

AGREEMENT

MICHIGAN EDUCATION SUPPORT PERSONNEL ASSOCIATION (ESCANABA CHAPTER)

AND THE

ESCANABA AREA PUBLIC SCHOOLS' BOARD OF EDUCATION

JULY 1, 2025 – JUNE 30, 2028



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**MICHIGAN EDUCATION SUPPORT
PERSONNEL ASSOCIATION
ESCANABA BRANCH**

This Agreement is entered into, effective the 1st day of July 2025 by and between the Escanaba Board of Education, Escanaba, Michigan, hereinafter called the "Board" and the Michigan Education Support Personnel Association, hereinafter called "MESPA," through its local affiliate, the National Education Association, Michigan Education Association, Escanaba District. The signatories shall be the sole parties to this agreement.

WHEREAS, the Board has a statutory obligation, pursuant to the Public Employment Relations Act, Act 336 of the Public Acts of 1947, as amended, to bargain with the MESPA as the representative of its Bargaining Unit Members with respect to hours, wages, terms and conditions of employment, and

WHEREAS, the parties have reached certain understandings which they desire to confirm in this Agreement:

THEREFORE, in consideration of the following mutual covenants, the parties hereby agree as follows:

ARTICLE 1 – RECOGNITION

- A. The Board hereby recognizes MESPA as the sole and exclusive bargaining representative of all teacher aides whose work is described in Article 12 - Item "D," whether under contract, on leave or on a per diem, hourly or class rate basis employed or to be employed by the Board.

Under the general classification of paraprofessionals, the following position titles exist:

Instructional Paraprofessionals:

1. Auditory Support Paraprofessional
2. Paraprofessional
3. Visually Impaired Support Paraprofessional

Non-Instructional Paraprofessionals:

1. Bus Support Paraprofessional

Such representation shall cover all personnel assigned to newly created positions which are not principally supervisory and administrative. The Board agrees not to negotiate with or recognize any organization other than the MESPA for the duration of this Agreement.

- B. All personnel represented by the MESPA in the above-defined bargaining unit shall, unless otherwise indicated, hereinafter be referred to as "Bargaining Unit Members."

ARTICLE 2 - EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

No person or persons shall be discriminated against on the basis of race, gender, creed, color, national origin, age, disability, marital status, or membership in, or association with the activities of the MESPA or refraining from such association. The parties will continue to work together to assure equal employment opportunities to all.

ARTICLE 3 - MAINTENANCE OF STANDARDS

The duties of any Bargaining Unit Member or the responsibilities of any position deemed instructional in the bargaining unit shall not be altered, increased, or transferred to persons not covered by this Agreement.

ARTICLE 4 - PAYROLL DEDUCTION

- A. Effective with the 2012-2013 School Year, the Association shall assume full responsibility for the collection of union dues.
- B. The Board, upon hiring a new bargaining unit employee, shall notify the Association president as to the name and work place of such new employee. The Board shall deduct from the pay of each Bargaining Unit Member from whom it receives written authorization to do so and make appropriate remittances for annuities, credit union, charitable donations, or any other plans or program jointly approved by the Board and the MESPA.
- C. MESPA shall indemnify and save harmless the Board, each individual Board member and agents of the Board against any and all claims, demands, suits, and expenses or other form of liability which shall arise from any payroll deduction undertaken by the Board pursuant to an authorization form. MESPA shall have the right to choose competent legal counsel to defend any such suit or action.

ARTICLE 5 – UNION MEMBERSHIP

- A. Each bargaining unit member, may join the MESPA, or may choose to not join the Association.

ARTICLE 6 - JOINT BOARD AND MESPA MEETINGS

The Association Professional Negotiating Committee and the Administrative Staff, together with members of the Board of Education or its designee, shall meet as needed to discuss the administration of this Agreement and any problems under it which either party believes exist or may occur in the operation of the School District. The Superintendent of Schools or the chairman of the Professional Negotiating Committee shall be responsible for calling this meeting. An agenda shall be prepared by the parties covering the subjects to be discussed at least one week prior to the meetings.

