



We Teach
Alabama

ALABAMA STATE DEPARTMENT *of* EDUCATION

TEAMS



Overview



FAQs



TEAMS

Teacher Excellence and Accountability for Mathematics and Science

Determining Eligibility of TEAMS Teacher Positions



Start



Next

Does the teacher hold a valid Alabama professional educator certificate or alternate certificate in middle level math or science OR secondary math, science or computer science

AND

teach [full-time] approved math and/or science courses in grades 6-12 with the appropriate certificate endorsements?

Does the teacher currently hold or plan to obtain an Advanced Credential from either the National Institute for STEM Education or National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) Certification in math or science?



y



n



y



n

THEN

the teacher is eligible to apply for a TEAMS contract with the local superintendent. To determine the type of contract, please proceed below.

IF

the teacher currently holds Advanced Credentials,

THEN

the teacher is eligible for an **ADVANCED TEAMS** contract for a period up to three years.

IF

the teacher does not currently hold, but is planning to obtain Advanced Credentials,

THEN

the teacher is eligible to apply for a one-year **PRELIMINARY TEAMS** contract that is renewable from three to six years.



TEAMS

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Next

Does the teacher teach in a school that has been designated by ALSDE as a hard-to-staff school?



*This supplement does not impact traditional NBPTS stipends or scholarships.

Employment Terms

- Participating teachers will be on contract for 189 days.
- A teacher who has attained continuing service status with his or her local education agency (LEA), and elects participation in the program under the same LEA, shall be deemed to have voluntarily relinquished his or her status and protections under the Students First Act. Any teacher who has attained continuing service status can revert to previous service status, if they do not pass their advanced credentials test.
- First contract would be PRELIMINARY one-year, unless the teacher already has one of the specialized credentials—then the teacher can obtain an ADVANCED three-year contract immediately. PRELIMINARY contracts must have provision to ensure a teacher's adequate progress to ADVANCED contract qualification.
- Teachers with over 20 years of service have to agree to participation for a term of at least five years.
- Subject to limited waivers, a participating teacher shall only qualify for PRELIMINARY contracts for his or her maximum three- or six-year period.
- At end of PRELIMINARY or ADVANCED contract, the LEA may:
 - Offer the participating teacher a new, ADVANCED three-year contract;
 - Terminate the teacher's employment by not nonrenewing or approving a new contract; or
 - Reemploy the teacher in any position outside of the program.
- LEA may cancel contract for any reason, and pay salary and benefits for remainder of contract.
- LEA may cancel contract for cause, and teacher could request hearing and appeal from said hearing would be to hearing officer through department.



ALABAMA STATE DEPARTMENT *of* EDUCATION

Frequently Asked Questions¹

General Questions

Q-1. Is this a pay bonus, or a completely new salary scale?

A-1. The Education Trust Fund budget outlines a separate, increased salary schedule for the TEAMS plan. The matrix below illustrates the TEAMS salary increase by year of service and education level, plus the hard-to-staff supplement for TEAMS teachers that are hired by local education agencies. TEAMS teachers must hold a valid Alabama professional educator certificate or alternate certificate in middle level math or science OR secondary math, science or computer science AND teach [full-time] approved math and/or science courses in grades 6-12 with the appropriate certificate endorsements. The first matrix is the new TEAMS pay scale. The second matrix shows the difference between the standard teacher pay scale and the new TEAMS matrix. Any “hard-to-staff” supplement is added on to the new base salary but is expected to be payable as part of the salary and not in a lump sum.

