

School Article 3 – REA Collective Bargaining Agreement

This article will approve a three-year Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) reached between the Raymond School Board and the Raymond Education Association (REA), which includes raising and appropriating \$415,215 for increases in salaries and benefits for the upcoming fiscal year. There are currently 116.5 teachers and other professional members of REA affected by this new contract.

Notable increases include salaries and benefits, longevity, and team leader pay. Salary increases are dollar amounts rather than percentages, resulting in higher percentage raises for lower salaried employees. Year 1 will increase each position on the salary schedule by \$1,900 (average salary increase 4.7%). Year 2 will increase each position by \$2,900 (average increase 6.0%), and Year 3 by \$2,500 (average 5.0%). Longevity increases from \$1,950 to \$2,000 in Year 1 (to \$2,100 in Year 2, and to \$2,200 in Year 3). (1) Raymond School's compensation for the lower steps, and on average, is one of the lowest in Rockingham County and is in the lowest fifteen School Districts in the State, so the District has been working to mitigate turnover of newer teachers. The agreement will assist the Town of Raymond in being more competitive, which will support recruiting and retaining teachers. (2)

In addition to salary and benefit changes, there are non-monetary changes in this contract. (3) Six Memorandums of Understanding between the REA and School Board are moved to the contract. Teachers have more time devoted to classroom setup at the beginning of the year, and a 30-minute standard lunch period will be implemented in all three schools. Two requirements are restructured: parent-teacher conferences arranged to better accommodate parent schedules, and teacher planning time at the middle and high schools. The dental insurance benefit would be increased with no extra cost to the District. Supplemental compensation is also restructured for educators covering overnight field trips, mentors, team leaders, and longevity.

The estimated tax impact of this article is \$0.31 per \$1000 assessment, or \$62 on a \$200,000 home. This is the same increase in the last CBA presented to the voters in 2022. (4) The estimated tax increase for the following two years cannot yet be calculated. (5)

A YES vote approves a 3-year contract for members of the REA and funds the first year of the agreement.

A NO vote means that professional staff continue to work under the current contract.

Reasons why some voters might vote yes:

- Agree with the changes in cost items and language
- To increase pay for professional members of REA, per the new pay scale
- To keep the District's contribution to dental benefits from rising

Reasons why some voters might vote no:

- Objection to any or all terms of the CBA
- Prefer to have a special meeting to address a revised agreement
- Want to maintain the current REA dental insurance

References:

1. Presentation made during the Budget Committee public hearing 1/7/2025 by Superintendent Terry Leatherman and Business Administrator Marjorie Whitmore,

RCTV link, <https://tinyurl.com/2p8xs6m8> and slide presentation link:
<https://tinyurl.com/36aazc8n>

2. School Board discussion of CBA, 12/18/2024, RCTV link at timestamp [1:24:42]
<https://tinyurl.com/5n8xftup>, pp. 4-5 in Draft Meeting Minutes,
<https://tinyurl.com/3f6caake>
3. Presentation about the REA CBA, discussion begins at [2:09:04], at the School District
Deliberative Session, 02/01/2025 RCTV link: <https://tinyurl.com/37zr2jpi>
4. Raymond VIP voter guide 2022 link with School Article 3, p.3,
<https://tinyurl.com/mnhxnxs5>, which passed 864-542, <https://tinyurl.com/bdd27fz5>
5. Question at the School Deliberative Session answered by School Board Chairman John
Harmon, 02/01/2025, at timestamp [2:24:57] <https://tinyurl.com/37zr2jpi>