

## MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

WHEREAS, the School Committee for the Wachusett Regional School District voted to accept M.G.L. c. 32B, §19 (Section 19) for the purposes of negotiating health insurance and other benefits.

WHEREAS, the Wachusett Regional School District (WRSD) and the duly - formed Public Employee Committee (PEC) have negotiated such benefits;

NOW, THEREFORE, the School Committee and the PEC agree as follows

### **Effective Date and Duration of Agreement**

The Agreement shall take effect on the date the School Committee and the PEC execute the Agreement and shall remain in effect through June 30, 2025

### **Insurance Plans Offered**

For Fiscal Years (FY) 2025, July 1, 2024- June 30, 2025, the non- Medicare HMO health insurance offered pursuant to this agreement shall be the HMO Blue New England Options and the HMO Blue New England Enhanced Value Plan. The non-Medicare PPO shall be Blue Care Elect. A fourth medical plan option was added in (FY) 2024, Access Blue NE Saver \$2,000. This plan is HSA-compatible and the District has sponsored a Health Savings Account, which will be fully funded by the employee. A new prescription program, Pillar Rx, was added to all non-Medicare BCBS plans in (FY) 2024 (with the exception of the Access Blue NE Saver \$2,000 plan). This program provides financial assistance, through manufacturer coupons, to cover most or all of out- of-pocket costs for certain eligible medications. In the successor year of this agreement, the District may, in addition to receiving rate quotes from Blue Cross Blue Shield, seek insurance quotes from other insurance carriers for coverage which mirrors, in all material aspects, these above referenced Blue Cross insurance plans. If a rate quote from one or more of the other carriers is lower than the Blue Cross quote for the above referenced plan to which it is being compared, the District and the PEC will together decide whether to switch carriers and offer that/those insurance carriers plans instead, provided said other plan or plans meet all of the material aspects and are the actuarial equivalent of the Blue Cross Plans referenced above.

For Fiscal Years (FY) 2025, July 1, 2024- June 30, 2025, the Medicare offering is Managed Blue for Seniors with Blue Medicare Rx and Medicare HMO Blue (Advantage Plan) provided by Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts. The Medicare indemnity plan is Medex 2 with Blue Medicare Rx provided by Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts. In the successor years of this agreement, the District may, in addition to receiving rate quotes from Blue Cross Blue Shield, seek insurance quotes from other insurance carriers for coverage which mirrors, in all material aspects, these above referenced Blue Cross insurance plans. If a rate quote from one or more of the other carriers is lower than the Blue Cross quote for the above referenced plan to which it is being compared, the District and the PEC will together decide whether to switch carriers and offer that/those insurance carriers plans instead, provided said other plan or plans meet all of the material aspects and are the actuarial equivalent of the Blue Cross Plans referenced above.

## **Contribution Splits**

### **Employees, Retirees, and their Dependents without Medicare**

Access Blue NE Saver \$2,000 plan and HMO Plan -78/22 split for 7/1/2024 through 6/30/2025. The HMO will be the Blue New England Options Deductible plan. For the life of the agreement, an Equal Dollar contribution of the above HMO will be paid by the District toward the HMO Blue New England Enhanced Value plan.

### **Employees, Retirees, and their Dependents without Medicare PPO Plan -- 50/50 Split**

From July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025, the WRSD will contribute fifty percent (50%) of the premium or cost for the preferred provider organization (PPO) and the subscriber shall contribute fifty percent (50%). For the purposes of this section, the PPO is Blue Care Elect PPO Deductible provided by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Massachusetts.

### **Eligible Retirees and Their Survivors with Medicare HMO -78/22 Split for 7/1/2024 through 6/30/2025.**

Subscribers who are eligible or who become eligible for Medicare shall transfer to Medicare coverage.

Effective July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025, WRSD shall contribute seventy-eight percent (78%) and the subscriber shall contribute twenty-two percent (22%). For the purposes of this section, the HMO Medicare plan is Managed Blue for Seniors with Blue Medicare Rx and Medicare HMO Blue (Advantage Plan) provided by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Massachusetts.

### **Eligible Retirees and Their Survivors with Medicare Indemnity Plans- 50/50 Split**

The Wachusett Regional School District will contribute fifty percent (50%) of the monthly cost of the Medicare Supplement enrollment of an indemnity plan for any subscriber enrolled in Medicare and the subscriber will contribute fifty percent (50%). For the purposes of this section, the indemnity plan is Medex 2 with Blue Medicare Rx provided by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Massachusetts.

## **Deductibles/Co-payments**

Unless otherwise provided for in this Agreement, health insurance plan design changes for Blue Cross Blue Shield Options Deductible plan will be as follows:

Deductible \$500/\$1000; Inpatient Co-pays \$275/\$500/\$1500; Day Surgery Co-pay \$250; Imaging co-pay \$100; Rx co-pays \$10/\$30/\$65 Retail and \$25/\$75/\$165 Mail Order.  
Except as referenced above, this agreement will maintain the standard plan designs that are incorporated into this agreement as "Appendix A: WRSD PEC Health Plan Details."

