

Compensation Redesign Q&A

The district has worked actively with Education Resource Strategies (ERS) to explore possible considerations for developing a balanced sustainable, and fair compensation system. The intent of the revised compensation system is to attract, retain, and leverage a high quality teaching force as we work towards our strategic goal of workforce excellence. This Q&A is based upon the draft plan developed by ERS and presented to the MCS Board of Education on September 6, 2013.

COMPENSATION REDESIGN OVERVIEW

Why is the school district exploring compensation redesign?

Due to economic shifts, the district must explore compensation models that are sustainable, support improved student achievement, and recognize effective teaching practices. The district aspires to provide MCS teachers with viable career ladders and opportunities to earn consistent salary increases. Our current compensation model does not adequately support these strategic goals. We partnered with Education Resource Strategies (ERS) through a Race to the Top Grant to provide expert assistance in drafting a proposed new model. More information about ERS can be found at <http://www.erstrategies.org>.

- Recent history and current reality is as follows:
 - 2009-2010: 1% COLA, no step raise; overall average teacher's salary \$54,405
 - 2010-2011: 0% increase across the board (no COLA or step raise); overall average teacher's salary \$55,836
 - 2011-2012: 1% special compensation award (not an increase to base), no COLA or step raise; overall average teacher's salary \$55,140
 - 2012-2013: 2% increase across the board; overall average teacher's salary \$55,307.
 - 2013-2014: 0% budgeted increase (i.e., no COLA or step raise); overall average teacher's salary \$55,176

Why is the district referring to the new plan as a *balanced* compensation system?

A quality plan must balance several key factors:

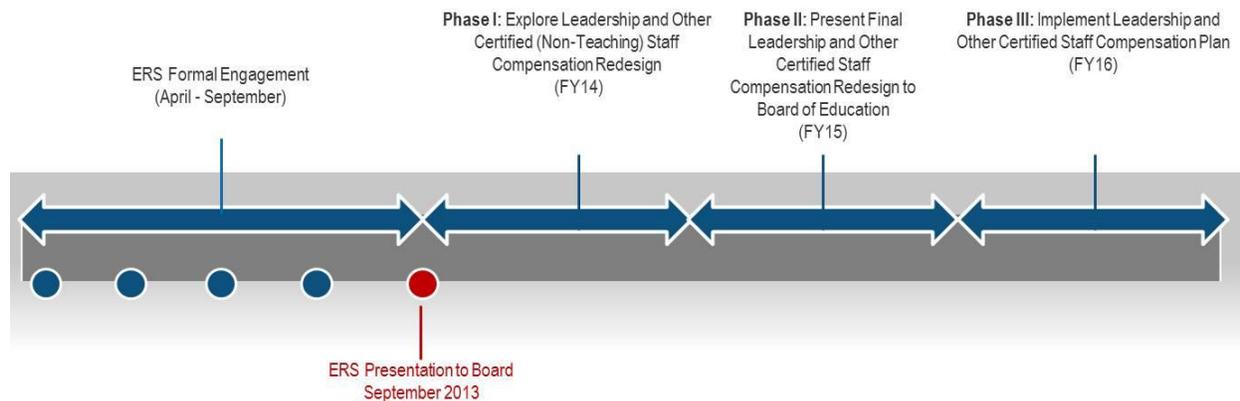
- findings from research,
- teacher commitment to the profession over time (effectiveness steps),
- continued professional growth (advanced degrees and endorsements),
- career advancement (additional roles) beyond traditional administration paths, and
- teacher effectiveness.

Revised October 21, 2013

What is the time table for implementation?

The proposed plan follows a three part phase-in process as follows:

- **Phase I - FY14:** Research, planning, design of new roles, outreach initiatives, seed funding, implementation of new evaluation system (TKES), BOE approval
- **Phase II - FY15:** Implementation of new teacher roles, recalibration of pay for advanced degrees, continued research on effectiveness pay
- **Phase III - FY16:** Full implementation



What are the potential benefits of the proposed model?