ARTICLE 7 - GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

- A. A claim by a Bargaining Unit Member, or the MESPA that there has been a violation, misinterpretation, or misapplication of any specific provision of this Agreement may be processed as a grievance as hereinafter provided.
- B. In the event that a Bargaining Unit Member believes there is a grievance, he/she shall first discuss the alleged grievance with his/her immediate supervisor, either personally or accompanied by the MESPA representatives. The grievance must be filed within fifteen (15) working days of the violation, misinterpretation or misapplication of any specific provision of this Agreement, or within fifteen (15) working days of when such violation, misinterpretation or misapplication should reasonably have been discovered.
- C. If, as a result of the informal discussion with the immediate supervisor, a grievance still exists, the Bargaining Unit Member may invoke the formal grievance procedure through the MESPA. A copy of the grievance shall be delivered to the immediate supervisor within the time limits set forth in "B" above. If the grievance involves more than one work location, it may be filed with the superintendent or his/her designee.
- D. Within fifteen (15) working days of receipt of the grievance, the immediate supervisor shall meet with the MESPA in an effort to resolve the grievance. The immediate supervisor shall indicate, in writing, his/her disposition of the grievance within fifteen (15) working days of such meeting, and shall furnish a copy thereof to the MESPA.
- E. If the MESPA is not satisfied with the disposition of the grievance, or if no disposition has been made within fifteen (15) working days of such meeting, or fifteen (15) working days from date of filing, the grievance shall be transmitted to the superintendent, or his/her designee. Within fifteen (15) working days, the superintendent, or his/her designee, shall meet with the MESPA on the grievance and shall indicate, in writing, his/her disposition within fifteen (15) working days of such meeting, and shall furnish a copy thereof to the MESPA.
- F. If the MESPA is not satisfied with the disposition of the grievance, or if no disposition has been made within fifteen (15) working days of such meeting, either party may request non-binding mediation through the Michigan Employment Relations Commission (MERC). It is understood that grievance timelines will be placed in abeyance from the time a grievance is referred for mediation until the conclusion of mediation. In the event that mediation is unsuccessful in resolving the issue or in the event that both parties mutually agree to forego mediation, the grievance shall be transmitted to the Board of Education. Within fifteen (15) working days, the Board of Education or any committee thereof, shall hold a hearing on the grievance and shall indicate, in writing, its disposition within fifteen (15) working days of such hearing, and shall furnish a copy thereof to the MESPA.
- G. If the MESPA is not satisfied with the disposition of the grievance by the Board of Education, or if no disposition has been made within the period provided above, the grievance may be submitted to arbitration. If the parties cannot agree as to the arbitrator, within five (5) working days from the notification that arbitration will be pursued, he/she shall be selected by the

American Arbitration Association in accordance with its rules which shall likewise govern the arbitration proceeding. The arbitrator shall have no power to alter, add to, or subtract from the terms of this Agreement. Both parties agree to be bound by the Award of the arbitrator and agree the judgment thereon may be entered in any court of competent jurisdiction.

- H. Fees and expenses of the arbitrator shall be borne equally by the parties.
- I. If any Bargaining Unit Member for whom a grievance is sustained shall be found to have been unjustly discharged, he/she shall be reinstated with full reimbursement of all compensation lost as deemed proper by the Arbitrator. If any Bargaining Unit Member shall have been found to have been improperly deprived of any compensation, the same or its equivalent in money shall be paid to him/her and his/her record cleared of any reference to this action.
- J. The time limits provided in the Article shall be strictly observed but may be extended by written agreement of the parties. Any grievance not timely filed or appealed is expressly deemed waived and shall not be allowed. Any grievance not timely responded to shall be deemed awarded to the grievant. However, any time limit in this Article may be extended by mutual written consent of the parties.
- K. Notwithstanding the expiration of this Agreement, any claim, or grievance arising there under, may be processed through the grievance procedure until resolution.
- L. For the purpose of assisting a Bargaining Unit Member, or the MESPA in the prosecution or defense of any contractual, administrative, or legal proceeding, including but not limited to grievances, the Board shall permit a Bargaining Unit Member and/or MESPA representative access to, and the right to inspect and acquire copies of his/her personnel file and any other files or records of the Board which pertain to the Bargaining Unit Member of any issue in the proceeding in question. Confidential letters of reference secured from sources outside the school system shall be excluded from inspection.
- M. A Bargaining Unit Member, who must be involved in the processing of a grievance procedure during the work day, shall be excused with pay for that purpose.
- N. If a grievance arises from the action of an authority higher than the immediate supervisor of the Bargaining Unit Member, the MESPA may present such grievance at the appropriate level of the grievance procedure.
- O. Class action grievances shall be processed as class action grievances provided that the grievance is attested to and supported by more than one employee.

ARTICLE 8 - HOURS OF WORK / WORK LOAD & ASSIGNMENTS

- A. A duty-free, uninterrupted lunch period of 30 minutes (based on a full day of work) will be granted per day. A full day shall be defined as 5 hours or more per day.

- B. In the event a student(s) is absent, the District shall reassign the paraprofessional to other work within their building (provided they are qualified). In case of multiple days' absence, said work may be of a substitute nature in another MESPA division within the district but the employee will be paid at their normal rate.
- C. All MESPA employees shall participate in a minimum of three days of professional development during each school year. Such days shall be determined collaboratively by District and MESPA leadership no less than two weeks prior to the first teacher workday of the school year. Employees required to come in for in-service shall be compensated for their normal work day hours. All MESPA employees will be paid their assigned day. In addition, all MESPA employees shall work regular hours on exam days for student record keeping, to complete other job-related duties, or to engage in professional development. All MESPA Employees are required to work all days, including a full day on the days in which students have a half day.

ARTICLE 9 – COMPENSATION

- A. Compensation: Hours worked and rate of pay shall be printed on each bargaining unit member's paycheck. There will be a 2-week delay in payment of hours worked, i.e. hours submitted for one pay period shall be paid in the next period.

B.

