

ATLANTA PUBLIC SCHOOLS COMPENSATION GUIDELINES

Human Resources – HR Services



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COMPENSATION PHILOSOPHY

The purpose of the Atlanta Public Schools (APS) Classification and Compensation Program is to attract, reward, and retain the most qualified employees by offering an equitable, competitive, and attractive program. We believe that a robust compensation strategy is essential to our success and a key component for progressing as a system. “Having strong students, strong schools, strong staffs, and a strong system” requires that we continually develop, recognize, and compensate staff by:

- Developing a classification and compensation system that is transparent and equitable
- Recognizing employees for their experience
- Including appropriate fiscal responsibility
- Ensuring that APS stays competitive in the market

Atlanta Public Schools partners with outside groups to analyze its compensation model, practices, and relationship to competitive markets. The following outlines our strategic plan for accomplishing our initiatives as well as creating internal salary equity:

1. Adopting a salary step pay plan that places non-teaching employees on the appropriate salary schedule based on verified years of experience,
2. Placing teachers and other certificated employees on the salary schedule based on years of teaching experience and their Georgia Professional Standards Commission (PSC) level, and
3. Adopting compensation and classification policies that maintain the integrity of the system.

HIRING PRACTICES

Newly hired employees will be placed on the appropriate salary schedule based on their years of verified work experience and certification level, where applicable. Please refer to [APS Salary Schedules](#) for more information.

APS TEACHER AND CERTIFIED COMPENSATION

Certified Teacher/Certified Compensation

Teachers and other certified employees paid on the teacher or instructional support scale will be granted verified year-for-year experience and placed on the appropriate step and certification level. To be granted a full year, a certified employee must meet all of the state’s guidelines ([160-5-2-.05 Experience for Salary Purposes](#)). Typically, to receive a full year of credit, certified employees must meet the following requirements:

Public Schools

- Must have been certified
- Worked in an accredited institution
- Worked at least 63% of the school year (full-time, 120 days)

Private & Charter Schools

- Worked in an accredited institution
- Worked at least 120 days full-time per school year

Non-Certified Pathway

Certified teachers are paid based on their years of experience and their Georgia PSC certificate level. As a charter system district, there is an option for a non-certified pathway for teachers. These non-certified teachers will be paid on the APS teacher pay scale as though they have a T4-level certificate. These non-certified teachers will receive experience credit (step) for their years of service as teachers participating in the approved APS non-certified pathway. As provided in the state guidelines, a non-certified teacher may receive experience credit for “a professional position in private industry that is job-related” up to a maximum of three (3) years upon hire. There will be no compensation adjustment beyond the T4 salary scale for non-certified teachers with advanced degrees. For example, suppose a non-certified teacher has experience in another Georgia charter system district under an approved, non-certified pathway program. In that case, they will receive experience credit for compensation purposes upon receipt of appropriate verification.

Non-certified, APS Teacher Pathway provides:

- a. Compensation on the APS teacher pay scale at the T4 certificate level,
- b. Experience credit (step) for years of service participating in the approved, APS non-certified teacher pathway,
- c. Experience credit for “a professional position in private industry that is job-related” up to a maximum of three (3) years, per state guidelines,
- d. No compensation adjustment beyond the T4 salary scale for advanced degrees, and
- e. Experience credit, if verified, for teaching in another Georgia charter district as part of an approved, non-certified pathway program.

NON-INSTRUCTIONAL COMPENSATION

For all other Employment Categories (Administration, Non-Teaching Professional, and Support)

Employees will be placed in their assigned pay grades and offered a salary based on their years of verified experience. Experience is defined and will be awarded based on the following guidelines:

- **Tier 1 - Equivalent Functional Experience** is defined by the position's job description, explicitly noting core job requirements, performance expectations, and responsibility to stakeholders. The candidate will be awarded years of equivalent experience for previous work verified in writing from their former employer.
- **Tier 2 - Relevant Industry Experience** is defined as experience related to the pending job/industry/division but has lesser or minimal job requirements, performance indicators, and less responsibility to stakeholders. The candidate will be awarded one year of service credit for every two years of relevant industry experience for previous work verified in writing from their former employer.

