



**Summary:**

These questions and answers are designed to assist employees and supervisors with understanding the many compensation initiatives for the 2023-2024 school year. The effective date of this guidance is July 1, 2023, and it will be updated as necessary throughout the school year. Nothing in this document supersedes local, state, and federal law, District policy, and administrative regulations.

This document is a supplement to the main compensation web page located at [www.atlantapublicschools.us/compensation](http://www.atlantapublicschools.us/compensation) and budget commission presentations located at <https://www.atlantapublicschools.us/Page/51829>.

Please refer to the table of contents below to locate questions by topic, or use the Ctrl+f command to type in and navigate to a specific keyword.

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## Annual Pay Increases

1. I'm paid on step 28 for the 2023 - 2024 school year, and I was on step 28 for the 2022 - 2023 school year. If my annual salary increases, do I qualify for the \$3,000 stipend?
  - a. Employees who remained on step 28 and received an increase to their annual salary are not eligible for the \$3,000 stipend.
2. My step increased for the 2023 - 2024 school year, but my annual salary did not increase. Do I qualify for the \$3,000 stipend?
  - a. If an employee is off-step and their current pay is higher than the new salary schedule, they will receive the \$3,000 stipend.
3. Where do I find the hourly rates of pay?
  - a. The hourly rates of pay can be found on Compensation's [Salary Schedules](#) page, under FY24 Salary Schedule Links >>> Hourly Rates and Stipends.
4. When do the new hourly rates go into effect?
  - a. The new hourly rates go into effect on July 1, 2023. Therefore, the earliest part-time/hourly employees will see their new pay increase on their paycheck is July 31, 2023.
5. As an annual employee, when will I see my step increase?
  - a. As an annual employee who works July 1 through June 30, you will receive your new rate of pay on the July 31, 2023 paycheck.
6. I'm a less-than-annual employee; when will I see my pay increase?
  - a. As a less-than-annual employee who starts work mid-to-late July, you will receive your new pay rate on the August 31, 2023 paycheck.
7. How do I determine my pay for the 2023 - 2024 school year?
  - a. Employees hired on or before August 1, 2023, should have received a compensation statement from [compensation@atlanta.k12.ga.us](mailto:compensation@atlanta.k12.ga.us) in July (annual employees) or August (less than annual). If you were hired after that date or have submitted prior work experience, you received an email from [compensation@atlanta.k12.ga.us](mailto:compensation@atlanta.k12.ga.us) with a breakdown of your verified experience, pay grade, certificate level (teacher and instructional support only), credit awarded/step, and salary. The compensation statement has your current pay grade and step. Most employees will receive a step at the end of the school year if they worked at least 63% of their work calendar. The most current salary schedules can always be found at: <https://www.atlantapublicschools.us/Page/47417>.



To determine your salary for the school year, select the salary schedule that matches your pay grade.

- **Teachers and Instructional Support** - the first column indicates the step/number of years completed teaching/working, and the next four (4) columns have the GaPSC Certificate level. Take last year's step and add 1 to it. That will be your step for this school year. Go to the row with your new step, and then go across to your current certification level. That is your salary for this school year.
- **Student Support Schedule** - created for those positions that provide students with support. Positions include counselors, social workers, physical therapists, occupational therapists, psychologists, speech-language pathologists, audiologists, and behavior support specialists. The first column indicates the step/number of years completed teaching/working, and the next four (4) columns have the GaPSC Certificate level. Take last year's step and add 1 to it. That will be your step for this school year. Go to the row with your new step, and then go across to your current certification level. That is your salary for this school year.
- **Student Support Lead Schedule** - New this school year, a salary schedule was created for the lead positions to include Lead Psychologist and Lead Social Worker. The first column indicates the step/number of years completed teaching/working, and the next four (4) columns have the GaPSC Certificate level. Take last year's step and add 1 to it. That will be your step for this school year. Go to the row with your new step, and then go across to your current certification level. That is your salary for this school year.
- **Principal and Assistant Principal Schedule** - New this school year, a salary schedule was created for the Principal and Assistant Principal positions. The first column indicates the step/number of years completed teaching/working, and the next four (4) columns have the GaPSC Certificate level. Take last year's step and add 1 to it. That will be your step for this school year. Go to the row with your new step, and then go across to your current certification level. That is your salary for this school year.
- **Employees paid on pay grades** - the first column indicates the step you are on. Take last year's step and add 1 to it. That will be your step for this school year. The rest of the columns indicate your work schedule. If you work an annual schedule, your salary will be in the first column labeled "252 Days." This information is on your compensation statement. Find your new step and go across it until you come to your work schedule. That is your salary for this school year.
- **Employees with specific pay schedules** (Bus Drivers/Monitors, Transportation Fleet, Safety and Security, and Information Technology) - the first column indicates the step. Take last year's step and add 1 to it. That will be your step for this school year. The rest of the columns indicate positions/pay grades. Find your current pay grade on your compensation statement. Find your new step and go across until you come to your position/pay grade. That is your salary for this school year.



