

**Policy GCBA: PROFESSIONAL STAFF COMPENSATION**

Status: DRAFT

Original Adopted Date: 12/16/1999 | Last Revised Date: 06/20/2024

**24D UPDATE EXPLANATION**

Senate Bill 727 (2024) allows school boards to place certain teachers employed in "hard-to-staff schools" or "hard-to-staff subject areas" higher on the salary schedule to attract and retain teachers in those positions. A "hard-to-staff" school is one where more than ten percent of certificated positions were left vacant or were filled with a teacher who was not fully qualified in the prior academic year. A "hard-to-staff subject area" is a content area for which positions were left vacant or were filled with a teacher who was not fully qualified in the prior academic year. Schools that use this provision must report certain information to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

It is MSBA's position that this was always legal to do, and some districts are already placing teachers with particular certification higher on the salary schedule. It is unclear whether the new law impacts this practice—particularly if the certification does not technically meet the definition of "hard to staff." MSBA encourages districts to discuss this issue with their private attorney. This new language is not required in the district's policy, but it is a legal requirement.

Please note that Senate Bill 727 also dramatically modified the minimum teacher's salary required by law. Beginning in the 2025–26 school year, teachers must earn at least \$40,000. The amount will be modified by inflation in subsequent years, capped at three percent per year.

Beginning in the 2025–26 school year, any full-time teacher with a master's degree and at least ten years of experience will earn at least \$46,000. In 2026–27, they will earn at least \$47,000, and in 2027–28 they will earn at least \$48,000. In subsequent years, the minimum salary will be modified by inflation, capped at three percent.

The policy currently states that, "All full-time teachers will be paid at least the minimum teacher's salary as required by law." Therefore, a policy change is not necessary. That said, MSBA strongly encourages districts to plan carefully for implementing this important legislative change.

The district needs highly qualified employees to accomplish its education mission and must offer competitive compensation to attract and maintain experienced professional staff in the district. The board directs the superintendent or designee to annually research regional and statewide trends in employee compensation and consult with district employees to prepare competitive salary schedules and salary recommendations for the board to consider within the constraints of the district's finances. Only the board has the authority to increase an employee's regular compensation or grant employees an extra-duty position or stipend.

As required by law, teachers will be paid in accordance with a board-adopted salary schedule. All full-time teachers will be paid at least the minimum teacher's salary as required in state law. Noncertificated professional staff and certificated staff members other than teachers will be compensated in accordance with a board-approved salary schedule or will receive the amount of compensation approved by the board for particular positions or particular employees.

### **All Professional Staff Salary Schedules**

The board is required to adopt salary schedules for the compensation of teachers and may use a salary schedule to compensate administrative and noncertificated professional staff. When creating a salary schedule, the board may recognize characteristics beneficial to the district, such as certification in high-need areas, in addition to traditional factors, such as experience and education.

The following rules apply to all district professional staff salary schedules unless determined otherwise by the board:

1. The board will make every effort to adopt salary schedules prior to the statutory deadline for issuing teacher and administrator contracts. Any board-adopted salary schedule will remain in effect and continue to operate until the board takes action to change or eliminate the salary schedule.
2. The board may freeze the operation of the salary schedule when warranted by the financial condition of the district or for other relevant reasons, as determined by the board. Once a salary schedule is frozen, employees will not advance on the salary schedule until the board votes to authorize movement on the salary schedule. If

the salary schedule is frozen for more than one year before the board authorizes movement, employees will advance to the next step for which they were eligible at the time the schedule was frozen unless the board determines that it is financially feasible to allow employees to move through all steps missed while the schedule was frozen. Alternatively, the board may adopt a new salary schedule that accurately reflects the salary associated with the appropriate years of service.