Improving student achievement by retaining and leveraging a high quality workforce to increase student achievement is the ultimate benefit and the ultimate objective. Further, the new model provides educators with opportunities to make a higher salary sooner, benefit from higher compensation for taking on additional roles, earn monetary recognition for demonstrating effectiveness, and have opportunities for tuition reimbursement for seeking an advanced degree. The district also seeks to develop a strong sense of pride among employees knowing that they work in an innovative school system that seeks to provide a sustainable compensation plan that is less susceptible to freezes, salary decreases, furlough days, etc.

How is the district funding effectiveness steps, tuition reimbursement, additional roles, and district priority areas?

Funds will be captured by reinvesting dollars that are currently applied universally to experience and education pay for all employees. As employees throughout the district have already experienced, the current model is no longer fiscally sustainable nor is it aligned with what research indicates makes a positive difference on student achievement.

Who would be impacted by ERS' recommendation?

ERS studied compensation redesign for the system's current teaching force. The compensation redesign recommendation does not currently include compensation redesign for non-teaching certified staff and for the system's leadership. The investigation of compensation redesign for certified professionals that serve in non-teaching capacities (non-TKES/LKES) will take place during the 2013-2014 school year; including those holding central office positions. It is currently planned for all certified staff to be positively impacted by a comprehensive new compensation system by FY16.

As MCS is looking at defining and designing evaluation tools for the "other" non-TKES/LKES professional contributors (media specialists, counselors, social workers, psychologists, etc...) will you include representation from the various disciplines to participate in the redesign?

Yes. Designing a position description that is valid and accurate, and a model for evaluation that is fair and relevant for these disciplines, will require input from those who function in these disciplines. Feedback will be actively solicited and incorporated along the way. Groups of individuals from across the system will be assembled to assist with this process. The goal for non-TKES/LKES professional personnel is to have position descriptions written, revised and updated, associated evaluation tools designed, and effectiveness measures defined by June of 2014.

How would current teachers transition to the proposed new compensation system?

The current salary for a teacher when the new compensation system goes into effect would become his/her current base pay. This would include both experience and education pay earned. Moving forward, current teachers would experience compensation increases each year based upon the opportunities afforded by the new compensation model (effectiveness, additional roles, district priority incentives, etc.).

EFFECTIVNES STEPS

What are effectiveness steps?

Effectiveness steps are similar to the annual steps in the current evaluation system except that they will be linked to an effectiveness measure. (These steps have been frozen monetarily for several years due to economic shifts.) In the proposed model, 80% of MCS teachers would earn an effectiveness compensation increase each year with the effectiveness increases being capped at year 30. Over time, we may be able to increase the percent of teachers funded by effectiveness steps based upon revenues and effectiveness data.

How will effectiveness be determined?

Effectiveness will be determined using multiple types and sources of input that inform the Teacher Keys Evaluation System (TKES). The proposed compensation system is contingent on the implementation of a fair and equitable evaluation process. For this reason, we will take an additional year (Phase II) to research the impact of the TKES performance evaluation tool and to determine how the district will use this system to determine overall educator effectiveness. A teacher effectiveness committee, representative of types of positions throughout the district, will be established to research and provide recommendations for determining effectiveness.

In order to ensure inner-rater reliability across the system for the TAPS portion of TKES, the District Coordinator for Teacher Quality and Performance Management was hired – Dr. Raquel Rimpola. The focus of this position is to assist with the full implementation of the state prescribed TKES/LKES Performance evaluation tool. Dr. Rimpola provides training for teachers and administrators on all aspects of the performance evaluation tool – the process, standards, indicators, and associated documentation – all of which help ensure that we have inter-rator reliability across schools, administrators and instruction roles, and an overall Teacher Effectiveness Measure (“TEM”) score that is supported with reliable data. For 2013-2014, TEM scores will serve as our baseline data, and will be used to guide coaching, professional development and objective-setting activities.