## Mid-Year Retention Stipend

8. Who is eligible for a \$1,000 one-time payment on 12/15?
  - a. Full-time \$1,000:
    - All full-time employees who were hired on or before 11/1 and actively employed on 11/30 are eligible for \$1,000
    - Employees on unpaid leave will be reviewed when they return to work
    - A full-time employee has an FTE (full-time equivalent) equal to or greater than 0.5.
    - Employees with a pending separation (last day of work) between 11/16 and 12/13 are not eligible
  - b. Part-time (Hourly and Substitutes) \$1,000:
    - All part-time employees (FTE = less than .5) who were hired on or before 10/15, actively employed on 11/30, and have worked the equivalent of 10 days (75 clocked hours worked this semester beginning 7/29/23 through 10/31/23) are eligible for \$1,000
    - All substitutes (working in person) hired on or before 10/15, actively employed on 11/30, and have worked the equivalent of 10 days (75 clocked hours worked this semester beginning 7/25/23 through 10/31/23)
    - All hourly employees who were hired on or before 10/15, actively employed on 11/30, and have worked the equivalent of 10 days (75 clocked hours worked this semester beginning 7/25/23 through 10/31/23)
    - Employees with a pending separation (last day of work) between 11/16 and 12/15 are not eligible.
9. What deductions may come out of my one-time payment?
  - a. Employers are required to deduct the minimum mandatory payroll taxes, which are FICA (1.45%), federal income tax, and state income tax
  - b. One-time payments are not subject to Teacher Retirement System (TRS) or benefits deductions, like health insurance

## FY'24 State Retention Stipend

10. Who is eligible for a \$1,000 one-time payment on 01/31/2024?
  - a. Full-time \$1,000:
    - All full-time employees who were hired on or before 12/15/23 and actively employed on 01/15/24 are eligible for \$1,000
    - Employees on unpaid leave will be reviewed when they return to work
    - A full-time employee has an FTE (full-time equivalent) equal to or greater than 0.5.
    - Employees with a pending separation (last day of work) between 12/15/23 and 01/15/24 are not eligible
  - b. Part-time (Hourly and Substitutes) \$1,000:
    - All part-time employees (FTE = less than .5) who were hired on or before 12/15, actively employed on 1/10/24 and have worked the equivalent of 10 days (75 clocked hours worked this semester beginning 7/29/23 through 12/15/23) are eligible for \$1,000
    - All substitutes (working in person) hired on or before 12/15/23, actively



employed on 1/10/24 and have worked the equivalent of 10 days (75 clocked hours worked this semester beginning 7/25/23 through 12/15/23)

- All hourly employees who were hired on or before 12/15/23, actively employed on 1/10/24, and have worked the equivalent of 10 days (75 clocked hours worked this semester beginning 7/25/23 through 12/15/23)
- Employees with a pending separation (last day of work) between 12/15/23 and 01/15/24 are not eligible.

11. What deductions may come out of my one-time payment?

- a. Employers are required to deduct the minimum mandatory payroll taxes, which are FICA (1.45%), federal income tax, and state income tax
- b. One-time payments are not subject to Teacher Retirement System (TRS) or benefits deductions, like health insurance

### Elementary Extended Day

12. How will elementary employees be compensated for the extra 30 minutes of work each day?

- a. Exempt employees (punch into Kronos one time a day only) will receive a \$3,000 stipend, paid in equal installments of \$150 per check from August 31, 2023, through June 15, 2024.
  - Exempt employees who are assigned to an elementary school for part of the day will receive a prorated stipend equivalent to the percentage of time they are assigned to an elementary school, as determined by their Full Time Equivalent (FTE) in the Global HR (Lawson) system.
- b. Non-exempt employees (punch in and out each day) will be paid for all hours worked and clocked in the Kronos timekeeping system. Non-exempt employees are not eligible for stipends for hours worked, because they are eligible for overtime.

13. Is the \$3,000 stipend added to base pay on the posted teacher salary schedules?

- a. No, the posted salary schedules do not include the \$3,000 stipend for elementary exempt employees. The \$3,000 stipend is temporary in nature (to be paid each year over the next 3 years, 2021 - 2022, 2022 - 2023, and 2023 - 2024).

### High-Poverty School Stipends

14. How do I know if my school qualifies for the high-poverty stipend?

- a. There are two tiers for the high poverty stipend. The first tier includes schools with a poverty percentage of 76.7% or higher. The second tier includes schools with a poverty percentage of 65.8% or higher.