	Paraprofessional	Auditory Support Paraprofessional	Visually Impaired Support Paraprofessional	Bus Support Paraprofessional
School Year	Base Hourly Rate	Base Hourly Rate	Base Hourly Rate	Base Hourly Rate
2025/2026	\$17.50	\$18.50	\$18.50	\$16.50
2026/2027	\$17.50	\$18.50	\$18.50	\$16.50
2027/2028	\$17.50	\$18.50	\$18.50	\$16.50

- C. **LONGEVITY:**
 Longevity earned during a school year will be calculated on a semester basis and will be awarded at the start of the next fiscal year. An employee who works less than 3 hours per day, average, for the majority of a semester, is considered part time, and will move one-quarter year in longevity. An employee who works more than 3 hours per day, average, for the majority of a semester, is considered full-time, and will move one-half year in longevity. Dock days will count against longevity calculations. Longevity pay for 2025/2026 will be paid at \$0.15/year, 2026/2027 will be paid at \$0.20/year, and 2027/2028 will be paid at \$0.25/year on top of base rate of pay for each member. Increases to longevity pay will occur on the anniversary date of the member.

If the semester break calculation results in a change in longevity, pay adjustments will be effective on the anniversary date of the member.

Longevity in pay would utilize the attached salary schedule.

- D. Bargaining Unit Members who are requested to perform duties which are customarily at a higher rate of pay will be paid the higher rate for all time when performing such duties. Under no circumstances will Bargaining Unit Members have their regular pay lowered when performing other duties. Paraprofessionals who substitute in a teaching position will be paid \$5.00 per hour in addition to their current wage.
- E. Bargaining Unit Members will receive their paychecks on the same day as teachers.
- F. A minimum of one hour "show-up" pay shall be paid to a bargaining unit member who is requested by a building administrator to work a period less than that which is not continuous in time with their previously existing scheduled work. This is specifically intended to apply to those situations where a bargaining unit member is requested to come in for a period not immediately prior to the beginning of a regular scheduled shift, or when they are requested to come back after having completed their regular work day. All hours worked beyond 40 hours, which are administratively approved, will be paid at 1½ times at the employee's regular rate. The Bargaining Unit Member is responsible for reporting such hours.
- G. MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT: Any Bargaining Unit Member using his or her car for school purposes, when authorized by supervisor and/or administrator, shall be remunerated at the current IRS rate.
- H. All auditory and visually impaired support paraprofessionals shall be paid full time as auditory and visually impaired support paraprofessionals for instructional time. The auditory and visually impaired support paraprofessionals assigned to a student shall be invited to that student's IEP.
- I. Paraprofessionals assigned to a student shall be invited to that student's IEP at the discretion of the principal.
- J. Hepatitis B vaccines, if required, shall be paid by the employer.
- K. Bargaining unit members (active/laid-off) shall not be required to pay for any procedure required by law (i.e. fingerprinting, background check).
- L. Any Paraprofessionals that work in a bided bus line supervisor position will receive \$.35/hour over their current pay rate.
- M. Any Paraprofessionals serving as a Mentor shall receive \$500 plus \$250 for each additional mentee after the first one.

Mentors shall be assigned by MESPA Leadership after consultation with the building Principal.

New Hires shall not be eligible for longevity pay until they have successfully completed the mentoring program as determined by the building principal.

Mentor logs and documentation will be maintained by the Union leadership.

Mentees who have not successfully completed the program as determined by MESPA Leadership and Building Principals will not be eligible to receive their longevity increase for the year and will have to repeat mentoring the following year.

Mentors who have not fulfilled mentoring requirements will have their stipends prorated as determined by MESPA Leadership and Building Principals.

ARTICLE 10 - WORK LOADS AND ASSIGNMENTS

The Board agrees to avoid splitting assignments between two buildings whenever possible. The Board will also make every attempt to make all positions include continuous work time, with the exception of regular breaks and lunch periods.

The Board agrees to offer positions to Bargaining Unit Members on the basis of seniority and previous work assignments, taking into consideration individual preferences wherever possible. It is understood if a Bargaining Unit Member bids into a classification that is deemed to be "instructional" as described by the State of Michigan, that the member must meet all requirements for paraprofessionals as defined by state and federal law prior to working in that assignment.

ARTICLE 11 - SENIORITY

- A. Seniority shall be defined as length of service in Escanaba Schools as a member of the bargaining unit, beginning with the first scheduled working day, minus any dock days, and shall be earned as follows:
 - 1. Full credit for three hours per day or more for a year
 - 2. One-half credit for less than three hours per day for a year

- B. The Board shall prepare a seniority list and transmit same to the Association bi-annually on or before August 1 and February 1 of each year. Each employee will have 30 days to challenge their placement on the seniority list. After 30 days, the list will be deemed to be correct for that year.

- C. A Bargaining Unit Member shall lose his/her seniority rights if he/she retires, resigns, is discharged for just cause, takes a non-bargaining unit position, or refuses recall from lay-off for the same amount of hours prior to lay-off. If the individual is rehired into a bargaining unit position or returns from a non-bargaining unit position within the district, such employee shall have no accrued seniority or longevity rights and shall return as a new hire. Any official communication regarding this section shall be copied to the MESPA President.

