



An Act relative to educators' pay

MTA Legislative Agenda, 2023-2024

Lead Sponsor: Rep. Erika Uytterhoeven (D-Somerville)

Establishes a statewide minimum salary for public school Education Support Professionals and increases the minimum salary for public school teachers

Education Support Professionals (ESPs) play critically important roles in our public schools, providing individual and small-group instruction to students with disabilities, assisting in early education classes, supporting English language learners, driving buses, preparing meals, keeping schools clean, and performing a myriad of administrative and education support functions.

Unfortunately, these essential educators are not treated with the respect they deserve, nor are they adequately compensated for the extraordinary work they do. With skyrocketing inflation, housing costs and rising costs of living, the gap between ESP pay and a living wage in Massachusetts cities and towns has only widened in recent years. Despite the fact that a majority of ESPs have higher education degrees, they are dramatically underpaid. A 2020 survey conducted by the Massachusetts Teachers Association found that nearly 85 percent of our paraprofessional members made \$30,000 or less.

This bill would:

- Establish a statewide minimum salary of \$40,000 for ESPs and increase the minimum salary for teachers to \$65,000 in the public school districts that adopt the law.
- School districts that adopt the statewide minimums will be reimbursed for the resulting increases in compensation over several years on a sliding scale, starting with a 100 percent reimbursement in the first year.

Passing *An Act relative to educators' pay* means:

ESPs and teachers will have greater protections around salaries and the increased base and reimbursement program will help local districts to work toward a living wage for all public school employees. Greater awareness will be spread about the necessary improvements needed to support our most essential, but historically most overlooked, school workers. ESPs keep students healthy, safe, supported, engaged and challenged, and they deserve the same security and dignity other professionals receive.

For more information please contact MTA Government Relations

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