

Frequently Asked Questions
Career Ladder and Tiered Licensure
December 18, 2014

Q1: How does the state fund salaries for teachers?

A1: The state uses a model of salary-based apportionment to assign funding to local school districts for teacher salaries. Currently, districts receive a set amount of money for each teacher's salary based on a teacher's years of experience and number of higher education credits.

Q2: How would this change with the career ladder?

A2: Districts would still receive an apportionment. Districts would still have the option to pay above that level if they choose.

Q3: Will some teachers take a pay cut if the career ladder is implemented?

A3: No teachers will take a pay cut. Each district will receive a larger appropriation than it currently receives for every teacher including those at the highest levels on the current salary grid.

Q4: Once the career ladder is implemented will there be a state salary schedule that district's must use to determine teacher pay?

A4: No. Each district can continue to establish its own salary schedule based on local needs and available funding. The plan does, however, propose a minimum salary.

Q5: Why is the career ladder being enacted through legislation?

A5: Salary-based apportionment is enacted through statute; thus the career ladder would be implemented through legislation. The legislation must be approved by both the House and Senate Education Committees as well as the full House and Senate.

Q6: How would administrator evaluations of teachers be used to determine compensation on the career ladder?

A6: The evaluation would be one of the measures of teacher effectiveness used to determine whether a teacher was on the professional or master level of the ladder. Local evaluations with a minimum of two observations based on the Charlotte Danielson model have been required by state law since 2010 and are required to occur on an annual basis.

Q7: How would student growth/achievement be used for the career ladder?

A7: Districts would select the growth measures by which to assess teacher effectiveness. The requirement at the professional level is for a majority of students to meet growth targets. At the professional level 60% of students must meet growth targets.

Q8: Is there any additional compensation for teachers who achieve advanced degrees?

A8: Districts would receive an additional allocation amount for teachers who have acquired additional education in the following amounts:

Baccalaureate degree and 24 or more credits: \$2,000 per fiscal year.

Master's degree: \$3,500 per fiscal year.

Doctorate: \$6,000 per fiscal year.

All credits and degrees earned must be in a relevant pedagogy or content area as determined by the state department of education. Additional education compensation would not be cumulative.

Q9: Does the career ladder apply to counselors and other support professionals such as audiologists and nurses?

A9: No. These personnel would not be included in the career ladder but would be treated separately from teachers for purposes funding. A committee of practitioners is working to identify how best to fund support staff as well as other school support specialists such as information technology specialists, purchasing agents, fiscal agents, etc. Until a recommendation is brought forward, these individuals will be treated the same as they are currently treated.