- D. In the event that more than one individual Bargaining Unit Member has the same starting date of work, position on the seniority list shall be determined by lots.
- E. Bargaining unit assignments will be bid annually. In order to facilitate the movement of members among and between job classifications, the following procedure will apply:
 - 1. There will be an annual job auction.
 - 2. As per Article 13, Section B – There will be no bumping rights between job classifications, however members must consider the unique job duties of positions prior to bidding, as the “pairings” of aides/students is essential to students to make progress toward their behavioral, medical and academic goals.
 - 3. Only seniority in a specific job classification will be considered for vacancies within that classification.
 - 4. When moving from one classification to another, any past seniority within the new classification is suspended until the following year’s job auction.
 - 5. Hours worked on a regular basis by Bargaining unit members obtained by way of the bidding process or by otherwise being assigned extra duties, will, for the purposes of the contract, be considered part of their normal working hours inclusive of holidays and “Act of God” days.
 - 6. The employee will be paid for the additional time associated with their regularly assigned extra duties on **not more than** 10 sick days and 3 personal days.
 - 7. Extra duty assignments shall be bid based on seniority and location. If an extra-duty assignment is not bid on by someone at the location of the extra-duty assignment, it shall be opened up to members at other locations.

The employee will remain in their assignment unless one of the following occurs during any school year:

- 1. A vacancy occurs; the employee bids the position and is awarded the position pending principal prior approval of the move as specified in Article 12 - Vacancies, Transfers, Placements.
- 2. There is a reduction in force in accordance with the procedures stated in Article 12 - Staff Reductions.
- 3. If there are two or more instructional paraprofessional positions opened or vacated within a one-week period, MESPA will hold a job auction to settle all movement within one day.

ARTICLE 12 - VACANCIES, TRANSFER AND PROMOTIONS

- A. A vacancy shall be defined, for purposes of this Agreement, as a position previously held by a Bargaining Unit Member, or a newly created position within the bargaining unit.

- B. Whenever a vacancy occurs or is anticipated, the Superintendent or designee shall immediately notify the MESPA President.
- C. Vacancies will be filled within a reasonable time frame when deemed necessary and appropriate by the Superintendent or designee, and partial positions will be combined when it is reasonably possible to do so. Should a vacancy occur after initial placements at the beginning of the school year, the employee seeking to bid on the open position shall first contact their principal to share their interest in bidding. Upon recommendation of the principal, the Board reserves the right to restrict a transfer of a paraprofessional if a principal deems the move would adversely affect the student(s) currently assigned to said paraprofessional; or conversely, allow the transfer if the principal deems the change will not adversely affect the student (s).
- D. The Board declares its support of a policy of filling vacancies from within the bargaining unit. Therefore, as agreed to in Article 13, Section B, (1) Paraprofessionals; (2) Bus support paraprofessionals; (3) Auditory Support paraprofessionals, and (4) Visual Support paraprofessionals are considered as four separate groups for purposes of qualifications and seniority when filling any paraprofessional position. The district shall consider internal candidates for vacant positions before said postings are made outside the district.
- E. Any Bargaining Unit Member may request a transfer, providing he/she is qualified for the position, after the satisfactory completion of the probationary period, which shall be for a period of thirty (30) days. The bargaining unit member shall have the right to return to his/her original position.
- F. Any bargaining unit position that is to be vacant during an approved temporary leave for 30 days or more, due to a leave of absence, shall be posted. If the member returns within 90 days, they will be allowed to return to their vacated position, if it is still available.
- G. Requests for transfer shall be made in writing, a copy of which shall be filed with the Office of the Superintendent, one copy with the MESPA and another copy will be submitted to the immediate supervisor.
- H. Bargaining Unit Members who have requested transfers shall be given preference over new appointments or promotions to available positions within their same classification.
- I. All vacancies shall be posted in the general office, kitchen and/or lounge of each building of the district for three (3) workdays. Said posting shall contain the following information:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Type of work 2. Location of work 3. Starting date 4. Hours to be worked 5. Minimum Requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6. One on One 7. Diabetic/ other health issues 8. Disability requiring regular physical accommodations 9. Diapered 10. Grade Level
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Interested Bargaining Unit Members may apply in writing to the superintendent or his designee, with a copy to the MESPA President, within the three (3) day posting period.

ARTICLE 13 - STAFF REDUCTIONS

- A. When, in the judgment of the Board, reductions in personnel are necessary, the final decision will be made by the Board. Any bargaining unit member subject to lay-off in accordance with this Article shall be provided two weeks prior notification of layoff.
- B. The Board and the Professional Negotiations Committee agree that lay-offs will occur in the inverse order of seniority within a job classification, provided that the most senior employee is qualified for the position as articulated on the job description. The district will notify the least senior employee in the district of lay-off. The senior bargaining unit members whose specific position is eliminated or reduced may bump a less senior person in the district, or volunteer for lay-off as per C. The least senior person will be considered displaced once reassignment has occurred in the district in accordance with seniority; any new or vacant positions will be available for the displaced employees according to seniority. All current displaced employees who have not been assigned will be notified of lay-off. For the purpose of lay-off and recall, (1) paraprofessionals, (2) bus support professionals, (3) auditory support paraprofessionals, and (4) visually impaired support paraprofessionals shall be considered as four separate groups with no bumping rights from one group to another.
- C. In the event of necessary reduction in staff, the employer shall first lay off those Bargaining Unit Members who volunteer providing there is no additional cost to the school district due to a difference in seniority or in hours worked. These Bargaining Unit Members who volunteer shall not lose unemployment benefits.