3. An employee may not advance more than one experience step per year on the salary schedule unless such movement is allowed by the board-adopted rules and is uniformly applicable to that particular salary schedule or is otherwise approved by the board.
4. An employee cannot progress on the salary schedule after entering into a contract for a school year unless such movement is specifically authorized in the contract.
5. Professional Growth Credit for credit hours earned may apply toward advancement on the salary schedule.
  - By the completion of the Professional Growth Credit (PGC) course, the teacher will indicate whether the PGC shall be applied to the salary schedule as outlined in this policy or “bank” the PGC hours for some future point in time. At that future point in time, he or she the teacher will have to notify the district in writing of his or her their intent to apply the “banked” PGC for advancement on the salary schedule. If the teacher does not use the PGC at the time it is earned or does not wish to “bank” them for later use, the teacher may receive compensation for those PGC courses. The PGC may only be used in one of the three options available and once the decision is implemented it may not be reversed at a later date.
  - Graduate and approved undergraduate hours used for advancement on the salary schedule will be recorded when the official transcript is received from the college or university.
  - An earned degree will be accepted for salary schedule advancement when a letter is received from the college or university verifying that all degree requirements have been met and the date when the degree will be conferred.
  - Professional Growth Credit (PGC) will be processed as directed by the employee (banked hours, hours applied toward credit, or payment for hours taken) when the Human Resources Department is notified by the Professional Development Committee of successful completion of the credit(s).
  - A list of banked PGC will be maintained in the computer and annual notification will occur in the spring each year.
  - College hours of PGC used for movement on the salary schedule may only be used one time. They cannot be used a second time for advancement on the salary schedule or to validate PGC for advancement on the salary schedule.
6. The district may recognize an employee's previous experience when placing that employee on the salary schedule. Experienced teachers who are new to the school district may receive full credit for previous experience. The board delegates to the superintendent or designee the authority to set guidelines on which previous experiences qualify. In addition, the district may recognize military service or work experience that the district considers beneficial to the position. Employees are responsible for fully apprising the district of their relevant background experiences when first employed in the position. Once the employee is initially placed on the salary schedule, the district is under no obligation to review the placement.
7. Teachers and administrators who provide documentation of advanced degree completion before the first day of the second semester will be provided a one-time \$500 stipend. The teacher's contract will be fully adjusted for the next full contract year.
8. Teachers who achieve National Board Certification will receive ten percent of the new teacher base salary in addition to their regular contracted salary.

### ***Teacher Salary Schedules***

#### **Salary Schedule Placement for Hard-to-Staff Schools and Hard-to-Staff Subject Areas**

**The school board may differentiate placement of teachers on the salary schedule to increase compensation in order**

to recruit and retain teachers in "hard-to-staff schools" or "hard-to-staff subject areas."

A "hard-to-staff" school is one where more than ten percent of certificated positions were left vacant or were filled with a teacher who was not fully qualified in the prior academic year. A "hard-to-staff subject area" is a content area in which positions were left vacant or were filled with a teacher who was not fully qualified in the prior academic year. The district may annually review and revise the schools and subject areas that are considered "hard to staff," but no modification to these classifications will result in the demotion of a teacher.

If the district elects to place certain teachers higher on the salary schedule to fill positions in hard-to-staff schools or in hard-to-staff subject areas, the district will report information to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education as required by law.

### **Credit for Externship**

In accordance with law, participation in a certified teacher externship program will qualify for movement on the salary schedule to the same extent and in the same manner as other graduate-level course credit.

### **Compensation for Extra Duties**

Additional duties, such as supervising activities, may be assigned to professional staff without additional compensation. In some situations and with board approval, the district may provide an employee with extra-duty compensation or a stipend to compensate the employee for performing additional duties. In those situations, the board will determine the amount of compensation, which may be set by adopting an extra-duty salary schedule or approving a specific amount for the position.

### **Employee Responsibility**

Employees are responsible for verifying that their salary schedule placement, compensation rate, and paychecks are accurate. Employees are required to notify the district within 30 days of receiving an inaccurate payment, and failure to do so could lead to discipline, forfeiture of amounts owed, or deductions for excess pay received, as allowed by law.

### **Compensation Disbursement**

In general, professional staff will be paid in equal installments over 12 months even if the employee's regular work schedule is less than 12 months. However, payment for extra duties that are seasonal or limited to a specific timeframe may be paid in the month the work was performed.

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Version GCBA-C.1E.PLT (10/24)

**Policy Reference Disclaimer:** These references are not intended to be part of the policy itself, nor do they indicate the basis or authority for the board to enact this policy. Instead, they are provided as additional resources for those interested in the subject matter of the policy.

#### **State References**

§ 163.172, RSMo.  
§ 168.025, RSMo.  
§ 168.110, RSMo.  
§ 168.126, RSMo.

#### **Description**

[State Statute](#)  
[State Statute](#)  
[State Statute](#)  
[State Statute](#)

#### **Federal References**

29 U.S.C. § 206(d)

#### **Description**

[Federal Statute](#)

#### **Cross References**

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#### **Description**

[PROHIBITION AGAINST ILLEGAL DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT AND RETALIATION](#)

**Cross References**

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**Description**

[SALARY DEDUCTIONS](#)

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