

**INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 1
AITKIN, MINNESOTA**

**PRINCIPALS
MASTER AGREEMENT
2025, 2026, 2027**

**ARTICLE I
PURPOSE**

Section 1. Parties: This Agreement is entered into between the School District of Independent School District No. 1, Aitkin, Minnesota, and the Aitkin Principals' Association, hereinafter referred to as exclusive representative, to provide the terms and conditions of employment for principals during the duration of this Agreement.

**ARTICLE II
RECOGNITION OF EXCLUSIVE REPRESENTATIVE**

Section 1. Recognition: The School District recognizes the Aitkin Principals' Association as the exclusive representative of principals employed by Independent School District No.1, which exclusive representative, shall have those rights as prescribed in the Public Employment Labor Relations Act of 1971, as amended.

**ARTICLE III
DEFINITIONS**

Section 1. School District: Shall mean the Independent School District No. 1, Aitkin, Minnesota, as governed by the School Board.

Section 2. Other Terms: Terms not defined in this Agreement shall have those meanings as defined by the P.E.L.R.A. of 1971 as amended.

Section 3. Principal: Any member of this bargaining unit: Principals.

**ARTICLE IV
SCHOOL DISTRICT RIGHTS**

Section 1. Effect of Laws, Rules and Regulations: The exclusive representative recognizes that all employees covered by this Agreement shall perform the administrative services prescribed by the School District and shall be governed by the laws of the State of Minnesota, and by school district rules, regulations, directives and orders, issued by properly designated officials of the school district. The exclusive representative also recognizes the right, obligation and duty of the School Board and its duly designated officials to promulgate rules, regulations, directives and orders from time to time as deemed necessary by the School Board insofar as such rules, regulations, directives and orders are not inconsistent with the terms of this Agreement and recognizes that the School District, all employees covered by this Agreement, and all provisions of this Agreement are subject to the laws of the State of Minnesota, federal laws, rules and regulations of the State Board of Education, and valid rules, regulations and orders of State and Federal governmental agencies. Any provision of this Agreement found to be in violation of any such laws, rules, regulations, directives, or orders shall be null and void and without force and effect.

ARTICLE V
PRINCIPAL RIGHTS

Section 1. Right to Views: Nothing contained in this Agreement shall be construed to limit, impair or affect the right of any principal or his/her representative to the expression or communication of a view, grievance, complaint or opinion on any matter related to the conditions or compensation of public employment or their betterment, so long as the same is not designated to and does not interfere with the proper performance of the duties of employment or circumvent the right of the exclusive representative if there be one or shall it be construed to require any principal to perform labor or services against his/her will.

Section 2. Right to Join: Principals shall have the right to form and join labor or employee organizations, and shall have the right not to form and join such organizations. Principals in an appropriate unit shall have the right by secret ballot to designate an exclusive representative for the purpose of negotiating grievance procedures and the terms and conditions of employment for such principals with the School District.

Section 3. Unrequested Leave of Absence and Reinstatement: Principals hired after July 1, 2003 shall be allowed to count only service as a unit member for purposes of placement on unrequested leave of absence from a principal’s unit position. Service in other non-units within the district cannot be counted for purposes of bumping another APA unit member. In the event a principal subject to this agreement must be reassigned or placed on unrequested leave because of discontinuance of position, lack of pupils, financial limitations, or merger of classes caused by consolidation of districts, the Principals shall retain all other rights under Minnesota Statutes Section 122A.40, Subd. 11(b). For purposes of this section, “hired” means assigned to a position within the principals’ bargaining unit. For purposes of this section, “unit member” means member of the Aitkin Principals Association. The provisions of implementing Minnesota Statutes 122A.40, Subd. 11(b) shall be in accordance with Article VI of the Master Agreement with the Education Minnesota-Aitkin Association.

ARTICLE VI
SALARY AND WORK DAYS

Section 1. Salary:

	<u>2025-2026</u>	<u>2026-2027</u>
Elementary Principal - Andy Dokken (term)	\$110,000	-
Elementary Principal – Leah Olk	-	\$105,000
High School Principal - Lisa DeMars.	\$124,424	\$126,912

Section 2. New or Additional Employees: If during the term of this Agreement, any of the current principal positions need to be filled or the School Board creates additional administrative positions, the initial salary shall be determined by the School Board.