If a senior member voluntarily chooses to take a layoff, the senior member taking the voluntary layoff shall be the last person recalled during the year for which the voluntary layoff was taken. At the start of the next school year, the senior member having taken the voluntary layoff will return to their place on the seniority list. The foregoing provision shall not be enforced if the job offered to a Bargaining Unit Member would result in a reduction of working hours from the previous year.
- D. Bargaining Unit Members who are laid off shall suffer no loss of sick leave benefits or seniority accrued for that contract year.
- E. Bargaining Unit Members who are laid off during a contract year shall be credited for their actual time worked on a pro-rated basis for the year for purposes of placement on the salary scale.
- F. Recall to employment shall be in the inverse order for lay-offs, as determined by the program(s) offered by the board subject to Article 11 Seniority.

- G. Upon recall, all accrued benefits in Escanaba shall be restored to the Bargaining Unit Member.
- H. Bargaining Unit Members shall be notified of recall by registered letter and shall have seven (7) calendar days to respond. If the Bargaining Unit member does not respond by that time, the Bargaining Unit Member shall be considered resigned.
- I. The parties agree that all classroom positions shall be for a minimum of one (1) semester. If the employee's assignment changes, he/she shall be reassigned an open position in his/her building, if available, otherwise will be employed in the district for assignments wherever warranted. If the situation changes in the building during the semester, the affected employee may be put in the position without posting that position.

ARTICLE 14 – PAID LEAVES

- A. Bargaining Unit Members shall be granted sick leave at the annual rate of ten (10) days, up to 80 hours, per year, such days to accumulate to 140 days (1120 hours) for sick leave purposes/utilization only: for purposes of terminal leave as defined in Article 18, Paragraph B, the maximum accumulation shall be 110 (880 hours). Sick leave can be used in a minimum of one quarter (1/4) hour (15 minute) increments. In the event of the death of the bargaining unit member, terminal leave shall be paid to the heirs or designated beneficiary of the employee. Sick leave may be used for a death and/or illness in the immediate family. The term immediate family shall be defined: spouse, children, step-children, father, mother, father-in-law, mother-in-law, brother, sister, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, grandparents and grandchildren. Bereavement leave for in-laws is capped at 5 days per year.

One paid bereavement day will be added to leave time and may be used for a death and/or illness in the immediate family, which includes spouse, children, step children, father, mother, father-in-law, mother-in-law, brother, sister, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, grandparents, and grandchildren. With prior supervisor authorization, additional sick leave days may be used for bereavement. Bereavement leave for in-laws is capped at 5 days per year and up to 3 sick leave days per year may be used for family members not listed above.

- B. An employee while on paid sick leave will be deemed to be on continued employment for the purpose of computing all benefits referred to in this Agreement, and will be construed as days worked specifically.
- C. In addition to the prescribed sick leave, each employee shall be allowed three (3) days per year, non-cumulative, for personal business - death or sickness of distant relatives or friends, religious observances, or time necessary to conduct personal business impossible to handle outside normal school hours provided notification is given in advance. This leave may not be used contiguous to a holiday or the first day of a semester without prior approval.

Up to two (2) sick days may be used as personal days with advance approval of the campus administrator.

If the allowed personal days remain unused at the end of the school year, they will be paid to the employee at 100% of their regular daily rate of pay or they can convert to sick days and accumulate up to the maximum of 140 days. Personal business leave can be used in a minimum of one-quarter (1/4) hour (15 minute) increments.

- D. The Association may be granted 6 days per year, for the purpose of conducting Association business or attending meetings, providing that the Association will reimburse the district for such expenses. The Association President shall notify the Superintendent of individuals authorized to use such days.
- E. All employees utilizing sick leave may be required to tender a medical certificate upon request of the employer after the third day of sick leave.
- F. Employee requests for leave time without pay, "dock days," shall be at the discretion of the administration; and, if granted, shall not set a precedent.

ARTICLE 15 - INCLEMENT CONDITIONS

- A. Nothing in this agreement shall require the Board to keep offices, school and administration open in the event of inclement weather, or when otherwise prevented by an act of God. When the schools are closed to students, due to the above conditions, all Bargaining Unit Members shall not be required to report to their job assignments.
- B. An employee who had previously made arrangements for paid leave provided for in Article 14 shall not have the day(s) charged against such leave in the event that school is not in session due to inclement weather.
- C. Employees shall be paid for up to five (5) "Act of God" days in accordance with their regular hours. Employees will work regular hours on all virtual days. Employees with an attendance record from the prior year of 96% of days worked shall be paid for all days in accordance with their regular hours for all "Act of God" days for which the District receives funding.

ARTICLE 16 - JURY DUTY

A Bargaining Unit Member who serves on jury duty shall be reimbursed on a bi-weekly basis, for the difference between the jury duty stipend and his/her regular board salary for days served. Bargaining Unit Members, when summoned to jury duty, should respond to such summons and shall not be charged for the days served.