How would state law potentially impact Teacher Effectiveness Measure (TEM) score?

House Bill 244 as passed by the House and the Senate becomes effective July 1, 2014, and is applicable beginning in school year 2014-2015. HB 244, Sections 2-1-A and 2-1-B state that when sufficient data becomes available from the department of Education to calculate student achievement growth measures, for both teachers of state tested courses and teachers of courses not subject to state assessments, “growth in student achievement on such assessments shall count for at least 50 percent of the evaluation using the student growth and academic achievement measures identified in the evaluation system.”

How would a teacher earn base pay increases under the proposed model?

Under the proposed Compensation system, effectiveness compensation increases will be determined annually. If an annual evaluation yield’s an effectiveness measure for an individual that is in the bottom quintile, and they are above experience step 2 (total experience, MCS and non-MCS), they will not be eligible for an effectiveness increase (*under current proposal*). If an individual is in the 20th – 40th percentile based on their overall effectiveness measure, they are eligible for an effectiveness increase of \$766/year (*as currently proposed*) up to experience step 15. Individuals who are in the top three quintiles based on their overall effectiveness measure,

are eligible for effectiveness increases of \$766, \$892 and \$919 respectively, *each year* that their effectiveness is represented in one of the top three quintiles, without experience step maximum consideration until year 30 (*again, this is as currently proposed*). Overall effectiveness score and associated effectiveness increase amounts are determined annually. An individual, who does not receive an effectiveness increase one year due to their overall effectiveness score, may qualify to receive effectiveness increases in subsequent years. An effectiveness increase received (\$766, \$842 or \$919) becomes and remains a part of an individual's new base compensation. Subsequent effectiveness increases are added as well, and serve to further increase base compensation.

Note: Effectiveness increase amounts noted here are for illustration purposes only. Final effectiveness increases amounts will be determined and communicated prior to the contract start date for the period to which they will be applied.

If an individual applies and is selected to take on an additional duty/responsibility, such individual will receive the additional compensation tied to the added duty/responsibility *on top of* their base compensation (which includes their annual effectiveness step increases).

If we will be tying compensation to effectiveness/evaluation, will MCS give teachers the opportunity to appeal their annual evaluation?

The TKES/LKES evaluation tool collects data from multiple perspectives and pulls from multiple sources to inform the appropriate overall evaluation result. No, we do not plan to change the district policy regarding an individual's right to appeal their annual evaluation due to the significant amount of data/evidence that will be available. The teacher plays a critical role in this process and is encouraged to provide ample documentation of the ten TKES standards.

How will evaluations be done for gifted teachers and specials teachers (art, music, PE)? These instruction roles are important to the classroom learning environment, and by collaborating with core curriculum teachers those in these roles help drive student achievement across the core content areas as well.

All certified instructional staff will be evaluated using the TKES performance evaluation tool. Student Growth will be defined using Student Learning Objectives ("SLO's) which the district will work with the State to design and roll out during the 2014-2015 evaluation period. Gifted and Specials teachers will be assessed on classroom instruction using the Teacher Assessment on Performance Standards ("TAPS") process and the student survey process just as teachers of core curriculum content are. We recognize that effective instruction will and should look different across disciplines. Therefore, in addition to building administrators, a district administrator who specializes in the area (gifted, art, music, PE) will collaborate with your building administrators to conduct classroom observations, walk-throughs, objective setting, feedback discussion and professional development planning. Using a district resource in this

way will provide an additional “lens” on the evaluation of non-core content instructors, and will also serve to provide a common “lens,” which provides for inter-relator reliability between schools and across the district.

ADDITIONAL ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

How would teachers qualify for additional roles?

Effective teachers will have opportunities to apply for additional roles. There will be specific qualifications based upon the particular duties required of the roles. The district is currently exploring redesigning current roles in the system as well as implementing new roles that tie directly to improving student achievement. The model proposed provides additional compensation for these roles that ranges from \$4000 to \$12,000 annually. This is a significant positive change from the current system.