Examples of Experience Credit

Position	Example of Experience	Credit Received	Total Credited Years of Service
Principal	3 Years Principal	3 Years for Principal (Tier 1)	9
	4 Years Assistant Principal	4 Years for Assistant Principal (Tier 1)	
	4 Years Teacher	2 Years for Teacher (Tier 2)	
Project Manager	3 Years Project Manager	3 Years for Project Manager (Tier 1)	5
	2 Years Program Analyst	1 Year for Program Analyst (Tier 2)	
	2 Years Program Specialist	1 Year for Program Specialist (Tier 2)	

Days worked in order to receive a year credit:

Work schedule	Number of days worked for a year credit
10 months - 201, 202, 211	120 Days
11 months - 231	139 Days
Annual/12 months - 252, 261	152 Days

***Please Note: All evaluations are completed by compensation professionals and are non-negotiable. Per Board Policy GARD, the Superintendent may directly appoint candidates and negotiate pay for positions at the executive director level and above.**

MILITARY EXPERIENCE

- Military service credit is for active duty service in the Armed Forces of the United States. Service in the Reserves shall not be counted unless the individual is called to active duty.
- Non-Teaching employees do not receive military service credit. However, if equivalent job duties were performed, work experience credit may be awarded.
- Certified employees may receive a maximum of three (3) years of military service credit unless the military experience was equivalent to the APS position.
- A DD214 must be submitted to the Compensation department for review.

JROTC PLACEMENT PROCEDURES

Newly hired JROTC instructors will initially be placed on step 3 of the Bachelor/GaPSC T4 Teacher Salary Schedule. Once appropriate forms are submitted to HR (i.e., DD-214, RAS, DA Form 5016, etc.), the JROTC instructor's Minimum Instructor Pay (MIP) will be calculated based on the guidelines provided in [Title 10 USC](#). Salaries will be calculated every January once the Defense Financing and Accounting Services publishes the updated Military Pay Charts. At that time, the compensation department will calculate retroactive payments for longevity increases. Central office staff, except the Director, will follow the same guidelines as instructors.

FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES

Full-time employees are paid on a salary basis (annual salary divided by 24 paychecks), are eligible for benefits, and earn sick leave. If a benefit-eligible employee is scheduled to work less than 100 percent of the time (<1.0 FTE). In that case, they are required to work the schedule equivalent to their FTE. See the table below for the most common partial work schedules.

FTE	Maximum Hours in Workweek
0.5	18.75
0.6	22.5
0.75	28.125
0.8	30
0.9	33.75

PART-TIME/HOURLY EMPLOYEES

Employees hired into part-time (<0.5 FTE) and hourly positions are paid for hours worked, not to exceed 29 hours each week. Part-time and hourly employees are not eligible for benefits, do not accrue paid sick leave, and are not paid during school closures, such as student/staff breaks and summers. Hourly rates of pay by position can be found on the [compensation website](#).

SUBSTITUTES

School-based substitute employees are compensated in half-day or whole-day increments only. The pay rate depends on the vacancy being filled, the degree/certificate level of the substitute teacher, and the length of the assignment. Current daily rates can be found on the [Substitute Teaching](#) page of the HR website.

PROMOTIONS

Employees who are promoted within the organization will have their experience re-evaluated as if they are a new hire with the organization. It is important to note that promoted employees must meet the minimum qualifications of the new job. Promoted employees will be evaluated in order to place the employee appropriately on the salary schedule based on their years of creditable experience and certification level, where applicable. For example, suppose the employee's experience does not result in a pay raise. In that case, the employee's current salary may be adjusted based on current compensation practices. Internal equity will always be a consideration in these cases.

DEMOTIONS

Voluntary and involuntary demotions will be treated the same. In the case of a demotion, employees will be placed on their newly assigned scale at the appropriate step, not to exceed the maximum. An employee will begin receiving the newly assigned salary based on the effective date of the demotion.

LATERAL MOVEMENT

If an employee moves to a new position within the same salary schedule and with the same workday schedule, they will receive the same pay.

VERIFICATION OF EMPLOYMENT & RETROACTIVE PAY FOR VERIFICATION OF EMPLOYMENT

Upon offer of employment with Atlanta Public Schools, a Human Resource Staffing Director will inform employees of their starting salary with APS. All employees (both internal and external) will be granted a salary offer based on verified experience. Therefore, an employee who has no verified experience upon hire will be placed at the entry salary level until APS experience verification forms are received and processed by the compensation department. If a third-party verification form is submitted, the form must include all of the information that is requested on the APS verification form. Once verification forms are processed, an employee's salary will be adjusted to reflect the total number of years of verified experience. The employee will also receive retroactive pay as long as proper documentation is received **before** May 1st and the employee remains on active, full-time status. Employees hired after February 28th will receive retroactive pay as long as proper documentation is received **before** May 1st of the next school year, and the employee remains on active, full-time status. Employees will be notified via email once the forms have been reviewed and processed.

