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"Making Education Work for All Georgians"

Guidance for O.C.G.A. § 20-2-212.5 Differentiated Compensation for Math and Science Teachers

In Reference to the Adoption of House Bill 280
during the 2009 Session of the Georgia General
Assembly

REVISION 3

The purpose of this document is to bring clarity to the practical application of the State Law and address topics covered in the law with greater detail. It is not intended to state new law or supplant any federal or state laws, regulations, or requirements. Nothing in this manual should be seen as having the force of law. This manual should not be cited as law or as imposing any additional requirements or obligations outside the requirements of existing law.

HB 280 Guidance

O.C.G.A. § 20-2-212.5

Differentiated Compensation for Math and Science Teachers

Background Information

House Bill 280 was introduced and approved during the 2009 session of the Georgia General Assembly. The bill was intended to provide differentiated compensation for math and science teachers, and includes a compensation determining process for secondary (6-12) teachers which is linked to certification and a compensation determining process for K-5 teachers which is linked to a certificate endorsement.

Local school superintendents and district personnel received information from Georgia Department of Education via an Elluminate Session on May 10, 2010 with regard to district level funding for differentiated salary increases. Essentially, it was communicated to local school districts that GaDOE personnel would collect Certified and Classified Personnel Information (CPI) from local school districts in determining accrued dollar amounts to which local school districts would be entitled based on the eligibility of their respective teachers. The accrued totals will be submitted to the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget and requested as part of the FY 11 Supplemental Budget and subsequently distributed to local school systems as part of their supplemental allocations to be used in compensating eligible teachers.

At a minimum, teachers eligible for additional compensation under HB 280 must have a clear renewable certificate in the area of math if they are teaching math courses or the area of science if they are teaching science courses.

Preliminary Guidance Information To Local Districts:

(A) For Math and Science Teachers, Grades 6-12

HB 280 states that, "On or after July 1, 2010, and until such date as may be determined by the State Board of Education that mathematics, science, or both are no longer areas in which there is an insufficient supply of teachers, a secondary school teacher in a local school system who is or becomes certified in mathematics or science by the Professional Standards Commission shall be moved to the

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salary step on the state salary schedule that is applicable to six years of creditable service (which equates to salary step four) , unless he or she is already on or above such salary step”.

Guidance Information:

- 1) School districts may use differentiated compensation to attract and recruit entry level secondary teachers who are certified in math or science and who are assigned to teach qualified math or science classes in grades six through twelve.
- 2) School districts may use differentiated compensation to employ and retain effective secondary math and science teachers who are certified in math or science, who have not reached salary step four (4) on the Georgia Teacher Salary Schedule, and who are assigned to teach qualified secondary math or science classes during a given school year.
- 3) Differentiated compensation shall apply to any otherwise eligible teacher who teaches at least one qualified class of secondary science or mathematics during a given school year.
- 4) Differentiated compensation shall apply to any otherwise eligible teacher who teaches special education students assigned to qualified science or math courses.
- 5) Teachers eligible for differentiated compensation shall continue to receive incentivized compensation for a period of at least five years, and longer provided if it is warranted by student assessment results.(as determined by the Governor’s Office of Student Achievement-GOSA)
- 6) District human resources personnel may obtain information from the Georgia Professional Standards Commission with regard to approved certification fields in determining teacher eligibility for the incentive.
- 7) District human resources personnel will also need to know which specific courses must be taught by certificated math and science teachers to be eligible to receive differentiated compensation. Qualified courses will be designated by certification field(s).

(B) Math and Science Teachers K-5

HB 280 further states that, “On or after July 10, 2010, a kindergarten or elementary school teacher in a local school system who receives an endorsement in mathematics, science, or both from the Professional Standards Commission shall receive a stipend of \$1,000.00 per endorsement for each year such endorsement is in effect, up to a maximum of five years”.

- 1) School districts may use differentiated compensation to attract and recruit entry level kindergarten through fifth grade teachers who have K-5 Mathematics Program and/or K-5 Science Program endorsements on their certificates.
- 2) School districts may use differentiated compensation to employ and retain effective elementary teachers who have K-5 Mathematics Program and/or Science Program endorsements on their

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certificates, and who are assigned to teach qualified math and/or science classes during a given school year.

- 3) Differentiated compensation shall apply to any otherwise eligible teacher who teaches at least one qualified class in math and/or science during a given school year.
- 4) Differentiated compensation shall apply to any otherwise eligible teacher who teaches special education students assigned to qualified math or science classes.
- 5) Teachers eligible for differentiated compensation shall continue to receive incentivized compensation for period of at least five years, and longer provided it is warranted through student assessment results.(as determined by GOSA)
- 6) District human resources personnel may obtain information from the Georgia Professional Standards Commission with regard to approved certification fields in determining teacher eligibility for the incentive
- 7) District human resources personnel will also need to know which specific courses must be taught by certificated math and science teachers to be eligible to receive differentiated compensation. Approved courses will be designated by certification field(s).

Additional concerns and issues will be addressed as part of this guidance document as questions arise with regard to eligibility for the incentive and placement on the salary schedule.

Questions and Answers

Question 1. I am a veteran high school teacher, but new to Georgia. Will I receive the incentivized salary?

Answer. Only those teachers who have not reached salary step four (which equates to six years of experience), on the state salary schedule are eligible to receive the incentive.

Question 2. I am a second year math teacher. Will my school district automatically place me on the incentivized pay scale, or do I need to contact them to receive the benefit of HB 280?

Answer. Your district may include your salary incentive in your current contract, or they may compensate you contingent upon the appropriation of state funds by the Georgia General Assembly to provide for math and science salary incentives. It is recommended that you contact your local school district human resources office to determine the process they will employ in compensating eligible teachers.

Question 3. How will the achievement level of my students be measured to ensure continuation on the incentivized pay scale?

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Answer. The Governor's Office of Student Achievement (GOSA) will establish student achievement criteria pursuant to HB 280.

Question 4. I taught high school math for two years during the 1990's, and left teaching. If I return to teaching, will I be eligible for the incentive?

Answer. Yes, if you meet the essential eligibility component of the law which states that you have not yet reached salary step four on the state teacher salary schedule, and are assigned to teach qualified math and science courses and/or classes.

Question 5. I teach high school band class the majority of the school day, but my principal has assigned me to teach chemistry for one period of the day because I am also certified in science. Do I qualify for the pay incentive?

Answer. Yes, the law makes reference to eligible teachers as those who become "certified in mathematics or science by the Professional Standards Commission". The answer assumes you have a valid certificate in science and that you are teaching a qualified science class.

Question 6. Are teachers employed by charter schools or systems and teacher employed by Investing in Educational Excellence (IE²) Systems eligible for the incentive?

Answer. Teachers employed by charter schools/systems and IE² systems are eligible to receive the incentive providing there is no language in the charter or contract indicating otherwise.

Question 7. I am an elementary teacher with ten years of experience in Georgia. Am I eligible to receive the K-5 one thousand dollar stipend?

Answer. Unlike the 6-12 component of HB 280, the K-5 component is only conditioned by the endorsement and teaching qualified math and science classes. The K-5 portion of the law makes no reference to years of experience as a condition for eligibility.