

Proposed Compensation Plan - Answers to Frequently Asked Questions

PLAN ELEMENTS— HOW IT WORKS

1. What is the SASD Educator Compensation Plan?

The SASD Educator Compensation Plan is a framework for rewarding educators for their commitment to educating students and for their commitment to the district. The plan includes an annual increase of an equal amount added to contract pay for all eligible educators. The plan also includes retention incentives that are added to contract pay for educators after the completion of their 3rd, 5th, 10th, 15th and every subsequent 5-years of consecutive service. Retention increases would be reflected in contract pay for the following year (i.e. at the beginning of the 4th, 6th 11th, etc.).

2. How does an educator qualify for the contract pay increase?

The annual increase will be given to educators based on successful completion of professional responsibilities of the role, building and district as well as active, regular collaboration with colleagues that influences student achievement. Educators on a performance improvement plan, including receiving a 1 in any component in their evaluation at any time during the school year, are not eligible for increases and will be frozen at their current salary for the duration of the improvement plan. The educator becomes eligible again for an annual increase the year following release from the improvement plan. It is the responsibility of the supervising administrator to report the development of an improvement plan to the Director of Human Resources.

3. Why are retention incentives higher after completion of years three and 10 compared to other years?

Data indicates that a greater number of educators leave the district after the completion of their 3rd and 10th year of teaching. Recognizing these professional transition periods, the retention incentives at the conclusion of the 3rd and 10th years will be higher.

4. How do I determine my total compensation in this plan?

An educator's total compensation will include his/her current contract pay/salary + the amount of the annual increase + any retention increases for which the educators is eligible for that year. *EXAMPLE: If the annual increase is calculated to be \$1100, an educator who is in his/her 3rd year in the district with a current salary of \$48,661 during the 2018/19 school year would receive an annual increase of \$1100 plus a retention incentive of \$2000 (total of \$3100) added to his/her contract pay for 2019/20 (\$51,761).*

5. What additional incentives could I earn under the plan?

Additives currently being paid for extra-curriculars, existing leadership positions (i.e. department, block, grade-level chairs) and work team hours will remain in effect. Additional paid district-identified opportunities may be created in order to advance district goals and meet building needs.

6. Will the plan ensure all educators with the same number of years of experience are paid the same?

The new compensation plan transitions all educators into the plan at their current salary and with their current number of consecutive years in the district. The plan does not include any parameters for comparing educator salaries based on years in the district or other factors.

7. Why are increases in dollar amounts rather than percentages?

In an effort to make the compensation plan as equitable as possible, the annual increases will be an equal dollar amount for all educators.

8. Is it possible to establish a guaranteed annual contract pay increase amount?

Given the nature of school financing, the annual increase amounts will be calculated yearly based on available funds, SEA negotiations, and after the allocation of retention incentives.

9. Is the retention increase based on total number of years in the district or do they have to be consecutive years in the district?

The retention incentives will be calculated based on consecutive years in the district. For clarification, the Human Resources department will confirm each educator's consecutive number of years in the district during the 2018/19 school year.

10. When will the amount of the annual increase be announced?

The yearly increase will be calculated based on an equal distribution of available funds. This increase is determined by the passage of the annual budget, completion of the SEA negotiations, and after the allocation of retention incentives.

11. What if I just missed a retention incentive because of when we transitioned into this plan, do I get that incentive anyway?

Each educator will enter into the new compensation plan at the salary they currently receive and with the number of consecutive years they have served the district. The retention incentives will be awarded after the completion of the 3rd, 5th, 10th, 15th, and every subsequent 5-years. No retroactive payments will be made as part of the transition into the new compensation plan.

12. Could I opt out of participation in the comp plan?

No. This compensation framework will be implemented for all educators.

13. How will this plan remain financially viable?

The proposed compensation framework is designed to be flexible to the realities of a school budget that could vary from year-to-year based on state budget allocations and other factors. The intention of the framework is to allocate an equal distribution of available funds among all educators. It is anticipated that that amount may fluctuate each year.

14. How does this plan address high demand positions?

This plan does not specifically address high demand positions. High demand positions will have to be acknowledged during the hiring process.

15. How does the new Educator Compensation Plan reward excellence in teaching?

There are many things we value as a district that don't directly link to compensation. We have come to the conclusion that the compensation plan is not the place to reward excellence.

IMPLEMENTATION

1. What is the timeline to roll out and implement the plan?

The Board of Education stipulated that the Career Ladder go through one full cycle so all educators have the opportunity to level over within that plan (based on the evaluation cycle). With the anticipated passage of the new plan in spring 2018, the Career Ladder will expire on June 30, 2018 and the new plan will go into effect as of July 1. The last round of Career Ladder leveling meetings will move educators on the Career Ladder for 2018/19. The first annual increases and retention incentives earned within the parameters of the new compensation plan will be distributed for the 2019/20 contracts.

