GROTON DUNSTABLE REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
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PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Groton-Dunstable Regional School Committee and the Groton-Dunstable Educators Association are pleased to announce that we have successfully negotiated and ratified a new collective bargaining agreement, which will be in effect from September 1, 2024-August 31, 2027. This agreement demonstrates the shared commitment first and foremost to the students of Groton-Dunstable.

More than a year ago, in September 2023, the bargaining teams for both the GDEA and the School Committee entered into negotiations with both sides having significant concerns that needed to be addressed through the new contract. We are very happy to have now concluded our negotiations in a way that is mutually beneficial for our teachers and our District, and will create some long term financial sustainability for our two towns.

The School Committee Chair, Lacey McCabe stated, “Our District is facing several years of financial struggles brought on by rising costs, and increased requirements from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, coupled with stagnant Chapter 70 funding from the State. Given the School Committee is responsible for the financial oversight of the District, we must continuously look for ways to control costs. That being said, it is of equal importance to create and maintain an exceptional learning environment for our students and to support the faculty and staff who play a critical role in every student's life, every single day. The School Committee wants to express our gratitude and appreciation to the members of the GDEA for the work they do on a daily basis to enrich the lives of their students, and for consistently demonstrating their commitment to our District and the towns of Groton and Dunstable.”

Superintendent Geoff Bruno stated, “as the new district leader in our two towns, opening the school year without a settled collective bargaining agreement was a daunting task for all involved: staff, school committee, and both towns. Despite this challenge, our staff and leadership team came together to open this school year successfully, welcoming back all of our students and families, which included a smooth transition into a new state of the art elementary school. I am appreciative of all the hard work that went into negotiating this agreement, and

I look forward to working together with the GDEA, School Committee, staff, and our communities to ensure we have the resources necessary to meet the needs of all students in Groton-Dunstable preK-12."

GDEA President Emily Stone stated, "The Groton Dunstable Educators Association is pleased to have come to an agreement and to have finalized a contract. We are looking forward to collaborating with new leadership to build, grow, and provide an excellent education for our students in Groton and Dunstable."

Below is a summary of some of the major points that the contract:

1. Employees of Groton-Dunstable will absorb an additional 5% of monthly health insurance premiums over the next 3 years. This represents a significant savings for the District, while also preserving a highly competitive employer contribution to premiums from GD. In the second year of the contract, employees will take on an additional 3% of the monthly premium, as well as in the third year they will take on an additional 2% of the monthly premium. This means by the end of this agreement, there will be a 5% cost shift of health insurance expenses for all District employees. This will save the school district over $500,000 over the duration of the agreement.

This 5% shift to employee health contributions over the lifetime of the contract will result in approximately a 33% increase in the actual contribution amount for the employee..

2. Salary increases total 9% over the next three years: 3/3/3. This adjustment will help to ensure that Groton-Dunstable can offer the competitive salaries necessary to hire and retain highly qualified and effective educators.

3. Teacher coverage for a colleague: Under the previous teacher contract, when a teacher had to cover a class for a colleague, due to another teacher's absence, they would be paid based on their daily rate. For example, once a teacher had covered enough classes to equal a full day's work, they would be compensated between $279 and $569, depending on their salary.

In the new contract, instead of paying teachers based on their daily rate, the district will pay a flat rate of $40 per hour for covering another teacher's class. This change will save the district a significant amount of money moving forward.

4. Lengthening of the Middle School Day: The Middle School day has been lengthened an additional 15 minutes to help meet the time on learning requirements set by DESE.