

CANTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS



960 Washington Street, Canton, MA 02021
Telephone: 781-821-5060
Fax: 781-575-6500
www.cantonma.org



Derek F. Folan, M.Ed.
Superintendent of Schools

To develop students who are competent and creative thinkers, curious and confident learners, and compassionate citizens.

PROGRESS UPDATE: Where are we today?

The School Leadership Team has worked to act very responsibly with the funding the community and state have provided for us. We have been bargaining in good faith with a sense of urgency and great care for all involved for over a year. We ask for the community's patience and support through this challenging time.

IN BRIEF

- **This good faith work has been a partnership.** Our team has been working diligently for over a year in partnership with the Superintendent and his administrative team to help arrive at a contract that fairly compensates our educators and drives the continued success of our Canton schools.
- **There are multiple priorities we must balance.** Throughout this process, we have done our best to support not only the priorities of our educators, but also the priorities of our Superintendent and his team to ensure we're meeting our responsibility to achieve the best possible student outcomes. This has been a process that the School Committee entered into with the intent of being more than fair and truly supporting educators. In fact, the School Committee initiated most proposals to improve benefits, proactively approved a record number of contract language changes, and never took a hard line approach to negotiations.
- **Many town leaders are engaged in the process.** We also have had to take into account the long-term financial health of the schools, which will ensure we are able to best serve students for years to come. Our Director of Finance and Operations has consulted with Canton finance officials to ensure our proposals are generous, fair and are also sustainable posing no risk to our AAA Bond rating or smart long-term financial health.
- **Our salary and benefits offerings are top of the market.** Our financial packages will place both Unit E and Unit A in the top of the market for the area, and they will have benefit packages that are some of the strongest in the field.

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- **The sticking point in negotiations has been an ask for better practice, to benefit students.** Our core request we've made of the CTA is to bring personal leave into line with the industry standard, limiting the practice of teachers using multiple personal days at a time, including to extend weekends, holidays, and school vacations/breaks. Students, parents, faculty and administrators have reported that when our educators are not in the classroom the school culture and learning for our students is directly impacted.
- **Our teachers currently have a salary table that starts at \$54,229 and ends at \$107,849. Since Dec. 2021 we have sought to fairly increase this compensation amount along with providing valuable benefits.** The current financial offer to teachers is a 7% across-the-board over 3 years, depending on their years of service/longevity and post graduate work. This offer includes a "Super Step 20" that would be a new step to the current 16 steps that provides an additional 1% increase for those Unit A members that have 20 years of experience in Canton. The total current offer allows our teachers to earn up to roughly \$58K- \$116K in the third year of the contract which represents at least a 10% to 14% increase for many over the 3 years.
- **Our Educational Assistants have a salary table that starts at \$18.78. Since Dec 2021, we have sought to make major increases for all members of this unit and provide transformational benefits within their contract.** The current financial offer for our Educational Support Professionals represents a minimum of a 16% increase over the three years and much more for many. In fact, we've had a proposal on the table that pays Educational Assistants with five years of service in FY23 at \$26.34 per hour, and senior ABA tutors at \$36.62 per hour, and senior COTAs and SLPAs at \$43.85 per hour.
- **We are continuing to be flexible and creative.** Yet, there is a reality to the amount of funding allocated to the schools from the town. Some packages that have been proposed to the School Committee would place significant strain on the town budget, with the potential of requiring Proposition 2 ½ override votes. We have tried to avoid that while providing substantial increases for educators. We have also sought to change the personal leave language in order to bring the district in line with better practice that ultimately best serves students. We will continue to value hearing from stakeholders on all sides.
- **Our educators are essential to our district and to our students' success as is community support.** We are confident that our School Leadership Team and the CTA will ultimately reach an agreement that compensates our educators fairly and positions the Canton Public Schools to continue providing high quality education to students in our community.
- **The team has been consistent in working to drive progress for Canton; our Team has repeatedly shown up, listened and then proactively offered concessions and additional support in hopes of reaching agreement.** We are committed to continuing to work in good faith until a resolution can be reached that both rewards our educators for their hard work and experience, and is fiscally sustainable for our community.

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