ARTICLE 17 - LEAVE POLICY

- A. The Board, upon written request, may grant a leave of absence for a period not to exceed one (1) year, subject to renewal at the will of the Board. Upon request, a leave of absence for physical or mental disability may be granted for a period not to exceed one (1) year.
- B. Types of leaves of absence are: illness, military, study, personal business, government and/or professional service. In the event an employee is requested to perform government service, the employee shall receive uncompensated leave time up to 5 days per year during the school year.
- C. A leave of absence for study, personal business, or government and/or professional service shall not be granted during the first year following employment.
- D. Bargaining Unit Members returning from leave shall be expected to remain in the Board's employment for at least one (1) year.
- E. Upon request of the employee a leave for purposes of childbirth or child care shall be granted without pay. The employee may be required to present approval from the attending physician that she is unable to continue work or to return to work for an anticipated disability. Such notice shall be in accordance with FMLA guidelines.
- F. Elected or appointed officers of the MESPA shall upon request, be granted professional service leave of absence without pay, for a period of one (1) year. Such leave may be extended upon request, from year to year.
- G. The representatives of the school district and the Association agree that it is their mutual intent and understanding to fully comply with the terms and conditions of the Family Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA). Employees eligible for the FMLA will be required to utilize paid leave during their FMLA leave time. Any time remaining after exhaustion of paid sick and personal leave, shall be unpaid time for up to 12 weeks under FMLA. FMLA will not be used to expand an employee's contractual rights and benefits, provided those rights and benefits meet or exceed the basic requirements of the FMLA. Nothing in this provision shall limit the Board from granting an unpaid medical leave. Employees may retain three (3) sick and/or personal days as they utilize FMLA.

ARTICLE 18 - RETIREMENT

- A. Retirement benefits shall be in accordance with the rules of the Michigan Public School Retirement System. All Bargaining Unit Members shall automatically become members of the Retirement System.

- B. Upon retirement, the Bargaining Unit Member shall be paid at 75% of his/her current salary level, for unused sick leave days as per Article 14, Section A.
- C. A Bargaining Unit Member may receive this terminal leave pay upon retirement from the School District after 15 calendar years of employment, or if they retire from employment with the District after having reached age 62 while in the employ of the District, regardless of how many years they have worked for the District. The employee need not qualify for retirement under paragraph "A" in order to receive this benefit, but need only to meet the requirement of this sub-section.
- D. Sections B and C of this Article shall apply only to employees hired prior to November 11, 1999. Employees hired after November 11, 1999 shall be paid \$30 per unused sick day (Maximum accumulated days 110) providing member has served at least 15 calendar years of service.

ARTICLE 19 - HOLIDAYS

- A. All Bargaining Unit Members shall be paid for the following holidays: Labor Day, Deer Day, Thanksgiving Day, the day following Thanksgiving, Christmas Day, Christmas Eve, New Year's Day, New Years Eve, weekdays between Christmas Day and New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Day, Good Friday and Memorial Day.
- B. If any of the above holidays fall on a Saturday, the preceding Friday shall be observed as the holiday. If the holiday should fall on Sunday, the following Monday shall be observed as the holiday.

ARTICLE 20 - BARGAINING UNIT MEMBER SELF-IMPROVEMENT

- A. The parties support the principle of continuing education for Bargaining Unit Members and participation by Bargaining Unit Members in their professional organizations.
- B. Upon prior approval of the Superintendent or his designee, any Bargaining Unit Member who enrolls in, and successfully completes courses related to his/her responsibilities at an accredited college or university or supported by the Board, shall receive reimbursement from the Board for seventy-five (75%) of tuition for up to 3 credits per fiscal year.
- C. Upon prior approval of the Superintendent or his designee, the Board shall provide funds to permit Bargaining Unit Members to attend selected professional conferences/training related to their specific present assignment with full expenses paid by the Board.
- D. If at any time, presently employed bargaining unit members are required by law and/or state mandated agency, to have additional training, it shall be at the district's expense.

ARTICLE 21 - PERSONNEL FILES AND EMPLOYEE COMPETENCE

- A. A Bargaining Unit Member shall have the right to review the contents of all records, excluding initial references, of the Board pertaining to said individual, originating after the initial employment, and to have a MESPA representative present at such review.

- B. No material originating after the initial employment shall be placed in a Bargaining Unit Member's personal record unless he/she has had an opportunity to review said material. The Bargaining Unit Member may submit a written notation regarding any material and the same shall be attached to the material in question. If the Bargaining Unit Member believes the material placed in his/her file is in error, he/she may receive the remedy as requested through the grievance procedure. If a Bargaining Unit Member is requested to sign material to be placed in his/her file, such signature thereon shall be understood to indicate his/her awareness of the material but, in no instance, shall said signature be interpreted to mean agreement with the material's content.
- C. Bargaining Unit Members are expected to perform the essential functions of their jobs as outlined on their job descriptions. Before a Bargaining Unit Member is rated unsatisfactory, the administrator shall meet with the individual at least 10 workdays prior to such a rating being submitted in order to put the Bargaining Unit Member on notice that the member's job performance is not satisfactory; and to discuss means of improvement. This does not preclude a principal from meeting with said member prior to the 10 days to hold a corrective interview to call the member's attention to the issue and to discuss training/resources to help the member improve. Written summaries of such a conference shall be prepared by the administrator and provided to the member.
- D. A Bargaining Unit Member shall be notified, in advance, when possible in writing, of the purpose of a meeting where an unsatisfactory rating and/or disciplinary action is contemplated and shall be entitled to have a MESPA representative present.
- E. No non-probationary employee shall be discharged, disciplined or deprived of advantages without just cause. During the probationary period (30 days) new hires may be terminated and such matter shall not be subject to the grievance procedure.

