



STATE OF ALABAMA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Thomas R. Bice
State Superintendent of Education

October 9, 2013

Alabama
State Board
of Education

MEMORANDUM

Governor
Robert Bentley
President

TO: County and City Superintendents of Education

FROM: Warren Craig Pouncey
Chief of Staff

Tracy T. Roberts
District I

SUBJECT: Paying Teachers for Their Highest Degree

Betty Peters
District II

As a follow-up to the recently adopted Apportionment of Funds rule, I would like to reiterate several items pertaining to teacher pay. The following excerpt is from rule 290-2-1-.01(1)(a)2.(i)(II) on page 15 of the *Alabama Administrative Code*:

Stephanie Bell
District III

Experience shall be considered in three year increments up to 30 years. Experience is defined as public education experience with fractional year as defined by the Alabama Teachers' Retirement System for earning years of service. Local boards shall place employees holding positions requiring certification on the salary schedule considering the highest degree earned from a regionally accredited institution and years of experience served in public education. Employees advance to the next experience step of the salary schedule on the anniversary date of experience. Local boards shall notify the State Department of Education of the earned advanced degree for each employee in a timely fashion. An employee shall be paid for an advanced degree in the pay period that begins after the advanced degree is recognized by the State Department of Education, provided that, if an employee has completed service under contract for the scholastic year, the advanced degree pay shall begin with the first pay period for service under contract in the subsequent scholastic year.

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Thomas R. Bice, Ed.D.
Secretary and
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Although it remains the prerogative of the local board to adopt a salary matrix in excess of the minimum salary schedule approved in ACT 2013-264, funding provided by the foundation program will be based on the minimum salary schedule in this act, not on actual amounts paid to the teacher. Information submitted to the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) should be based on actual years of experience as in public education and actual degrees recognized by ALSDE Teacher Certification.

According to this rule, local boards are required to advance employee pay on the anniversary date of experience, even if this date occurs during the contract year. School boards do have the option of taking a proactive approach and granting the

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experience increase at the beginning of the contract year or semester in which the anniversary date will occur. School boards are not allowed to wait until the next contract year begins to grant the experience increase, as this would result in the pay increase occurring after the anniversary date.

As stated in this rule, local boards are required to advance employee pay to the next degree at the time the advanced degree is recognized by the Alabama State Department of Education. Please note this does not say at the date the degree is earned. It is the responsibility of both the employee and employer to provide the necessary information to the ALSDE Teacher Certification section in a timely manner. If the local board receives notification from the ALSDE after the end of the school year, the advanced degree pay may begin with the new contract year. In order to assist you in meeting the appropriate timelines, I am providing the link to the current Verification of a Higher Degree request form. It is accessible in the Verification of Higher Degree folder via this link:

<http://www.alsde.edu/CertificationForms>

Questions should be directed to the Teacher Certification staff member assigned to your LEA or to Dr. Jayne A. Meyer via jmeyer@alsde.edu. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

WCP/SSP

cc: Chief School Financial Officers
Mrs. Sherrill W. Parris
Mr. Larry Craven
Dr. Jayne A. Meyer
Mrs. Sarah P. Justiss
Mr. Dennis Heard

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