



IDAHO STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
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September 9, 2014

Dear Idaho Educator:

In 2013, a group of education stakeholders was asked to take a comprehensive look at how to improve Idaho's education system. The Governor's Task Force for Improving Education, which included teachers and a broad spectrum of other stakeholders, worked for several months to bring forward 20 recommendations based on research, best practices, and input from educators.

Among those recommendations was a plan to significantly increase pay for Idaho teachers. The plan called for developing a framework of tiered licensure for accountability to support a career ladder of compensation involving increased pay. This recommendation received the unanimous support of the 31 member Task Force, including the Idaho Education Association, Idaho Association of School Administrators, and the Idaho School Boards Association.

The next step was to work on the details of the recommendation and develop a plan for implementation. To do this work, the State Board of Education brought together representative members of the Task Force along with additional education stakeholders. Nearly half of the 2014 Career Ladder/Tiered Licensure Committee are teachers or former teachers. The committee also consulted district human resources directors, teachers, and colleges of education in forming its recommendation for implementation. Numerous adjustments were made to the Task Force's original recommendations based on stakeholders' concerns, **including ensuring that a professional teacher's certificate could not be lost based on performance under the tiered licensure system.**

The final committee recommendations for the career ladder have yet to be completed. However, the following framework was developed by the Task Force and reviewed by last year's legislature. This framework will inform the final committee recommendations. It calls for increasing funding to districts over a 5-6 year period as follows:

- \$40,000 for beginning teachers (up from the current \$31,750)
- \$47,000 to \$51,000 for teachers who hold a professional certificate
- \$54,000 to \$58,000 for teachers who qualify for a master designation (up from the current maximum of \$47,000)

While districts may continue to fund their salary schedules at rates higher than the state apportionment, this salary model will help reduce the gap for districts that must pay above the state schedule to be competitive and ultimately provide more financial stability for all districts.

The tiered certification framework connected to the career ladder compensation model contains the following components:

1. Three types of certificates will be granted under the tiered licensure program:
 - For starting teachers, a three-year, non-renewable residency certificate with intensive mentoring and an opportunity to qualify for a standard professional certificate.

- A five year, renewable standard professional certificate for teachers who complete their residency and meet proficiency standards on the annual evaluation and student achievement criteria.
 - A three-year, non-renewable interim certificate for individuals following the alternate path to certification or for out-of-state teachers seeking to qualify for a professional certificate.
2. A professional certificate includes three designations – standard, master and contingent. A standard designation applies to teachers attaining or retaining “proficiency.” A master designation applies to teachers attaining or retaining “higher proficiency.” And, a “contingent” (basic) designation applies to teachers not able to retain proficiency after qualifying for a standard professional certificate.
 3. **All currently certificated teachers in the state will be given a renewable standard professional certificate upon implementation of the career ladder and tiered licensure plans.** The requirements and designations will then apply when teachers next renew their certificates.

Contrary to what you may have heard, a professional certificate, whether standard, master or contingent (basic), cannot be revoked by the state, a district, or an administrator based on performance under tiered licensure. It can only be revoked pursuant to the current system of due process in place through the state’s Professional Standards Commission. This was unanimously agreed to by the Committee and approved by the State Board of Education.

Teachers not in the classroom can request a leave of absence or inactive status, allowing professional certificate holders to maintain their certificates while meeting only current credit requirements.

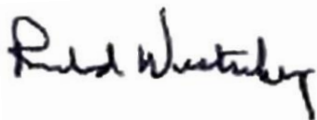
Further details include use of Idaho’s existing Evaluation Framework for teacher evaluations, provided that evaluations must be completed by a minimum of two observers who have proof of proficiency in evaluating teachers. In addition, assessments of student growth will be completed at the district level using multiple measurement tools. Local boards of trustees will make the decisions regarding the assessments to be used from a list of possibilities.

We know, with certainty, that the higher salaries will not come without enhanced accountability. Tiered certification supports and serves as the foundation for the career ladder compensation plan providing significantly higher teacher pay. The two must be approved together. We believe the plans outlined by the Task Force and the Career Ladder/Tiered Licensure Committee are the best opportunity we will have in the foreseeable future to significantly increase pay for Idaho’s teachers.

More information about these plans is available at www.boardofed.idaho.gov. Public hearings to take comment on the proposed administrative rule on teacher certification will be held on the dates below. Comments, which must be received by Oct. 22, 2014, can also be sent to tracie.bent@osbe.idaho.gov.

Tuesday, Oct. 7, 2014	Pocatello	Idaho State University Student Union-Salmon River Room
Tuesday, Oct. 14, 2014	Lewiston	Lewis-Clark State College, Meriwether Lewis Hall Room 100
Tuesday, Oct. 21, 2014	Nampa	College of Western Idaho-Nampa, Micron Center for PTE, Classrooms 1701 A/B

Sincerely,



Richard Westerberg, Chair
Task Force for Improving Education