ARTICLE 22 - BARGAINING UNIT MEMBER PROTECTION

- A. No Bargaining Unit Member shall be left in a building alone.
- B. Any case of assault upon a Bargaining Unit Member shall be promptly reported to the Superintendent. The Board will reimburse the Bargaining Unit Member for the cost of legal counsel up to \$500 to advise the individual of his/her rights and obligations with respect to such assault and shall promptly render all reasonable assistance to the Bargaining Unit Member in connection with handling of the incident by law enforcement and judicial authorities. In the event an assault on a Bargaining Unit Member results in any civil or criminal actions against the student, the employee shall be paid for such court appearances.
- C. Time lost by a Bargaining Unit Member in connection with any incident mentioned in this Article shall be deducted from the member's accumulated sick bank starting the second workday after the incident, should the member require a sick day. If the assault is deemed to warrant the member needing more than 2 work days (day of incident, day immediately following incident) to recover, upon receipt of a doctor's note, the employee's sick leave shall not be charged up

until the 7th work day after the incident. If said member is absent due to an injury compensable under the Michigan Worker's Compensation law, the member shall, at the member's option elect to supplement their compensation payment with their accumulated sick leave up to their normal per day salary up to the limit of the employee's accumulated sick leave.

- D. The Board shall reimburse Bargaining Unit Members for any loss, damage, or destruction of clothing or personal property while on duty unless the employee is negligent.
- E. In the event a complaint or charge is made by any person or group not employed by the Board against any Bargaining Unit Member, the Bargaining Unit Member shall be given full information with respect thereto and with respect to any investigation conducted by the Board, unless prohibited by law.

ARTICLE 23 - INFORMATION

- A. The Board agrees to furnish to the MESPA in response to written requests, any information allowed by FOIA, and such other information as will assist the MESPA in developing intelligent, accurate, informed, and constructive programs on behalf of the MESPA, together with information which may be necessary for the MESPA to process any grievance or complaint. Such information as provided in this section shall be subject to fees and costs consistent with FOIA.
- B. The rights granted herein to the MESPA shall not be granted or extended to any competing labor organization.

ARTICLE 24 - ASSOCIATION ACTIVITIES

- A. The MESPA and its representatives shall have the right to use Board buildings at all reasonable hours for meetings which do not interfere with the assigned functions of the regular program. No charge shall be made for use of the buildings prior to the beginning of the workday, nor until 10:00 p.m.
- B. The MESPA shall be permitted to transact official MESPA business on Board property at all reasonable times, provided that it shall not interfere with, or interrupt, normal operations.
- C. MESPA members shall have the right to distribute MESPA materials to other Bargaining Unit Members so long as such distribution does not interfere with the normal operation of the work area or his/her job performance.
- D. The MESPA members shall be permitted to use Board equipment, including typewriters, mimeograph machines, duplicating machines, copying machines, calculating machines and audio-visual items, when such equipment is not otherwise in use. The MESPA shall pay for the reasonable cost of all materials and supplies incident to such use.

- E. Whenever the president of the local affiliate of the MESPA and up to 2 members are mutually scheduled, during working hours, to participate in conferences, meetings, or negotiations, he/she shall suffer no loss of pay, and when necessary, with the approval of the superintendent or his designee, substitute service may be provided.

ARTICLE 25 - RIGHT TO MANAGE

The Employer, on its own behalf and on behalf of its electors, hereby retains and reserves unto itself, without limitations, all powers, rights, authority, duties and responsibilities conferred upon and vested in it by the laws and the Constitution of the State of Michigan and of the United States. Further, all rights which ordinarily vest in and are exercised by employers, except such as are specifically relinquished herein, are reserved to and remain vested in the Employer, including but without limiting the generality of the foregoing, the right:

- (a) to manage its affairs efficiently and economically, including the determination of quantity and quality of service to be rendered, the control of materials, tools and equipment to be used and the discontinuance of any services, material or methods of operation;
- (b) to introduce new equipment methods, machinery, or processes, change or eliminate existing equipment and institute technological changes, decide on materials, supplies, equipment and tools to be purchased;
- (c) to determine the size of the work force and increase or decrease its size;
- (d) to hire, assign, lay off, and discharge employees, to reduce the work week, or the work day or effect reduction in hours worked by combining layoffs and reductions in work week or work day, to set hours of employment and to set times during the work day of all shifts;
- (e) to direct the work force, assign work and determine the number of employees assigned to operations;
- (f) to establish, change, combine or discontinue job classifications and prescribe and assign new job duties, content and classification; to establish the number of people needed or used in all classification;
- (g) to make rules and regulations not inconsistent with the terms hereof.