Our MCS teachers work extremely hard. Why would we want to give them added duties and responsibilities?

Yes, our teachers work extremely hard. This compensation redesign initiative is intended to recognize and retain our effective educators. Our objective is to address the “underpaid” concern, to fairly compensate individuals for the work they are currently doing, and to provide the opportunity for individuals to earn more, substantially more, if they choose to take on (and are selected for) additional roles and responsibilities. It is not required that an individual take on an additional role or responsibility, it is an option. In addition to the increased earnings potential, the additional roles and responsibilities provide alternate career paths for individuals who wish to expand the scope of their responsibilities and their skills, but they do not necessarily wish to leave the classroom in order to do so. The additional roles and responsibilities provide some career path expansion opportunities, and also increase the earnings associated with the jobs many of them are already doing.

Regarding the new “Roles and Responsibilities,” how are individuals selected to fill the roles and responsibilities, and who is selecting the teachers chosen for these responsibilities?

Additional role and responsibility position descriptions, effectiveness measures and evaluation criteria, eligibility criteria and selection process will be well defined and communicated. It is early in the design phase now, so that information is not yet available, but it will be forthcoming, and will be widely shared and available for stakeholder feedback prior to implementing the additional roles and responsibility opportunities.

Will there be position term limits placed on the roles and responsibilities positions?

Yes, we do anticipate there will be some “limits.” However, it is anticipated that the “limits” will apply to the application/selection/evaluation for the roles and responsibilities, not the overall number of sequential years that an individual could be selected to fill the role. An individual who is highly effective in a role or responsibility area, who chooses to reapply for the role/responsibility, could compete against other applicants and be reselected for that role/responsibility. It is important to note that as we move forward, we anticipate there being more roles and responsibilities available across the district, which will increase the earnings potential for more individuals, and support the idea of a greater degree of “distributed management” across MCS each year.

Will people have to “apply” for these roles and responsibilities?

Yes. We currently are in the process of defining these roles, the key effectiveness indicators/measurements and measurable outcomes, eligibility criteria and selection process. There will be well-defined selection and evaluation criteria and processes for effectiveness in these roles.

If position term limits are applied, and there are only a certain number of roles, theoretically, from year to year, could your salary fluctuate?

Yes. The roles and responsibilities supplements are layered on top of base compensation. If an individual does not have an additional role or responsibility, they will not earn that additional supplement that year.

TUTION REIMBURSEMENT

How would teachers qualify for tuition reimbursement?

During Phase I, detailed planning will take place through a committee process to outline the procedures for tuition reimbursement. It is planned that specific criteria would need to be met in order to qualify such as institution accreditation requirements, agreement to stay in the district for a predetermined amount of time, history of satisfactory performance, etc. Transition time periods and plans will be made to address situations where advanced degree work is already underway.

*A separate tuition reimbursement detail will be published in the near future. This document will provide considerable details regarding the proposed tuition reimbursement program. The information covered will be derived from feedback collected during the compensation redesign outreach sessions

DISTRICT PRIORITY AREAS

What are district priority areas (DPA)?

District priority areas are strategic/critical needs, hard to fill, difficult to retain positions. Currently, math, science, and special education are considered district priority areas. The model proposed provides additional compensation for these roles that ranges from \$4000 to \$8,000 annually.

NEXT STEPS

What next steps will be taken to move compensation redesign forward?

The MCS Board of Education has approved the engagement of school communities through outreach sessions and the collection of feedback from stakeholders. Compensation redesign information sessions will take place at each school. During this time, participants will be encouraged to ask questions. They will also be provided with opportunities to provide feedback. This feedback will be considered as the proposal from ERS is further refined. An updated compensation redesign proposal is currently scheduled for presentation to the MCS Board of Education in December.

Where can I go to learn more about compensation redesign?

The ERS website provides substantial resources on the topic of compensation redesign. You may access these resources at <http://www.erstrategies.org/library>.