Section 3. Payment: The salaries of principals shall be divided into 24 payments to be paid on the 15th and last work day of the month unless otherwise specified by the School District.

Section 4. Work Days: Principals work full-time throughout the calendar year. These work days do not include duties for the School District Alternative High School which shall be considered over and above these amounts.

ARTICLE VII
OTHER COMPENSATION

Section 1. Professional Growth:

Subd. 1. The District shall contribute 100% of the cost of dues for each principal: National, State, Regional or District Professional Association, i.e. NASSP, MASSP, NAESP, MESPA, CMASSP, NMESPA, BOSA.

Subd. 2. Each principal shall be allowed to attend a national convention once every three years. Expenses allowed under the School District travel policy shall be paid by the School District to a maximum of \$1,000. The decision to attend a national convention must be made in the year prior to the convention so budget dollars are set aside for convention attendance.

During the fiscal year that a principal attends a national convention, he/she may use up to 50% of his/her regular principal's office travel budget to reimburse eligible expenses that exceed the \$1,000 mentioned earlier in this subdivision.

Section 2. Mileage: Each principal shall be reimbursed at the mileage rate established by the School District for the use of a private automobile in the performance of professional responsibilities/duties which require out of district travel.

Section 3. Additional Duties, Director of the School District Alternative High School: The School District may assign the administrative responsibility for the Alternative High School to a member of the principals' bargaining unit. If that assignment is made, the principal shall be compensated, in addition to the regular salary (Article VI), an additional \$11,830 for the 2025-2026 school year and \$12,066 for the 2026-2027 school year.

Section 4. Extra-Curricular Event Supervision: When the Activities Director is unable to serve as the Event Supervisor for an evening event at the high school, a Principal/Dean of Students shall be eligible to receive a \$50.00 stipend for serving as the Event Supervisor upon submission of a pay voucher.

ARTICLE VIII
GROUP INSURANCE

Section 1. Selection: The selection of the insurance carrier and policy shall be recommended by the Association and approved by the School District as provided by law.

Section 2. Medical, Hospital Insurance: The School District shall contribute full payment per month of the premium for family medical and hospitalization insurance coverage, up to a maximum of \$2,200 per month for each fulltime principal employed by the School District who qualifies for and is enrolled in the medical and hospital insurance plan.

In the event the School District offers a health coverage option where two or more companies make coverage available to eligible employees or eligible retirees, it is agreed to that:

1. In the case where the School District employs, in any capacity, married partners (both husband and wife), that couple is eligible for two separate single health coverage plans or one family plan per family. That one family plan can be the property of either partner.

2. In the case where the School District insures both partners where either one or both partners are retired, or where one partner is retired and the other still employed by the School District, as individuals they are eligible for two single health plans or one family health plan per family.

Section 3. Long Term Disability Insurance: The Principal shall contribute the premium for long term disability insurance coverage, as provided in the group insurance plan. The School District shall reimburse the employee for this premium.

Section 4. Term Life Insurance: The School District shall contribute the group premium for \$100,000 of term life insurance coverage for each principal employed by the School District. A principal not eligible for group life coverage may continue or obtain other insurance and receive the equivalent of the group premium toward such other insurance. Additional coverage can be purchased, at the expense of the principal in increments of \$10,000 beyond the \$100,000 base as allowed by the insurance company. Additional purchase of insurance must be uniform throughout the principals' group.

Section 5. Dental Insurance: The School District shall contribute full payment per month of the premium for family dental insurance coverage for each principal employed by the School District as provided in the group dental insurance plan.

Section 6. Liability Insurance: The School District shall pay the premium for and name each principal as coinsured, in a general liability insurance policy in an amount not less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence. The School District shall pay the premium for and name each principal as insured in an "errors and omissions" insurance policy in an amount not less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence.

Section 7. Claims Against the School District: It is understood that the School District's only obligation is to purchase insurance policies and pay such amounts as agreed to herein and no claim shall be made against the School District as a result of a denial of insurance benefits by any insurance carrier. All benefit amounts are subject to the terms, conditions, and applicable limits defined by the policies.

Section 8. Duration of Insurance Contribution: A principal is eligible for School District contribution as provided in this Article as long as the principal is employed full time by the School District. A terminated employee, whose termination was for reasons other than the employee's disability or retirement, may elect to continue insurance coverage as per COBRA laws. The terminated employee must pay full costs for continued coverage, in advance, on a monthly basis.