*(See list of schools on next page)*



**Tier 1 - High-Poverty Schools**

Barack and Michelle Obama Academy	Humphries Elementary School
Boyd Elementary School	Hutchinson Elementary School
Cascade Elementary School	John Lewis Invictus Academy
Cleveland Elementary School	Kimberly Elementary School
Continental Colony Elementary School	Long Middle School
Dobbs Elementary School	M.A. Jones Elementary
Douglass High School	Michael R. Hollis Innovation Academy
Dunbar Elementary School	Miles Elementary
Fickett Elementary School	Perkerson Elementary School
Finch Elementary School	Peyton Forest Elementary School
F. L. Stanton Elementary School	Scott Elementary School
Hank Aaron New Beginnings	Sylvan Middle School
Harper-Archer Elementary School	Tuskegee Airmen Global Academy
Heritage Academy Elementary	Usher/Collier Elementary School
Herman J Russell West End Academy	

**Tier 2 - High-Poverty Schools**

B.E.S.T Academy	South Atlanta High School
Bunche Middle School	Therrell High School
Carver Early High School	Washington High School
Coretta Scott King Young Women's Academy	West Manor Elementary School
Hope-Hill Elementary Schools	Young Middle School
King Middle School	



15. How is the poverty percentage determined?
- APS is using a state-wide measure called “direct certification.” Direct certification is a school poverty measure that includes students in households receiving state anti-poverty aid, migrants, and homeless. This measure is updated annually by GA DOE; for more information, visit <https://gosa.georgia.gov/directcert>.
16. Who is eligible for a high-poverty school stipend?
- All employees, including bus drivers and monitors, assigned to a high-poverty school in Tier 1 or Tier 2 are eligible for a stipend.
  - Tier 1 schools: Teachers and other salaried, exempt staff are eligible for \$2,000 per year. Non-exempt support staff are eligible for \$1,000 per year.
  - Tier 2 schools: Teachers and other salaried, exempt staff are eligible for \$1,000 per year. Non-exempt support staff are eligible for \$500 per year.
  - Employees who are assigned to an eligible Tier 1 or Tier 2 school for part of the day will receive a prorated stipend equivalent to the percentage of time they are assigned to an eligible school, as determined by their Full Time Equivalent (FTE) in the Global HR (Lawson) system.
  - Employees must be actively employed without a resignation in the system at the time that stipends are submitted to payroll to be eligible for payment.
17. Why can support staff receive a high-poverty school stipend but not an extended day stipend?
- High-poverty school stipends are retention stipends and are not considered to be compensation for hours worked. Extended day stipends are based on extra time worked, which must be tracked by the hour for non-exempt staff according to Department of Labor regulations. Therefore, stipends cannot be paid to non-exempt staff for actual time worked. They may be paid for incentives not tied to hours worked, such as retention.
18. How often will the high-poverty school stipends be paid?
- The stipends will be paid twice a year, with half paid on December 15 and the other half on May 15.

### **High-Needs Subject Area Stipends**

19. Which positions qualify for the high-needs subject area stipends?
- For the 2023-2024 school year,
    - Special education teaching positions paid on the teacher salary schedule, and special education lead teachers
    - Math teachers
    - Dual Language Immersion teachers
    - ESOLare eligible for the high-needs subject area stipend. Additional high-needs subject areas may be added in the future.
  - Employees must be actively employed without a resignation in the system when stipends are submitted to payroll to be eligible for payment.



20. I am a special education teacher at a tier 1 high-poverty school. Will I get the \$3,000 special education stipend and the \$2,000 high poverty stipend?
- Yes, these stipends are stackable. For example, if you are a special education teacher working at a tier-one high-poverty school, you are eligible for both stipends, a total amount of \$5,000 in addition to your base pay.
21. How often will the high-needs subject area stipends be paid?
- The stipends will be paid twice a year, with half paid on December 15 and the other half on May 15.

### **General Compensation Topics**

22. How do I access the APS Compensation Page?
- You can access the APS Compensation Page by clicking the following link: [www.atlantapublicschools.us/compensation](http://www.atlantapublicschools.us/compensation) or by going to: [www.atlantapublicschools.us](http://www.atlantapublicschools.us) >>> Departments and Services Directory >>> Human Resources >>> Compensation.
23. When do I receive my first and last check of the school year?
- The first paycheck for the school year is August 31<sup>st</sup>, and the last paycheck for the school year is August 15<sup>th</sup> of the following year. (Note: If you are an employee who works year-round, the first paycheck for the new year is July 31<sup>st</sup>, and the last paycheck for the year is July 15<sup>th</sup>. This is because the new work year starts every July 1<sup>st</sup>.)
24. How long do I have to submit my experience verification forms after starting a new role?
- Documents must be received by April 30th of the current school year in order to receive retroactive pay if hired before February 28th. If hired after February 28th, documents must be received by April 30th of the next school year in order to receive the retroactive pay. Documents that are submitted after the deadline will be processed non-retroactively.
25. Suppose I am applying for out-of-state reciprocity for my certification. Can I just use the same verification form I had to complete for the GaPSC for my previous experience?
- The GaPSC Form will be accepted; however, processing of the form may be delayed if it does not contain all of the necessary information to determine if the experience is creditable for salary purposes.





