



Who sets the salaries for teachers and administrators in the school district?

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As you will find in every public school district in Connecticut both the teachers and the administrators are represented by a union and salaries are set through a process called Collective Bargaining. Collective Bargaining is governed by state law. There are three main

categories under this - mandatory, permissive and illegal subjects of bargaining. Each of these has specific rules around what can and cannot be party to negotiations. Wages, hours and conditions of employment are mandatory subjects of bargaining, while an item such as how much time a teacher or administrator must remain after a school day ends would be a permissive subject. Tenure is an example of an illegal subject of bargaining as it is covered under state statute. Teacher and administrator contracts (minus the Superintendents) are governed by Sections 10-144 through 10-159 of the Connecticut General Statutes, also known as the Teacher Tenure Act.

Teacher and administrator contracts typically run for a 3 year term. There are specific timelines that must be adhered to in the process, such as the start and completion dates. The union as well as the Board of Education have subcommittees (The Board committee is the Liaison Committee) who act on behalf of their respective parties to negotiate these important contract documents. Each side is also represented by legal counsel in these matters. Contract negotiations are not open to the public and both sides must adhere to ground rules that dictate how the process will run which include not speaking about the negotiations publicly until they are completed. If initial negotiations do not yield a contract, the next step in the process is mediation and then finally binding arbitration. Again this process is mandated by Connecticut law and cannot be deviated from. Once a contract agreement has been reached at the committee level it is then ratified by the union, approved by the BOE and then submitted to the Town Clerk's office where the selectman have 30 days to reject it if they so wish.

Teacher salaries follow a step and lane model where years of experience as well as the degrees a teacher has obtained factor into where they fall on the wage schedule. For administrators, there are job classifications for those positions which have set pay rates attached to them. All of the Seymour Public Schools bargaining unit contracts can be found here - <https://www.seymourschools.org/district-departments/finance-operations/contracts> Collective Bargaining is also utilized as the process for contract negotiations for our nurses, custodians, paraprofessionals and secretaries in our school district. Those discussions do not include the set timeframes for start and completion as seen with the teachers and administrators.

Reference:

<https://www.teachercontracts.conncan.org/about/connecticut-laws-collective-bargaining>