Section 9. Tax Sheltered Annuities: Principals may request to take part in a tax sheltered annuity program in accordance with School District policies relating to same.

ARTICLE IX **OTHER BENEFITS**

Section 1. Health Care Savings Plan: All Principals shall participate in the Minnesota Post Employment Health Care Savings Plan (HCSP) authorized under Minnesota Statutes, section 352.98 (Minn. Supp 2001).

All eligible principals shall contribute \$1,700 per year in equal pay period installments. The School District shall match \$1,700 per year in equal pay period installments. All funds collected and/or contributed by the School District on behalf of the principal will be deposited into the post employment health care savings plan account.

Section 2. 403B Match Program: Principals may participate in a 403B School District match program. The School District will match each eligible principal contribution up to \$3,000 for 2025-2026 and \$4,300 per year beginning July 1, 2026, but not to exceed \$30,000 over the principal's career in the School District. There shall be no balance paid, only the yearly match.

Section 3. Sport Passes: The Principal may purchase season sports passes for themselves or members of their household at 50% face value until September 30. Any passes purchased after September 30 will be at full price. If sports passes are lost, new passes can be purchased according to school district policy. A household shall consist of a husband, wife, and children less than 22 years of age as long as they are still in school.

Section 4. Cell Phone Stipend: Principals will receive a monthly cell phone stipend of \$50.00. Their cell number must be provided to the District and be used for school business.

ARTICLE X **LEAVES OF ABSENCE**

Section 1. Sick Leave:

Subd. 1. All principals employed full time shall earn sick leave at the rate of 15 days (120 hours) for each year of service in the employ of the School District. Sick leave will be credited on the principal's first scheduled day of employment. If, however, a principal leaves the School District within the year, the principal will receive credit for only the sick days earned on a prorated basis as of the last day of employment. If the number of sick leave days used exceeds the number of days earned for that time period, the principal will have the corresponding number of days' pay automatically deducted from his/her salary.

Subd. 2. Unused sick leave days may accumulate to a maximum credit of 200 days (1600 hours) of sick leave per principal.

Subd. 3. Sick leave with pay shall be allowed by the School District whenever a principal's absence is due to illness, injury or disability of the principal or as allowed under Minnesota Statute. The maximum sick leave a principal can use for a disability shall be the minimum amount necessary to qualify for disability benefits.

Subd. 4. The school district may, where insufficient reason is suspected, require a principal to furnish a medical certificate from a qualified physician as evidence of illness, indicating such absence was due to illness, in order to qualify for sick leave pay.

Subd. 5. Sick leave allowed shall be deducted from the accrued sick leave days earned by the principal.

Subd. 6. Sick leave pay shall be approved only upon submission of a signed request upon the authorized sick leave pay request form available at the principal's office.

Section 2. Personal Business Leave: A principal shall be granted leave of no more than 4 days per year, non-cumulative, the days used to be deducted from sick leave, for business situations which must be handled during school hours requiring the principal's personal attention.

Section 3. Bereavement Leave: Principals shall be granted up to five (5) days bereavement leave, per occurrence, in the event of the death of a sibling, son in law, daughter in law, brother or sister in law, parent, grandparent, grandchild or parent in law, step sibling or step parent. The Principal shall be allowed ten (10) days bereavement leave per occurrence in the event of the death of a spouse, child or stepchild. Used leave will be subtracted from accumulated sick leave.

Section 4. Leave of Absence: A principal, upon written request, may be granted a leave of absence without pay up to one (1) year. Said leave must have approval by the School Board. An employee shall retain fringe benefits by paying monthly for them in advance.

Section 5. Legal Leave:

Subd. 1. In cases where a principal must appear as a witness at the request of the Board, the principal shall not lose any pay or fringe benefits for the time absent.

Subd. 2. In cases where the principal must make an appearance at a job related legal proceeding the principal shall not lose any pay or fringe benefits for the time absent.

Section 6. Professional Leave: A principal may be granted professional leave during the summer months for the purpose of attending summer school. Additional professional leave may be granted at the Board's discretion upon submission of a plan. The granting or denial of such additional professional leave shall be non grievable.

Subd. 1. Salaries and fringe benefits during professional leave will remain at 100%.