Please Note: It is the employee's responsibility to ensure that verification forms are sent to the appropriate identified former employers and contact these employers if the forms are incomplete or delays occur. The expectation is that the compensation office will receive all verified experience documentation in one packet at one time. Based on this documentation, the employee's salary will be adjusted, and retroactive payment(s) will be calculated, if applicable. It is encouraged that all forms be reviewed for errors by employees before submission. Completed packets should be scanned and emailed to compensation@atlanta.k12.ga.us.

CERTIFICATION UPGRADES

Atlanta Public Schools strongly encourages its employees to continue their education to increase their effectiveness in their jobs and enrich their lives. One way of doing this is via certificate level upgrade. The Georgia PSC has policies that identify how to upgrade a certificate. Additionally, it provides the general rules and procedures for obtaining/maintaining a certification. Please visit www.gapsc.com for more information.

For employees who qualify for a pay increase resulting from a certificate upgrade, the following steps and policies apply to a certification upgrade request:

- The certification department must receive a copy of the upgraded certificate. Please scan and email to certification@atlanta.k12.ga.us.
- Pay changes for applicable upgraded certificates will be instituted based on the effective date of the new certificate level.

- Suppose an employee submits a copy of the certificate to HR within the same fiscal year of the certificate being issued. In that case, an employee will receive a salary increase and retroactive pay (if applicable) based on the certificate's effective date.
- Suppose an employee submits a certificate upgrade after the fiscal year has ended. In that case, the employee's salary increase will go into effect starting their next contract year (June 30th of the fiscal year is the deadline).
- If an employee's certificate is not effective on their first day of work for the school/fiscal year, the upgraded salary will be prorated based on the number of days worked in the same school/fiscal year.
- Positions on the Teacher Salary Schedule (i.e., Teacher, Master Teacher Leader, IB Specialist, etc.) are paid based on the educator's certificate level, not the leadership level. Positions on the Instructional Support Salary Schedule (i.e., Instructional Coach, Special Ed Lead Teacher, Counselor, etc.) are paid on the leadership level.

TEMPORARY PLACEMENTS

Occasionally, circumstances arise that require employees to fill positions that require additional or different responsibilities temporarily. These positions are often referred to as interim in nature and are time-bound. When an employee is covering for duties of another employee on leave of absence or a vacancy, the supervisor may submit an additional compensation request, noting the percentage of duties that the employee is covering and the number of hours and weeks for which the coverage is to be provided.

During this time, when thinking through additional compensation, supervisors should make every effort to prioritize essential task(s) and function(s) of the specific department.

Eligibility Guidelines

Limited to exempt employees; if non-exempt, the employee should record overtime as hours worked

Additional Compensation Limitations

- Coverage is provided for a limited, but significant duration (6-weeks or more)
- Additional compensation will not be eligible for covering duties of any subordinate staff
- Should not exceed more than 10% of an employee's base salary; or 37.5% (10 hours/week) of the assumed position
- Additional compensation is not to reflect as a part of an employee's base pay

- An increase in the volume of work within an employee’s job description does not warrant additional compensation; authorized additional compensation should reflect distinctly separate and unrelated job responsibilities apart from the employee’s primary job description
- Additional compensation stays with the employee in the position; any transaction resulting in an employee moving to a different position will immediately cease the additional compensation.
- Additional compensation is not to exceed one year in duration, or past the end of a fiscal year, without further review; reassessment of such duties should be completed and submitted before June 1st and, if authorized, will begin/continue July 1st
- Additional compensation is subject to Chief Human Resources Officer approval or designee
- Additional compensation should not be used in lieu of performance or merit increases
- Additional compensation must be submitted to Human Resources before duties are assumed; stipends will not be paid retroactively
- All additional compensation is to be paid as an additional allowance plan, paid bi-weekly, with a scheduled end date.

Additional compensation may not be used as a substitute for a reclassification (permanent and substantial change in duties) or promotion of a position (to be authorized and applied for). In addition, additional compensation is not intended for agreed-upon stretch assignments to further an employee’s development.

Please refer to definitions and considerations towards reclassification in this document, if needed.

