

DIFFERENTIATED PAY PLAN RESPONSE

Pursuant to N.C. Session Law 2014-100, § 8.41(b), we, the *Macon County Board of Education* (“Board”) hereby presents to the N.C. Senate Appropriations/Base Budget Committee, the N.C. House Committee on Appropriations and the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee the following Differentiated Pay Plan Response.

The Macon County Board of Education has had the following serious reservations about developing a Performance-Based or Differentiated salary plan:

1. Multiple research studies indicate differentiated pay and performance-based pay is ineffective in terms of increasing student achievement.
2. Meeting the legislative criteria to construct a performance-based pay plan for those teachers rated ‘highly effective’ on the NC Teacher Evaluation Instrument is difficult because of the varied types of assessments used across grade levels/subject areas that impact Standard 6: Mclass, NC Finals, EOG’s, EOC’s and product/performance-based assessments.
3. The concept of performance-based salaries is an industry-based, corporate response to a human endeavor: increasing student performance. However, when dealing with the human element of teaching, student interaction, and student motivation, perhaps a more subjective and humane analysis should be considered.
4. Any differentiated or performance-based salary plan may create problems within the employment ranks and may serve to detract from the positive, collegial and collaborative environment that our employees have worked hard to create and maintain.
5. While the role of classroom teachers is hugely important, employees of the school that are not considered classroom teachers often have direct motivational impact on increased student achievement: school social workers, school counselors, non-certified personnel, etc.

In response to the Legislative request, and despite the above reservations by the Board, the School Board of Macon County endeavored to see if the system could construct a performance-based and differentiated pay plan that could be used to address some of the Board’s concerns and increase student achievement. Through the hard work of School Improvement Teams and administrators across the district and from all schools, the system has developed a performance-based and differentiated pay plan for consideration that the Board of Macon County Schools believes addresses at least some of the above reservations and provides for the possibility of increasing student achievement. The

Board strongly believes that all school employees, not simply classroom teachers, deserve salary increases that are fair and equitable.

I. Differentiated Bonuses for Classroom Teachers

The Board believes that all classroom teachers are valuable employees and should be entitled to additional financial compensation. In an effort to lessen the difficulty in filling some of these certified positions, the Board feels the following classroom teachers, should be entitled to some form of differentiated bonus:

1. The Macon County School system is like most other North Carolina school systems in that we have few certified candidates for ‘hard to staff’ positions such as middle and secondary math, middle and secondary science and Exceptional Children positions. It is also difficult for our school system to find candidates for our alternative school. In addition to these customarily difficult positions, our school system has the added challenge of attracting certified teachers to our two K-12 schools. These two schools are geographically isolated by winding mountain roads and have other characteristics that make it difficult for many teaching candidates to consider these schools. Therefore, we would offer a signing bonus of \$1500 to all certified candidates selected for hire in any of these ‘hard to staff’ positions. Additionally, if no certified candidates are available or selected, the teacher hired would receive the bonus once he or she completes the teacher certification process.

The Board believes that any differentiated bonus plan should be financially meaningful, recurring, and properly and fully funded in the bi-annual budget. A recurring differentiated bonus plan would help create stability and create a better and more advanced applicant pool in these categorical areas.

II. Performance-Based Salary Increases

The Macon County School system strongly believes that student achievement can best be accomplished when all school employees work together as a team. With the knowledge that all students do not enter the classroom at the same level of knowledge and understanding, the Board feels that student achievement must reflect academic growth over a period of time. At the present time, there are few ways to effectively measure academic growth. However, one such way to measure academic growth may be through the Educator Value Added Assessment System (EVAAS). EVAAS examines the impact of teachers, schools, and districts on the learning of their students in specific courses, grades, and subjects. Recognizing that EVAAS is not without flaws, the Board sees this as the best alternative for measuring student growth at this time. The Macon County School

Board respectfully submits the following Performance-Based salary plan for consideration:

1. Each Macon County school identified as 'exceeding academic growth' by EVAAS would receive a portion of the funding set aside for performance-based salary increases by the NCGS. The amount that each school receives will be based upon that school's ADM. The School Improvement Team of each school will develop a plan for implementing the performance-based salary bonus. Final implementation of the plan would require a majority vote by the faculty.
2. Each Macon County school identified as 'meeting academic growth' by EVAAS would receive a portion of the funding for salary increases set aside by the NCGS. The amount that each school receives will be based upon that school's ADM and will be 25% less per pupil than the amount received by schools that 'exceed academic growth'. The School Improvement Team of each school will develop a plan for implementing the performance-based salary bonus. Final implementation of the plan would require a majority vote by the faculty.
3. The performance-based salary bonus must be equal across job descriptions in each school's plan.
4. Alternative school teachers would be included in performance-based salary bonuses based upon the home school of their students.