2. Will I still need to do action research, as outlined in the Career Ladder?

The Career Ladder will expire on June 30, 2018 and the new plan will be implemented as of July 1, 2018. The 2018/19 increases will be based on the Career Ladder, but other components of the Career Ladder, including action research requirements, will no longer be in effect.

3. How will/could bargaining affect the new compensation plan?

The goal is to have the Stoughton Education Association (SEA) and the district use the new framework to determine increases during the bargaining process. If the board determines there are funds available in excess of the CPI, as it has done since the passage of Act 10, those funds will be incorporated into the total increases awarded (annual and retention).

4. How long will this plan be in place?

The Board of Education will ultimately determine how long the compensation plan remains in effect. The compensation committee is suggesting a minimum five-year commitment to the plan, with the understanding that adjustments may need to be made, based on implementation.

5. Might the plan change if the make-up of the school board changes?

Ultimately, the Board of Education is responsible for determining what compensation system is in place for the district.

6. Who will be responsible for overseeing the implementation of the compensation plan?

Based on direction from the Board of Education, the SASD administrative team, headed by the Director of Human Resource in collaboration with the Director of Business Services, will oversee implementation.

OTHER

1. Will the plan ensure all educators with the same number of years of experience are paid the same?

The new compensation plan transitions all educators into the plan at their current salary and with their current number of consecutive years in the district. The plan does not include any parameters for comparing educator salaries based on years in the district or other factors. The compensation plan also ensures that no educators' pay will decrease.

2. Will there still be an option to earn additives for certain positions?

Additives currently being paid for extra-curriculars, existing leadership positions (i.e. department, block, grade-level chairs) and work team hours will remain in effect.

3. What compensation do you get for obtaining a Master's degree?

Anyone who obtained a Master's Degree prior to implementation of the Career Ladder is already compensated for that degree in their current salary. With the implementation of the Career Ladder, Master's Degree attainment no longer garnered additional compensation. And, with the current changes to state regulations, Master's Degrees are no longer an element of state licensing. Therefore, the committee determined that in order to allocate as much of the available funds as possible to the annual increases and the retention incentives, for which all educators are eligible, Master's Degree attainment is not included in the plan.

4. Will educators receive a salary increase for National Board Certification as part of the compensation plan?

Educators can earn a \$1500 increase on their continual salary for achieving National Board Certification as outlined in the SASD Employee Handbook.

5. Why doesn't the plan include an element that specifically compensates educators for excellence?

The committee explored, researched and considered many possible ways to define, measure and reward excellence in teaching and were unable to identify an acceptable plan that was perceived as objective, transparent and did not require additional work. The committee is hopeful that with a simplified, straightforward compensation plan, educators will be able to focus their attention more fully on perfecting their craft and exploring innovative ways to educate students and prepare them for future success. Given the significant interest from educators and school board members in rewarding excellence, the committee recommends the district consider identifying a future committee to further explore this topic.

6. Does this plan include a provision to compensate educators for assuming leadership roles?

No. The only two factors that impact salary in the new compensation plan are annual contract pay increases and retention incentives upon completion of 3, 10, 15, 20, etc. years in the district. While educators may receive additional stipends or additives for extracurricular activities or other paid positions they take on, these additional amounts are not included as part of the core compensation plan.

7. Are there any retroactive increases in this plan?

No. Transition into the new compensation plan includes all educators beginning at their current salary with their current number of consecutive years in the district. Salary increases will be commensurate with the parameters of the annual and retention increases.

PLAN GOALS AND CRITERIA

1. What were the defining criteria the committee used when crafting the plan?

All three committees/iterations of the committee that have worked on development of an alternate compensation plan have established a similar objective: to create a sustainable, well-defined pay structure that attracts and retains quality staff. The most recent committee also created a set of criteria against which it measured the plan, including: (1) aligning with the district vision; (2) encouraging and supporting professional growth of educators while promoting collaborative educator learning; (3) retaining and attracting quality staff and (4) being well-defined, easily understood and easily implemented.

2. How does this plan encourage and support professional growth of educators while promoting collaborative educator learning?

The plan compensates educators who commit to advancing student learning, as demonstrated by adherence to the guidelines established by the Danielson Framework and fulfillment of the educators' roles and responsibilities within the district.

Part of an educators' professional responsibility includes remaining current in their field, engaging in professional development at both the department, building and district level to support and enhance district initiatives toward student success (Danielson 4e)*.

3. How does this plan retain and attract quality staff?

The committee believes this straightforward, easy-to-explain and easy-to-understand plan will appeal to new educators coming to the district and the retention incentives will reward educators for continued commitment to the district.

**Teaching is a complex profession, and teachers need to continuously grow and develop to keep their skills current. As the academic disciplines themselves evolve, educators have to constantly refine their understanding of how to engage students in learning. As a result, growth in content, pedagogy, and information technology are essential to good teaching. By staying informed and increasing their skills, teachers become more effective and are able to lead their colleagues. (ASCD 2009)*