Subd. 2. Principals taking advantage of professional leave shall utilize at least 15 days vacation for the year during which they return from such leave.

Subd. 3. Requests for professional leave must be submitted in writing to the Superintendent of Schools no later than May 1.

Section 7. Holidays: Holidays shall constitute the following: New Year's Day, President's Day or Midwinter holiday, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Juneteenth, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, the day after Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve Day, Christmas Day, New Year's Eve Day. If a listed holiday falls on a Saturday, then the Friday preceding is the holiday and if such holiday falls on a Sunday, then the next workday shall be the holiday.

Section 8. Vacations: The following vacation schedule shall apply to principals in the respective positions:

High School Principal Lisa DeMars:	35 working days
Elementary School Principal Andy Dokken:	35 working days

If a principal leaves the School District within the year, the principal will receive credit for only the vacation days earned on a prorated basis through the last day of employment. If the number of vacation days used exceeds the number of days earned for that time period, the principal will have the corresponding number of days' pay automatically deducted from his/her salary.

The provisions of this section are subject to the provisions of Section 7 of this Article. Vacation time shall be non-cumulative and non-compensatory. Vacation days must be utilized by August of the following the fiscal year (before the start of the next school year).

ARTICLE XI
GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Section 1. Grievance Definition: A grievance shall mean a claim by a principal resulting in a dispute that there has been a misinterpretation or misapplication of terms and conditions of employment insofar as such matters are contained in this Agreement.

Section 2. Representative: The administrator or School Board may be represented during any step of the procedure by any person or agent designated by such party to act in his/her behalf.

Section 3. Definitions and Interpretations:

Subd. 1. Extension: Time limits specified in this Agreement may be extended by mutual agreement.

Subd. 2. Days: Reference to days regarding time periods in this procedure shall refer to all week days not designated as holidays by state law.

Subd. 3. Computation of Time: In computing any period of time prescribed by procedures herein, the date of the act, for which the designated period of time begins to run shall not be included. The last day of the period so computed shall be counted, unless it is a Saturday, a Sunday, or a legal holiday, in which event the period runs until the end of the next day which is not a Saturday, a Sunday, or a legal holiday.

Subd. 4. Filing and Postmark: The filing or service of any notice or document herein shall be timely if it bears a postmark of the United States Mail within the time period.

Section 4. Time Limitation and Waiver: Failure to file any grievance within the time periods prescribed hereafter shall be deemed a waiver thereof. Failure to appeal a grievance from one level to another within the time periods hereafter provided shall constitute a waiver of the grievance. Failure by the School Board or its representative to issue a decision within the time periods hereafter provided shall constitute a denial of the grievance and the principal may appeal to the next level.

Section 5. Adjustment of Grievance: An effort shall first be made to adjust a grievance informally between the principal and the Superintendent of Schools. The School Board and the principal shall attempt to adjust all unsettled grievances which may arise during the course of employment of any principal within the school district in the following manner:

Subd. 1 Level I. If informal discussions are not successful, the grievance, to be valid for consideration, must be submitted in writing to the superintendent, setting forth the facts and the specific provision of the Contract allegedly violated and the relief sought, within 10 days after the date of the event giving rise to the grievance occurred. The superintendent shall give a written decision on the grievance to the parties involved within five days after receipt of the written grievance.

Subd. 2. Level II. If the grievance is not resolved in Level I, an appeal may be made to the Board of Education, provided such appeal is made in writing within five days after receipt of the decision in Level I. The Board of Education will within ten days meet with the parties involved and five days thereafter issue a decision in writing.

Section 6. School Board Review: The Board of Education reserves the right to review and change any decision issued under Level I provided such change is made within ten days after the decision was issued. In the event the Board of Education changes a decision previously rendered under the grievance procedure the principal retains those rights of arbitration hereinafter provided.

Section 7. Arbitration Procedures: No grievance shall be considered for arbitration which has not been first duly processed in accordance with the grievance procedure heretofore prescribed. If the principal and the Board of Education are unable to resolve a grievance, the grievance may be submitted to arbitration as defined herein:

Subd. 1. Request: A request to submit a grievance to arbitration must be in writing, signed by the principal and submitted to the Chairman of the Board of Education within five days following the decision in Level II of the grievance procedure.

