

February 18, 2009

S 218. NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOLS & TEACHER MERIT PAY. Filed 2/18/09. *DIRECTING LOCAL BOARDS OF EDUCATION TO PROVIDE VOUCHERS TO STUDENTS NOT PERMITTED TO ATTEND NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOLS AND TO ESTABLISH A MERIT PAY SYSTEM FOR TEACHERS, INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT PERSONNEL, AND PRINCIPALS.*

Vouchers. Amends GS 115C-366 by adding a new subsection to require school systems to provide a voucher for a student to attend a nonpublic school if the following is true: (1) the student lives within a one and one-half mile radius of an age-appropriate school for that student and (2) the local board chooses not to assign the student to that school. Provides that the amount of the voucher is to be equal to the average state and local funds allocation per student for that local school administrative unit.

Merit pay for teachers. Amends GS 115C-302.1 to establish a system of merit pay for teachers and instructional support personnel. Under current law, teachers and other personnel paid on the teacher salary schedule receive incremental pay increases based on years of experience. Directs the State Board of Education (SBE) to establish an entry level salary for teachers and instructional support personnel who hold "A" certificates, "Masters" certificates, National Board for Professional Teaching Standards certification, certification based on advanced degrees, and other levels of certification. Authorizes a school principal to exercise discretion in determining (1) if an employee's qualifications or experience make it appropriate to pay an employee more than the entry-level salary or (2) if it is necessary to offer more than an entry-level salary to recruit and retain teachers in certain areas of certification such as math, science, and special education.

Provides that the General Assembly may appropriate annually in the Current Operations Appropriations Act funds for (1) a cost of living increase and (2) merit pay. Provides that each employee may receive a cost of living increase as provided by the General Assembly but directs that employees are not to receive any additional across-the-board incremental increase or an incremental increase for years of experience.

Authorizes the principal of each school to determine the amount of merit pay each employee is to receive annually in accordance with the policy of the local board of education.

Provides that teachers and instructional personnel who are not paid out of state funds are to receive a cost of living increment and merit pay in the same manner as employees who are paid from state funds.

As the proposed new subsection to GS 115C-302.1 eliminates the teacher salary schedule based on years of experience, conforming changes delete all reference to "teacher salary schedule" and salary based on credit for years of experience, including provisions for longevity pay. Makes additional conforming changes to replace the phrase referencing *other personnel paid on the teacher salary schedule* with the phrase *instructional support personnel*, wherever it occurs in GS Chapter 115C. Also makes conforming changes to GS 20-88.1(b) (regarding salary range for driver education instructors) and GS 116-143.5 (regarding eligibility for in-state tuition for certain teachers).

Merit pay for principals and supervisors. Amends GS 115C-285 to establish a system of merit pay for principals and supervisors. Under current law, principals and supervisors are paid on a salary schedule with incremental increases for years of experience. Directs the SBE to establish the entry level salary for principals and assistant principals. Authorizes the local superintendent to exercise discretion in determining (1) if an employee's qualifications or experience make it appropriate to pay an employee more than the entry-level salary, or (2) if it is necessary to offer more than an entry-level salary to recruit and retain the employee.

Provides that the General Assembly may appropriate annually in the Current Operations Appropriations Act funds for (1) a cost of living increase and (2) merit pay. Provides that each employee may receive a cost of living increase as provided by the General Assembly but directs that employees are not to receive any additional across-the-board incremental increase or an incremental increase for years of experience.

Authorizes the local superintendent to determine the amount of merit pay each employee is to receive annually in accordance with the policy of the local board of education.

Provides that principals and assistant principals who are not paid out of state funds are to receive a cost of living increment and merit pay in the same manner as employees who are paid

from state funds. Also provides that principals employed at the schools and institutions listed in GS 115C-325(p) (regarding schools and institutions of the Department of Health and Human Services, Corrections, and Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention) in the same manner as such employees of local Boards of Education are to receive a cost of living increment and merit pay.

Makes additional conforming changes, including deletion of experience credit on the existing salary schedules for teachers, principals, and supervisors for time served in the armed forces.

The act is effective when it becomes law and applies beginning with the 2009-2010 school year.

Intro. by Hunt.

GS 20, 115C, 116