



# TEAMS Act

Teacher Excellence and Accountability for Mathematics and Science  
Salary Schedule Program  
Act 2021-340

The Act creates a program to incentivize prospective teachers to choose math and science fields and offers an alternate career pathway with significant salary increases for existing and newly hired teachers who satisfy certain criteria.

Beginning in the 2021-22 school year, each local board would be allocated one position for math and one position for science for every 105 students in combined grades 6-12. Charter schools can also participate in the program.

## Money Matters

- **TEAMS Fund**
  - The Act creates a TEAMS Fund in the State Treasury to be funded by the legislature annually.
  - The TEAMS Fund would provide the funding difference between the traditional salary schedule and the TEAMS salary plus supplement and stipends.
  
- **TEAMS Salary Schedule**
  - The Education Trust Fund budget outlines a separate, increased salary schedule for the TEAMS program.
  - The TEAMS salaries are at least 5% higher than the traditional salary matrix.
  - The TEAMS salary schedule provides annual step raises for the first 12 years of service, and step raises every three years thereafter.
  
- **Supplement & Stipends**
  - Hard-to-Staff School Supplement
    - TEAMS teachers are eligible for a \$5,000 supplement if they teach in hard-to-staff schools to be identified by the SDE.
  - National Board Certified Teacher (NBCT) Stipends

- TEAMS teachers remain eligible for the \$5,000 stipend for holding NBCT certification AND the \$5,000 stipend for NBCT teachers who teaching in a challenging, high poverty school.

## **Eligibility and Selection**

To apply for the TEAMS program, a teacher must:

- Teach full time;
- Be certified for middle level or secondary math or science;
- Teach a 6-12 grade approved math and/or science courses; and
- Hold a certification/credential OR obtain it within three years of admission to the program from one of the following:
  - The National Institute for STEM Education,
  - National Board of Professional Teacher Standards (Math or Science), or
  - Certification/credential designated by the state Board of Education.
- A teacher who wishes to participate in the program must submit an application to the local superintendent.
- The superintendent would confirm eligibility and recommend to the local school board that a TEAMS contract be offered.
- A teacher must complete at least four days of quality professional development each year as approved by the SDE.

## **TEAMS: 189-Day Employment Contracts**

### **Contract Employment (Non-Tenure)**

- A participating teacher voluntarily relinquishes tenure status under the Students First Act.
- Years of service in TEAMS do not count towards earning tenure under the Students First Act.
- A teacher may return to former tenure status if the teacher has attained continuing service status as of June 30, 2021, elects to participate in the program with the same local board, maintains adequate progress towards qualifications but fails to obtain the certification/credential.

## **Preliminary Contract**

- A teacher who does not yet hold the required certification/credential may be offered a preliminary contract for one year.
- A preliminary contract may be extended from year to year for a maximum three years.
- After three years, a teacher either obtains a certification/credential and qualifies for an advanced contract or is nonrenewed.
- Only if the teacher did not have sufficient experience to be accepted for the certification/credential (i.e. two years of classroom experience for the NBCT program), or is granted a limited SDE waiver exemption, the preliminary contract may be extended year to year for a maximum six years.
- When the preliminary contract expires each year, the board must notify the teacher by June 30 that it has taken one of the following actions:
  - Offered another one-year contract or advanced contract;
  - Non-renewed the contract and employment entirely; or
  - Non-renewed the contract and offered re-employment outside of the program.

If no action is taken, the contract is deemed renewed for one year UNLESS the teacher has reached the maximum number of preliminary contracts and the contract is deemed nonrenewed.

## **Advanced Contract**

- A teacher meeting the criteria may be offered an advanced contract for a three-year period.
- A teacher on a preliminary contract who meets the criteria within three years may be offered an advanced contract for a three-year period.
- A teacher with over 20 years of service who qualifies for an advanced contract would be offered a five-year contract.
- When an advanced contract expires, the board must notify the teacher by June 30 that it has taken one of the following actions:
  - Offered another advanced three-year contract;
  - Non-renewed the contract and employment entirely; or
  - Non-renewed the contract and offered re-employment outside of the program.
- If no action is taken, the contract is deemed renewed for three years.

## Nonrenewal of Contracts

- Nonrenewal decisions may be made for any reason except personal and political reasons.
- A teacher with an advanced contract may challenge the non-renewal by filing a petition with the SDE within 10 days.
- The SDE will determine only whether the teacher can prove the non-renewal was based on a personal or political reason.

## Termination

- If the board terminates the teacher without cause before the contract ends, the teacher is due the balance of the contract salary and benefits.
- A board may terminate a contract for cause anytime for any of the following reasons: immorality, insubordination, neglect of duty, conviction of a felony or crime of moral turpitude, failure to comply with board policy, incompetency, justifiable decrease in positions, and incarceration.
- Upon receiving written notice that the local superintendent will recommend termination, a teacher has ten days to request an expedited evidentiary hearing before the local board.
- The superintendent will provide a court reporter to produce a transcript of the hearing.
- If the board votes to terminate the contract with cause, the teacher may:
  - Request an expedited review of the termination to the SDE;
  - The SDE would review, or appoint a hearing officer to review, the case based solely on the administrative record; and
  - Teacher pay and benefits would continue until the SDE issues a final order.
- A teacher would be summarily terminated for loss of certification.

