



Union County Public Schools Differentiated Pay Proposal

January 15, 2015

The Appropriations Act (SB 744; S.L. 2014-100 Sec. 8.41(b)) requires that local boards of education submit a proposal to establish a program to provide differentiated pay for highly effective classroom teachers by January 15, 2015. Proposals may be sent to the General Assembly at pavplan@ncleg.net.

Rationale

Union County Public Schools' (UCPS) has 53 schools and a total enrollment of slightly over 40,000 students, 33 percent of whom are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. UCPS believes that an effective Differentiated Pay Plan will further UCPS' strategic goal to hire and retain highly qualified teachers, administrators and staff. However, UCPS also believes that a compensation plan which does not reward all educators equally has the potential to create a competitive or even divisive work environment, rather than one of collaboration. The educators who contributed their input on the UCPS Plan were united in their belief that any compensation structure adopted by the district should promote the collaborative framework of the Professional Learning Community (PLC) process already adopted by the district.

UCPS stakeholders unilaterally favor a compensation plan that encourages educators to collaborate and discourages pay increases based on an individual's performance evaluations.

Development of the UCPS Differentiated Pay Plan

During the fall of 2014, Dr. David Clarke, UCPS Deputy Superintendent of Human Resources, assembled a group of UCPS stakeholders to receive input on how UCPS could create a Differentiated Pay Plan with maximum buy-in from teachers and administrators. On November 11, 2014 the Ad Hoc Committee on Differentiated Pay met to discuss the General Assembly's mandate to provide differentiated pay for highly effective classroom teachers. The Committee was comprised of 11 education leaders within the district, including the past and present UCPS Teacher of Year and Principal of the Year. The Ad Hoc Committee made the following recommendations:

- The Plan must value the existing PLC process and foster collaboration among teachers.
- School "Grades" should not be a factored when determining whether teachers are entitled to receive bonuses or salary increases.**In 2012, the General Assembly through Session*

Globalization. Innovation. Graduation.

Law 2012-142 included requirements for reporting School Performance Grades (A, B, C, D, and F) for each public school. These 'grades' are based on student performance on state mandated tests.

- Teachers should receive bonuses when their schools show growth, similar to North Carolina's former School-Based Management and Accountability Program (ABC's), which awarded financial incentives to schools where students achieved set levels of growth in performance.
- Teachers should receive bonuses for serving in high priority schools, leadership positions, and hard-to-fill content areas.

On December 11, 2014, the Ad Hoc Committee's recommendations were presented to the Union County Public Schools' Professional Advisory Council (PAC), a council of teacher representatives from each UCPS school. A representative from the district's largest professional association, Union County Association of Educators (UCAE) also attended. The PAC discussed the Ad Hoc Committee's recommendations and approved a proposal for presentation to the Superintendent.

Union County Public Schools' proposal was approved by the Union County Board of Education at its' regular meeting on January 6, 2015.

- I. **Teachers should receive bonuses when their schools demonstrate pre-determined levels of student growth.** However, this growth measure should be evaluated from data beyond that of only core or tested subjects. All teachers, regardless of their content area, should be recognized for their stake in the performance growth of their school's student population. The existing PLC framework, which honors collaboration among colleagues, should be used as a conduit for uniting teachers under the common goal of raising student achievement at individual schools.
- II. **Teachers should receive bonuses for serving in high priority schools, leadership positions, and hard-to-fill content areas.** The definition of a "leadership position" should be clearly defined, and any leadership roles that result in bonus pay should come with specific expectations and accountability. Bonus pay opportunities should be available to all teachers, regardless of their length of service with district or years in the profession.