



STATE OF IOWA

TERRY BRANSTAD, GOVERNOR
KIM REYNOLDS, LT. GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
JASON E. GLASS, DIRECTOR

February 21, 2013

Dear Superintendents,

As you may know, the House of Representatives passed H.F. 215 yesterday. While many steps remain in the political process and changes to the bill are likely, I am encouraged by the progress. Namely, support for the Governor's centerpiece reform, the creation of a comprehensive system of teacher leadership and compensation, continues to gain momentum. This system will attract Iowa's best and brightest students to pursue teaching as a career, retain our most effective teachers in the classroom, promote collaboration, reward professional growth and effective teaching, and improve student achievement by strengthening instruction.

As my team and I have conversations with you, we know that most of you whole-heartedly support this piece of the bill. We also know that you have questions about what this system could and should look like in your unique local context and about how much flexibility you would have in developing and implementing this system.

I am writing today to provide you with some initial answers to the most frequent questions I'm hearing. Although this letter is not intended as official guidance, I am hopeful that with this additional information you will feel better prepared to answer questions about the proposed teacher leadership and compensation system.

Please see attached for the Department's current responses to the most frequently asked questions about the legislation as it stands today.

I look forward to our continued partnership as we move this work forward in Iowa. I also encourage you to contact Ryan Wise (ryan.wise@iowa.gov or 515-725-2830), Director of Strategic Initiatives at the Department of Education, if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jason E. Glass".

Jason E. Glass
Director

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Championing Excellence for all Iowa Students through Leadership and Service

H.F. 215 Division VII: Teacher Leadership and Compensation System FAQs: February 21, 2013¹

Will districts have the option to either implement a state model teacher leadership and compensation plan or can a district design its own plan?

Yes. H.F. 215 describes a model plan that districts could implement. The bill creates a new section of code, 284.15, which describes each of the teacher leadership pathways, including:

- **Model Teacher:** earns at least a \$2,000 supplement; includes at least 10 percent of a school district's teachers; works five additional contract days; full-time teaching load
- **Mentor Teacher:** earns at least a \$5,000 supplement; includes at least 10 percent of a school district's teachers; works ten additional contract days; teaching load of not more than 75 percent student instruction
- **Lead Teacher:** earns at least a \$10,000 supplement; includes at least five percent of a school district's teachers; works 15 additional contract days; teaching load of not more than 50 percent student instruction

The bill also allows districts to partner with another district or AEA to implement the plan or to apply to the department for approval to implement "*a comparable system of career paths and compensation for teachers that contains differentiated multiple leadership roles*" (H.F. 215, p. 65).

What would constitute a comparable plan?

As provided for in the bill, the department would establish criteria and a process for application and approval of the default model and for comparable systems. While the criteria would be fully described in the rule-making and guidance process, some of the likely criteria for a comparable plan include:

- A minimum salary of \$32,000 for all full-time teachers
- Increased support for new teachers, such as additional coaching and mentoring
- Multiple, differentiated teacher leadership roles in which at least twenty-five percent of the teacher workforce serves with additional time and compensation commensurate with the responsibilities for the role
- A rigorous selection process that uses measures of effectiveness and professional growth for placement into and retention of teacher leadership positions
- A teacher facilitated professional development system aligned with the Iowa Professional Development Model

The comparable plan option provides increased flexibility on the percentages of teachers in each pathway, the stipend amount for each pathway, the number of required additional contract days, the release time required for each role, and the process for selecting teachers for each of the pathways.

¹ This document reflects H.F. 215 as of February 21, 2013 and is subject to change. The Department of Education issues official guidance upon passage of all major education related legislation and rules.

How can the Teacher Leadership Supplement funds be used?

H.F. 215 provides for seven uses of the Teacher Leadership Supplement².

- 1) Increase the stipend payment for a model, mentor, or lead teacher
- 2) Increase the percentages of model, mentor, or lead teachers
- 3) Increase the minimum teacher salary to \$32,000
- 4) Cover the costs for the time mentor and lead teachers are not providing instruction to students in a classroom
- 5) Coverage of a classroom when an initial or career teacher is observing or co-teaching with a mentor, model, or lead teacher
- 6) Professional development time to learn best practices associated with the career pathways leadership process
- 7) Other costs associated with an alternative teacher leadership proposal submitted by a district and approved by the department of education with the goals of improving instruction and elevating the quality of teaching and student learning

What kind of support will my district receive in developing a plan?

H.F. 215 allocates \$3.5 million for planning grants during the 2013 – 2014 school year. The planning grants are to be used to facilitate a local decision-making process that includes representation of administrators, teachers, parents/guardians of students, and community members. The Department of Education will create an application for the awarding of planning grants.

In addition, H.F. 215 allocates up to \$500,000 for technical assistance to school districts and AEAs in the design and implementation of the teacher career paths, leadership roles, and compensation framework (with priority given to providing support for districts with fewer than 600 students).

What is the implementation plan and timeline?

The teacher leadership and compensation system is designed to be phased in over four years with the first year designated as a planning year.

2013 – 2014: all districts eligible to receive planning grants

2014 – 2015: funding available to schools to serve up to 1/3 of students in Iowa

2014 – 2015: funding available to schools to serve up to 2/3 of students in Iowa

2015 – 2016: funding available to schools to serve all students in Iowa

² H.F. 215 creates the Teacher Leadership Supplement (TLS) by dividing the allocation amount for the budget year beginning July 1, 2014 (currently \$48.5 million) by one-third of the statewide total budget enrollment. The Department of Education currently estimates the TLS at \$314 per pupil. Districts will receive the TLS once they receive approval to implement a plan.