Submission Process

When submitting a request for additional compensation, the supervisor must provide:

- Justification (not to be limited to the questions below)
 - Are the additional responsibilities due to a vacated position? Will you be filling the position that holds these responsibilities within the year?
 - What responsibilities will be assigned to the employee? What duties are additional on top of the employee’s responsibilities already within their job description?
 - Are the duties crucial to the organization and/or department? What responsibilities? Prioritize essential tasks.
- The percentage of the amount of work is assumed (i.e., the employee assumes 30% of job duties)
- How many hours per week the employee is assuming these responsibilities

- Number of weeks the responsibilities will be assumed
- Start date and anticipated end date (not to exceed one year and July 1st)

The supervisor should submit the above information, with their Chief's sign-off, to the compensation department at compensation@atlanta.k12.ga.us. The compensation department will confirm if any more information is needed for justification and the calculation for the additional duties. Once the supervisor has seen and agreed upon the additional duties, the information will be submitted to the Chief Human Resources Officer for review/approval.

A confirmation email will be sent upon all approvals or denials with applicable information (amount of stipend, paycheck dates, first payment, etc.) to the employee, their supervisor, and the payroll department.

STIPENDS FOR ADDITIONAL DUTIES

Utilizing the district's teacher career pathways and providing stipends for supplemental duties is highly suggested for teacher retention. Principals should use the supplemental duty role descriptions, APS leadership readiness criteria, and talent reviews to determine who is ready and make appropriate selections for a career pathway leadership role.

A complete list of supplemental duty stipends is provided on the [Compensation Salary Schedules](#) page of the APS website. This list contains two sections: district-funded stipends and school-funded stipends. Any individual serving in a supplemental duty role that is listed in the district-funded stipends section should receive the stipend for the role. The stipends in the school-funded section are in addition to the district-funded stipends and are at the discretion of the school.

What you need to know about the supplemental duty stipend process:

1. Each year, the number of stipends for a department or school are identified and budgeted by the budget center manager during the budget planning process each year. If an appropriate stipend for a supplemental duty is not included on the stipend list, a new stipend may be requested by sending an email to Jennifer Lang (jennifer.lang@atlanta.k12.ga.us) with the following information:
 - a. a list of the additional responsibilities and tasks,
 - b. an estimate of the time needed to perform the additional duties (hours per week),
and
 - c. when these additional duties would occur (before/after work, weekends, start date, end date, etc.)

2. At the start of each school year, principals submit (as part of the day one task list) the names of employees for all stipends to the compensation department (compensation@atlanta.k12.ga.us) using the template provided in the day one resource guide.
3. Departments must reach out to the compensation department (compensation@atlanta.k12.ga.us), to ensure their stipend is approved, and provide the names of employees to receive stipends for the coming school year.
4. Employees will receive a supplemental duty agreement from the compensation department for their signature that will outline the duties and the stipend amount. Generally, stipends are assigned to one employee and are paid twice per school year (half in December and half in May.)
5. If duties are to be shared by two employees, the stipend amount may be split. An email must be sent to the compensation department (compensation@atlanta.k12.ga.us), providing the details of the shared supplemental duties and stipend details. For example, employees A and B will share the department chair's responsibilities, and the stipend amount will be split evenly for the entire year.
6. If duties change during the year, an email should be sent to the compensation department (compensation@atlanta.k12.ga.us) stating the circumstances of the situation prior to the payment of the stipend. For example, "Employee A is not able to continue to perform the duties of the department chair. Effective December 1st, the department chair duties will be performed by employee B." Failure to notify the compensation department of a change in stipend assignment may result in the wrong employee being paid and/or the right employee not being paid.
7. In November and April, school principals will receive a list of supplemental duty stipend recipients for their school. The compensation office will need confirmation that the list is accurate and complete before stipend payments are issued in December and May. If the employee has not performed the supplemental duties assigned, they are not eligible to receive the stipend and should be removed from the list by the principal.

SECONDARY ASSIGNMENTS

Secondary assignments should be used when full-time employees have an additional work assignment beyond their normal work. Secondary assignments could be activities such as ticket taker at athletic games, operating the scoreboard at athletic events, teaching compensatory services, providing tutoring to students outside the regular school day. This type of work may happen for a sports season, a semester, or the entire year. Employees

will need to work with their timekeepers to ensure they are clocking in/out of their assignments correctly in the timekeeping system to ensure timely payments. Hourly rates of pay can be found on the [Salary Schedule](#) website under Rates for Supplemental Duties. Hourly assignments should be reviewed at the start of each year and ended if they will no longer be performed. Supervisors should email their HR staffing director to end a secondary assignment.

