour, thus increasing the base by a total of \$3 per hour.

As part of this package, both the School Committee and EEA agree to withdraw all other proposals to amend the contract for the period of September 1, 2025 – August 31, 2026.

Easton/para-24-06-neg/25-03-05-teacher -SC pack prop