Subd. 2. Selection of Arbitrator: The representative of the Board of Education and the principal or his/her representative shall, within five days after the request to arbitrate, attempt to mutually select an arbitrator. If the parties cannot agree as to the arbitrator, they will obtain a list of arbitrators and each will strike until one is left. This process shall not take longer than ten additional days.

Subd. 3. Hearing: The grievance shall be heard by a single arbitrator and both parties may be represented by such person or persons as they may choose and designate, and the parties shall have the right to a hearing at which time both parties will have the opportunity to submit evidence, offer testimony, and make oral or written arguments relating to the issues before the arbitrator. The proceeding before the arbitrator shall be a hearing de novo.

Subd. 4. Decision: Decisions by the arbitrator in cases properly before him shall be final and binding upon the parties, subject, however, to the limitation of arbitration decisions as provided by in the P.E.L.R.A.

Subd. 5. Expenses: Each party shall bear its own expenses in connection with arbitration including expenses relating to the party's representatives, witnesses, and any other expenses which the party incurs in connection with presenting its case in arbitration. A transcript or recording shall be made of the hearing at the request of either party, cost of which will be borne by the requesting party. The parties shall share equally fees and expenses of the arbitrator.

Subd. 6. Jurisdiction: The arbitrator shall have jurisdiction over disputes or disagreements relating to grievances properly before the arbitrator pursuant to the terms of this procedure. The jurisdiction of the arbitrator shall not extend to proposed changes in terms and conditions of employment as defined herein and contained in this written Contract; nor shall an arbitrator have jurisdiction over any grievance which has not been submitted to arbitration in compliance with the terms of the grievance and arbitration procedure as outlined herein.

Section 8. General:

Subd. 1. At least one exclusive representative shall be allowed to attend and present his/her views at any meetings, hearings, appeals, or other proceedings relating to a grievance which has been formally presented.

Subd. 2. The fact that a grievance is raised by an employee shall not be recorded in the employee's personnel file.

Subd. 3. Any hearing provided for in the grievance procedure shall be conducted at a time and place which will afford a fair and reasonable opportunity for all persons entitled to be present to attend.

ARTICLE XII **DURATION**

Section 1. Term and Reopening Negotiations: This Agreement shall remain in full force and effect for a period commencing on July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2027, and thereafter until modifications are made pursuant to P.E.L.R.A. of 1971 as amended. If either party desires to modify or amend this Contract commencing on July 1, 2027, it shall give written notice of such intent no later than April 1, 2027, unless a petition has been filed with the Bureau of Mediation Service contesting the exclusive representative's right to negotiate. The parties may upon mutual agreement commence negotiations 60 days prior to the expiration of the Agreement.

Section 2. Interpretation:

A. Representatives of the Board and exclusive representative bargaining committee may meet on the request of either party for the purpose of reviewing the administration on the Agreement, and to resolve problems of interpretation and administration that may arise. These meetings are not intended to bypass the grievance procedure.

B. All meetings between the representatives of the Board and the exclusive representative bargaining committee will be scheduled to take place as promptly as possible at times when the principals involved are free from assigned responsibilities unless otherwise mutually agreed.

C. Should such a meeting result in a mutually acceptable interpretation of the Master Agreement language, the interpretation shall be subject to ratification by the Board and exclusive representative.

Section 3. Effect: This Agreement constitutes the full and complete Agreement between the School District and the exclusive representative representing the principals of the district. The provisions herein relating to terms and conditions of employment supersede any and all prior agreements, resolutions, practices, school district policies, rules, or regulations concerning terms and conditions of employment inconsistent with these provisions.

Section 4. Finality: Any matters relating to this Agreement, or to the agreement term, whether or not referred to in this Agreement, shall not be opened for negotiation or amendment, unless by mutual consent of the Board of Education and the exclusive representative during the term of this Agreement, unless it be found contrary to law. Then such provision or application shall not be deemed valid except to the extent permitted by law. All other provisions or applications shall continue in full force and effect.

Section 5. Severability: The provisions of this Agreement shall be severable, and if any provision thereof or the application of any such provision under any circumstances is held invalid, it shall not affect any other provision of this Agreement or the application of any provision thereof.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, THE parties have executed this Agreement as follows:

Aitkin Principals' Association

President

Secretary

Dated this ___ day of _____, 2026.

Independent School District No. 1

Chairman

Clerk

Dated this ___ day of _____, 2026.