## ***Health Savings Account***

The School District agrees to sponsor a Health Savings Account (HSA) for employees enrolled in the Access Blue NE Saver \$2,000 plan. The HSA will be fully funded by the employee. An HSA is a

tax-advantaged savings account, paired with a high-deductible health plan, owned by an individual that allows you to put money away and withdraw it tax free, as long as you use it for qualified medical expenses, like deductibles, copayments and coinsurance. HSA funds will roll over from year to year and your HSA can be taken with you if you leave the District. Per IRS guidelines, a member may not be enrolled in an HSA and FSA.

### ***Health Reimbursement Account***

In addition, the School District agrees to continue the Health Reimbursement Account (HRA) to go into effect on July 1, 2024. The District will reimburse the following amounts for those on the HMO Blue New England Options Deductible plan and the HMO Blue New England Enhanced Value Plan: \$250 for each outpatient surgical procedure co-pay; \$275 for each inpatient procedure co-pay; \$35 for each Urgent Care co-pay; and \$100 for each Imaging co-pay. The rules of the HRA are as follows:

1. The WRSD shall administer the HRA and reimburse members monthly.
2. Members must pay the required co-pays per the plan and will be reimbursed for the payments.
3. Members must present their paid receipt and explanation of benefits to the Director of Human Resources to verify payment.
4. Eligible co-pays will be reimbursed up to 90 days after the end of the plan year. The plan year ends each June 30<sup>th</sup>.
5. The Health Reimbursement Account will be capped at \$50,000 annually for each year. Any excess money from the year will not be added to the following year's \$50,000 total. Payments will be made on a first come first serve basis and end once the HRA is exhausted.

### ***Insurance Buyout***

For any enrollee enrolled in the District's health insurance on June 30th of a particular plan year covered by this Agreement who opts to get his/her health insurance from another source for the following plan year, the District will pay an annual cash payout of \$2000 for a family plan and \$1000 for an individual plan for the year in which the enrollee has foregone receipt of the District's health insurance. Notwithstanding the preceding sentence, any enrollee who previously opted out of the District's insurance under the prior PEC Memorandum of Agreement (2023-2024) and who is still opting out of the insurance will continue to receive the opt-out payment in accordance with the payout procedures enumerated in this Paragraph. The buy-out form must be returned to Human Resources by June 30th to be eligible for a payout and must be accompanied by proof of other insurance. The insurance buy-out payment referenced herein will be paid via equal pro rata payments in September and February of the applicable contract year. If the enrollee must reinstate health insurance during the waived year when he or she is receiving the buy-out payment, due to an emergency and/or a loss of health insurance from another source or any other reason, the enrollee must reimburse the District a pro rata portion of any amount already paid as part of the reimbursement within 30 days of the reinstatement of health insurance.

### ***Dental/Life/Long/Short-Term Disability and Vision Insurance***

Wachusett Regional School District shall offer life, dental, long-term disability and vision insurance benefits to subscribers.

For the duration of this Agreement, the cost of dental insurance provided for eligible employees, retirees and their dependents shall be paid one-hundred percent (100%) by the employee or retiree. The dental insurance offered is Dental Blue Program 1 and Dental Blue Program 2 provided by Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts.

The cost of Basic \$10,000.00 Life and Accidental Death and Dismemberment Insurance for eligible employees shall be paid fifty percent (50%) by the employee. If an employee should retire from the District, the employee may continue with the employee's life insurance policy as a retired employee of the District. The retired employee is responsible for ninety-five percent (95%) of the cost. Employees may purchase a Group Voluntary Life and Accidental Death and Dismemberment Insurance Plan as long as they have enrolled in the Basic \$10,000.00 Life Insurance Plan. The cost of Group Voluntary Life and Accidental Death and Dismemberment Insurance Plan for eligible employees shall be paid one hundred percent (100%) by the employee.

The cost of long-term disability insurance provided for eligible employees shall be paid one-hundred percent (100%) by the employee and are paid on a post-tax basis. Employees of the District that participate in the long term disability insurance are entitled to a salary stipend equivalent to fifty percent (50%) of the member's yearly long term disability insurance premium.

The cost of short-term disability insurance provided for eligible employees shall be paid one-hundred percent (100%) by the employee and will be paid on a post tax basis.

An optional Blue 20/20 Vision Plan will be offered to Employees and non-Medicare retirees with subscribers paying one hundred percent (100%) of the cost of that benefit plan.

The District will continue to offer a Flexible Spending Account option for Employees.