ARTICLE 26 - LIMITATIONS OF AUTHORITY AND LIABILITY

The Union will not authorize, sanction, condone, nor acquiesce in, nor will any member of the bargaining unit take part in, any strike or work stoppage of any kind or nature, including, but not limited to, slowdowns, stoppages of any kind, sit-ins, "blue-flu", and picketing or demonstrating of any kind, during contracted work hours, in reference to the Employer. The Employer shall have the right to discipline, including discharge, any member of the bargaining unit for taking part in any activities or conduct violating this Article.

ARTICLE 27- INSURANCE BENEFITS

The Board reserves the right to implement a statutory insurance cap with regard to health insurance. In addition, the Board shall provide for a payroll deduction for the members' share of health insurance costs. Each MESPA member working three (3) or more hours per day shall be given the right to elect either of the benefit programs for the duration of this contract.

The specific MESSA Medical Plans available to eligible employees are determined by the Coalition Team of the Upper Peninsula Area Purchasing Agreement (UP APA). Plans will be decided by the Coalition Team each September (after the initial year) for implementation on the following January 1. Should the district no longer participate in the UP APA, or if the UP APA no longer exists, the existing MESSA plans will be in place until other plans are negotiated. Dental, vision, life and long term disability benefits are still subject to this collective bargaining and are listed elsewhere in this contract.

For employees opting to switch plans, this change shall be selected during "Open Enrollment" in the fall and the employee will continue under their current plan until the start of the calendar year (January 1st). It is understood that members utilizing the ABC Plan will use a Health Savings Account (HSA) rather than a Flexible Spending Account (FSA) as per I.R.S. regulations.

Employees terminating their employment before December 31st will reimburse the District the unpaid portion of prepaid funding towards the employee's Health Savings Account (HSA).

Employees who choose to take health care coverage shall contribute 20% towards the payment of the medical insurance costs (health) under a qualified 125 Plan of the Internal Revenue Code. The Board reserves the right to implement a statutory insurance cap with regard to health insurance; or to vote to pay no more than 80% of medical benefit plans, as per Michigan P.A. 152 of 2011.

The plan shall be as follows:

5 hours or more	100% of single subscriber rate (12 months)
4 hours, up to 5 hours	75% of single subscriber rate (12 months)
3 hours, up to 4 hours	50% of single subscriber rate (12 months)

June, July, and August partial premiums, if due, will be deducted as they occur with all other staff members.

Those employees working three (3) or more hours per day that do not elect to take the health plan, may elect to have \$200.00 per month placed into an annuity or Flexible Spending Account.

Life insurance and AD & D will be provided in the amount of \$65,000, District paid at 100%.

The Board will provide Dental and Vision, Single Subscriber or two person only, District paid 100% as per MESSA quote ID 360288.

These benefits will commence as of October 1 of each year and continue for a twelve (12) month period.

ARTICLE 28 - GENERAL

- A. Pursuant to the Michigan Public Employment Relations Act, the Board hereby agrees that every Bargaining Unit Member shall have the right freely to organize, join, and support the MESPA for the purpose of engaging in collective bargaining or negotiations or to refrain from such activities. The Board undertakes and agrees that it will not directly, or indirectly, discourage or deprive or coerce any Bargaining Unit Member in the enjoyment of any rights conferred by the Act or other laws of Michigan, or the Constitution of Michigan and the United States of America; that it will not discriminate against any Bargaining Unit Member with respect to hours, wages, or any terms or conditions of employment by reason of his/her membership in the MESPA, his/her participation in any activities of the MESPA or collective negotiations with the Board; or his/her institution of any grievance, complaint, or proceeding under this Agreement or otherwise with respect to any terms or conditions of employment.
- B. Nothing contained within this Agreement shall be construed to deny or restrict to any Bargaining Unit Member's rights he/she may have under the Michigan General School Laws, or the applicable laws and regulations.
- C. The MESPA recognizes that the Board has responsibility and authority to manage and direct, in behalf of the public, all the operations and activities of the school district to the full extent authorized by the laws and Constitutions of Michigan and the United States of America, provided that such rights and responsibilities shall be exercised by the Board in conformity with the provisions of this Agreement.
- D. In the event that any provision of this Agreement shall, at any time, be held to be contrary to law by a court of competent jurisdiction from whose final judgment or decree an appeal has been taken within the time provided for doing so, such provision shall be void and inoperative, however, all other provisions of the Agreement shall continue in effect.
- E. Pursuant to P.A. 4 of 2011, the Board and Association shall follow the state guidelines regarding the appointment of an emergency financial manager.

ARTICLE 29 DURATION OF AGREEMENT

This Agreement shall be effective as of July 1, 2025, and shall continue in effect through June 30, 2028. Negotiations between the parties shall begin sixty (60) days prior to the contract expiration date. If, pursuant to such negotiations, an Agreement on the renewal or modification is not reached prior to the expiration date, this Agreement shall expire at such expiration date unless it is extended by mutual agreement of the parties.

For the Michigan Education Support Personnel Association (MESPA)



Jenny Bourdeau, MESPA President


12-5-25
Date



Larry Gabka, MEA


12-4-2025
Date

For the Escanaba Board of Education - Escanaba, Michigan



James Beauchamp, Board President

12-8-25
Date



Dr. Coby W. Fletcher, Superintendent

12/05/2025
Date