26. Do you consider my education when calculating my salary?
  - a. Certified positions (i.e., Teacher, Instructional Coach, etc.) are paid based on their certificate level as determined by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GaPSC). In conjunction with the certificate level, salaries are determined by the years of verified experience.
  - b. Non-certified positions are determined by years of verified experience.
  
27. If my previous employer does not have a record of my employment or no longer exists, how can I get my years of experience verified?
  - a. Submit a notarized letter to the Compensation Department stating pertinent information (as indicated on the Verification of Experience Form Instructions, page 2) regarding your prior employment. Along with the notarized letter, W-2 forms, tax returns, and/or check stubs that would assist in verifying the employment information should be provided.
  
28. Can I get credit for my experience as a substitute and/or hourly employee (if I was certified)?
  - a. Per the Georgia State Salary Guidelines, supply/substitute teaching experience shall not be recognized for advancement on the salary schedule (see [Georgia State Salary Guidelines](#)).
  
29. Once my verification forms have been submitted and received by the APS Compensation Department, how long will it take for my verification forms to be processed?
  - a. Verification forms for current employees are typically processed within two pay periods after they have been received by the Compensation Department. Verification forms for new employees starting the following fiscal year will be processed timely for the employee's first paycheck. A member of the Compensation Department will notify you via email once the process has been completed.
  
30. Why didn't I get credit for every year of my experience?
  - a. Experience must be equivalent or relevant to your current position and is awarded based on one of the following tiers:
    - Tier 1 - Equivalent Functional Experience (experience is granted year-for-year up to max step)
    - Tier 2 - Relevant Industry Experience (one year granted for every two years)



31. Can my salary be negotiated if I disagree with it?
  - a. Employees are placed on the appropriate salary schedule and step based on their years of verified experience and certificate level (where applicable). The salary is non-negotiable; however, you may contact a member of the Compensation Department to discuss your salary inquiries.
  
32. When can I expect to see any retroactive pay after my verification forms have been processed?
  - a. If retroactive pay is due, it may take up to two pay periods before it is seen on your paycheck.
  
33. What do I need to do to get on the appropriate pay scale once my certificate level is updated?
  - a. A copy of the upgraded certificate must be sent to the Compensation Department. A copy of the upgraded certificate should be sent electronically to [compensation@atlanta.k12.ga.us](mailto:compensation@atlanta.k12.ga.us) for processing. A member of the Compensation Department will notify you via email once the process has been completed.
  
34. What should I do if I believe my Compensation Statement is inaccurate?
  - a. If you believe that your Compensation Statement is inaccurate, you should send an email to [compensation@atlanta.k12.ga.us](mailto:compensation@atlanta.k12.ga.us) or contact a member of the Compensation Department.
  
35. Why doesn't my annual salary on my compensation statement match box 1 of my W-2?
  - a. Your annual salary is a gross dollar amount earned before taxes and deductions are taken out. Meanwhile, your Form W-2 shows your taxable wages reported after pre-tax deductions. Pre-tax deductions, for example, include employer-provided health insurance, dental insurance, life insurance, and disability insurance.
  - b. Also, the W-2 is for a calendar year (January - December), and compensation statements are for a school year.
  
36. Why does my contract have the same salary amount as my current salary instead of next year's salary?
  - a. Contracts are prepared every spring during the 2<sup>nd</sup> school semester before the school year is complete. Experience credit (step increases) for the current school year will not be applied to employees' pay until the new school year starts. Therefore, your contract for the upcoming school year will provide your current salary.



37. Can I determine my salary for the next school year by using the current salary schedule?
- You should anticipate that salary schedules will change from year to year. Salary schedules for a new school year are established in coordination with the Board's adoption of a budget in June. Our goal is to provide a percentage increase to salary schedules in addition to a step increase. Because of this strategy, the current salary schedule may not be an accurate representation of salaries in future years.
38. Who do I contact for direct deposit changes?
- Payroll at (404) 802-2209 or [PayDept@atlanta.k12.ga.us](mailto:PayDept@atlanta.k12.ga.us)
39. Who do I contact for benefits questions?
- Email [BenefitsDept@atlanta.k12.ga.us](mailto:BenefitsDept@atlanta.k12.ga.us) or visit their website: <https://www.atlantapublicschools.us/Page/1198>
40. Do stipends and one-time payments count towards TRS retirement?
- Stipends and one-time payments are not part of base pay and do not count towards TRS.
41. How are stipends identified/labeled on pay stubs?
- Stipends will be listed as "Stipend Pay."