ADDITIONAL PAY

Additional pay is any type of compensation that is not considered a component of an employee's salary and may be for writing or developing curriculum, teaching a class for professional development, etc. Additional pay may be paid for activities that are performed on an ad hoc basis and are generally compensated in a one-time payment to an employee for a specified scope of work. Additional pay, then, is any approved work activity that is NOT a stipended supplement. Any non-salary compensation requested for an employee must meet several criteria. Prior to the additional work starting, the project should be sent to the compensation department (compensation@atlanta.k12.ga.us) for review. The compensation department will determine if the scope of work should be paid as an additional hourly assignment, if the employee should use the district's timekeeping system to track hours, or if a one-time payment should be used. The compensation department will provide an appropriate rate of compensation based on the scope of work and communicate that back to the program owner. The program owner will meet with their budget representative to determine if funding is available (prior to work being completed). Once work is completed, the one-time payment form is routed for approval, and the employee is paid via the regular payroll schedule.

LEAVE WITH NO PAY

An employee's annual salary is divided into 24 even payments processed through semi-monthly payroll. Per Board Policy, after an employee has incurred 20 days of unpaid leave, the employee's annual salary is recalculated and will reflect a decrease in salary for the remainder of the school/fiscal year. The employee's salary will return to the full amount at the start of the next school or fiscal year, depending on the work schedule.

RECLASSIFICATION/JOB EVALUATION PROCESS

The purpose of the job evaluation process is to determine whether a position's core duties and responsibilities have significantly and permanently changed to such an extent that reclassification to a different pay grade (higher or lower) is appropriate. The essential functions of a position typically change in response to the

organization's needs, not based on the person in the position. Therefore, the assessment will focus on the standard requirements associated with the position without regard to the person's merits occupying the position.

The reclassification and job evaluation review process will occur during the second semester of every school year. The Superintendent has final approval authority for all recommendations coming out of this review process. If a reclassification is approved, it will take effect on the first duty day of the following fiscal year.

For a review to be considered, the following steps must occur:

1. The appropriate supervisor has to agree that a job evaluation review should occur,
2. The appropriate senior cabinet member should be in agreement that the job evaluation review should occur, and
3. The requestor must complete and submit the Reclassification and Job Evaluation Packet, signed by the appropriate supervisor and senior cabinet member.

Please see the [Reclassification website](#) for additional information.

ANNUAL MAINTENANCE OF THE APS SALARY SCHEDULE

Each fiscal year, the Atlanta Public School district is required to adopt a balanced budget. Salary schedules may need to be adjusted to reflect changes made during the budget process (i.e., general pay increases, salary freezes, new salary schedules, etc.). As a result, to maintain equity in compensation, annual maintenance of the salary schedules may occur in one of the following manners:

1. Salary schedules will remain intact. When this occurs, employees will receive a salary increase based on an additional year worked (step increase).
2. Salary schedules will be adjusted to reflect no additional compensation. When this occurs, employees receive a year of experience but will not receive a salary increase. This allows for internal equity to be maintained with internal and external hiring for that particular fiscal year. (Salary hearings as required by General Code of Laws may be necessary.)
3. Salary schedules will be modified to include a general pay increase and/or other increases. When this occurs, employees will receive an increase based on an additional year worked and an increase to the salary schedule.
4. Positions of Assistant/Associate/Deputy Chief and Chief Officers (executive leadership above pay grade 140) will receive a percentage increase of their actual pay proportional with the average increase provided to executive director positions on the non-teacher salary schedule. For example, suppose a

general pay increase of 2% and step (average 1%) is adopted for the employees on the non-teaching salary schedules. In that case, the executive leadership will receive a 3% increase in their annual salary.

5. Hourly positions with a full-time equivalent position on an approved salary schedule will have the same hourly rate as step 0 of that salary schedule. For example, an hourly paraprofessional rate will equal the hourly rate for pay grade 114 on the non-teacher salary schedule. All other hourly positions will be reviewed and modified as part of the budget process, and the listing of approved hourly rates will be maintained on the compensation website.
6. In all scenarios, to be eligible for an annual salary increase, employees must be actively employed when the pay increase is submitted to payroll, which is approximately 15 days before the pay date of the increase. Employees who separate from employment prior to the first pay date of an annual increase will not be eligible for the increase. For employees on unpaid leave of absence, their eligibility for an annual pay increase will be determined when they return to active status.