



# An Act relative to educator pay

MTA Legislative Agenda, 2023-2024

**Lead Sponsor:** Rep. Erika Uyterhoeven (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 \$45,000 for ESPs and increase the minimum salary for teachers to \$65,000 in public school districts. School districts will be required to pay teachers and ESPs at no less than these minimum levels.
- Provide state reimbursements to school districts for the increases in compensation over several years on a sliding scale, starting with a 100% reimbursement in the first year.
- Require the state to adjust the minimum salaries to reflect the impact of inflation every five years beginning July 1, 2029.

**Passing An Act relative to educator 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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