#### ***Future Meetings of the Wachusett Regional School District and PEC***

The PEC shall be composed of a union representative from each collective bargaining unit which negotiates with the Wachusett Regional School District and a retiree representative designated by the Retired State, County and Municipal Employees Association. Each union representative and the retiree representative shall have the option of allowing one additional representative to attend meetings of the PEC and the Wachusett Regional School District Administrator or his designee. The retiree group shall have a ten percent (10%) vote. The remaining ninety (90%) percent vote shall be divided as follows: each collective bargaining unit represented on the PEC shall have a weighted vote equal to the proportion which the number of employees eligible for health insurance under this chapter employed in the bargaining unit he/she represents bears to the total number of employees eligible for health insurance in all bargaining units of the governmental unit. Any agreement with the public authority must be approved by fifty-one percent (51%) of the votes cast by the representatives on the public employee committee on a weighted basis.

The parties shall establish a regular schedule of meetings to discuss the implementation of this Agreement and any issues relating to the effectiveness and efficiency of health coverage for subscribers. Such meetings shall take place quarterly, unless agreed otherwise. Meetings will be held at times and places which are mutually agreed upon by the Wachusett Regional School District and the PEC. In addition, either party may convene a meeting upon seven days' notice to the other party, unless there is an emergency that requires shorter notice. Meeting notices will be provided to the Wachusett Regional

School District and to the PEC in writing. The Wachusett Regional School District may provide notice of a meeting or a series of meetings up to twelve months in advance of a meeting. Any employee who is a representative on the PEC shall receive time off to attend meetings of the Committee with the Wachusett Regional School District with full pay and benefits.

### **Correspondence and Information**

The Wachusett Regional School District shall make available to the PEC copies of any correspondence between the Wachusett Regional School District and any provider of health care. The PEC shall be given reasonable access to all information necessary for the efficient and effective functioning of the PEC.

At the request of the PEC, the Wachusett Regional School District will present alternative plans which are at least the actuarial equivalent of those offered for the 2024/2025 plan year so that the parties may fully explore and negotiate health coverage to be provided to subscribers starting July 1, 2025. The parties agree to commence negotiations for a successor agreement on or before December 31, 2024.

### **Effect of Agreement**

This Agreement shall be binding on all subscribers and shall supersede any conflicting provisions of any Wachusett Regional School District policies or any collective bargaining agreements between the Wachusett Regional School District and any unions representing Wachusett Regional School District employees.

### **Arbitration of Disputes**

Either party may submit a dispute between the parties concerning the interpretation or application of this Agreement to the American Arbitration Association for arbitration under its Labor Arbitration Rules. A request for arbitration by the PEC must be approved by seventy (70%) of the weighted votes of the representatives on the PEC. Any arbitrator appointed in such process shall look to and be bound by external law.

### **Savings Clause**

If any provision or portion of the Agreement is found to be unenforceable or unlawful, the remaining provisions or portions shall remain binding.

### **Scope and Modification**

This Agreement shall constitute the whole of the Agreement between the Wachusett Regional School District and the PEC. The Agreement may be modified only by a written document signed by the Wachusett Regional School District and the PEC.

### **Authorization to Sign Agreement**

Each signatory to this Agreement is authorized to bind the entity he/she represents. The PEC represents that it has the authorization and approval of fifty-one (51%) of the weighted votes of the PEC and that this Agreement is binding on all subscribers and their representatives.

Signatories

The signatories are authorized to bind their principals.

For the Wachusett Regional School District:

By: James M. Reilly  
James Reilly, Ed.D  
Superintendent of Schools

Date: 3/25/24

By: Scott Runstrom  
Scott Runstrom, Chair  
Wachusett Regional District School Committee

Date: 4/8/2024

For the Public Employee Committee:

By: Linda Sasso  
Linda Sasso  
Wachusett Regional Education Association, Inc.  
559 Eligible Members 51.56%

Date: 3/25/2024

By: Patricia N. O'Donnell  
Patricia O'Donnell  
Wachusett Administrators Association  
30 Eligible Members 2.77%

Date: 3/25/2024

By: Christine Lawton  
Christine Lawton  
Wachusett Regional Nurses Association  
14 Eligible Members 1.29%

Date: 3/25/2024

By: Matthew Sullivan  
Matthew Sullivan  
AFSCME, Council 93, Local 2885 – Custodial Employees  
60 Eligible Members 5.27%

Date: 3/25/2024

By: Deborah Vaillant  
Deborah Vaillant  
AFSCME, Council 93, Local 2885 – Clerical Employees  
28 Eligible Members 2.49%

Date: 3/25/24

By: Vicki Mosher  
Vicki Mosher  
SEIU, Local 888 – ABA Program Assistants  
55 Eligible Members 5.08%

Date: 3/25/24

By: Michele Goodacre  
Michele Goodacre  
Wachusett Cafeteria Association  
45 Eligible Members 3.79%

Date: 3/26/24

By: Kenneth Bergen  
Kenneth Bergen  
Teamsters Local #170 - Aides  
193 Eligible Members 17.74%

Date: 3/25/24

By: Roy K. Baer  
Roy Baer  
Retirees  
10%

Date: 3/25/24