TEAMS State Salary Matrix [New salary total for participating teachers on a TEAMS contract] - FY22 Math and Science - 189 Day Contract						TEAMS Special Compensation over Teacher Base Pay Matrix					
Yrs	Bachelor	Master	AA/EDS	Doctor	Hard-to-Staff School Supplement	Yrs	Bachelor	Master	AA/EDS	Doctor	Hard-to-Staff School Supplement
0	\$ 46,690	\$ 52,941	\$ 56,695	\$ 60,446	\$ 5,000	0	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000
1	\$ 49,982	\$ 57,479	\$ 61,977	\$ 66,479	\$ 5,000	1	\$ 8,292	\$ 9,538	\$ 10,282	\$ 11,033	
2	\$ 52,652	\$ 60,547	\$ 65,304	\$ 70,025	\$ 5,000	2	\$ 10,962	\$ 12,606	\$ 13,609	\$ 14,579	
3	\$ 54,192	\$ 62,320	\$ 67,215	\$ 72,075	\$ 5,000	3	\$ 8,337	\$ 9,587	\$ 10,355	\$ 11,085	
4	\$ 55,774	\$ 64,139	\$ 69,177	\$ 74,179	\$ 5,000	4	\$ 9,919	\$ 11,406	\$ 12,317	\$ 13,189	
5	\$ 57,397	\$ 66,006	\$ 71,190	\$ 76,338	\$ 5,000	5	\$ 11,542	\$ 13,273	\$ 14,330	\$ 15,348	
6	\$ 59,063	\$ 67,921	\$ 73,258	\$ 78,554	\$ 5,000	6	\$ 11,198	\$ 12,878	\$ 13,891	\$ 14,895	
7	\$ 60,773	\$ 69,889	\$ 75,378	\$ 80,828	\$ 5,000	7	\$ 12,908	\$ 14,846	\$ 16,011	\$ 17,169	
8	\$ 61,988	\$ 71,285	\$ 76,886	\$ 82,445	\$ 5,000	8	\$ 14,123	\$ 16,242	\$ 17,519	\$ 18,786	
9	\$ 63,228	\$ 72,712	\$ 78,423	\$ 84,094	\$ 5,000	9	\$ 14,406	\$ 16,568	\$ 17,869	\$ 19,162	
10	\$ 64,176	\$ 73,803	\$ 79,599	\$ 85,355	\$ 5,000	10	\$ 15,354	\$ 17,659	\$ 19,045	\$ 20,423	
11	\$ 65,139	\$ 74,910	\$ 80,793	\$ 86,635	\$ 5,000	11	\$ 16,317	\$ 18,766	\$ 20,239	\$ 21,703	
12	\$ 66,116	\$ 76,034	\$ 82,005	\$ 87,935	\$ 5,000	12	\$ 16,318	\$ 18,767	\$ 20,240	\$ 21,704	
13	\$ 66,116	\$ 76,034	\$ 82,005	\$ 87,935	\$ 5,000	13	\$ 16,318	\$ 18,767	\$ 20,240	\$ 21,704	
14	\$ 66,116	\$ 76,034	\$ 82,005	\$ 87,935	\$ 5,000	14	\$ 16,318	\$ 18,767	\$ 20,240	\$ 21,704	
15	\$ 67,112	\$ 77,179	\$ 83,240	\$ 89,260	\$ 5,000	15	\$ 16,318	\$ 18,767	\$ 20,240	\$ 21,704	
16	\$ 67,112	\$ 77,179	\$ 83,240	\$ 89,260	\$ 5,000	16	\$ 16,318	\$ 18,767	\$ 20,240	\$ 21,704	
17	\$ 67,112	\$ 77,179	\$ 83,240	\$ 89,260	\$ 5,000	17	\$ 16,318	\$ 18,767	\$ 20,240	\$ 21,704	
18	\$ 68,128	\$ 78,347	\$ 84,501	\$ 90,611	\$ 5,000	18	\$ 16,318	\$ 18,767	\$ 20,240	\$ 21,704	
19	\$ 68,128	\$ 78,347	\$ 84,501	\$ 90,611	\$ 5,000	19	\$ 16,318	\$ 18,767	\$ 20,240	\$ 21,704	
20	\$ 68,128	\$ 78,347	\$ 84,501	\$ 90,611	\$ 5,000	20	\$ 16,318	\$ 18,767	\$ 20,240	\$ 21,704	
21	\$ 69,164	\$ 79,540	\$ 85,786	\$ 91,989	\$ 5,000	21	\$ 16,318	\$ 18,767	\$ 20,240	\$ 21,704	
22	\$ 69,164	\$ 79,540	\$ 85,786	\$ 91,989	\$ 5,000	22	\$ 16,318	\$ 18,767	\$ 20,240	\$ 21,704	
23	\$ 69,164	\$ 79,540	\$ 85,786	\$ 91,989	\$ 5,000	23	\$ 16,318	\$ 18,767	\$ 20,240	\$ 21,704	
24	\$ 70,221	\$ 80,754	\$ 87,097	\$ 93,395	\$ 5,000	24	\$ 16,318	\$ 18,767	\$ 20,240	\$ 21,704	
25	\$ 70,221	\$ 80,754	\$ 87,097	\$ 93,395	\$ 5,000	25	\$ 16,318	\$ 18,767	\$ 20,240	\$ 21,704	
26	\$ 70,221	\$ 80,754	\$ 87,097	\$ 93,395	\$ 5,000	26	\$ 16,318	\$ 18,767	\$ 20,240	\$ 21,704	
27	\$ 71,299	\$ 81,995	\$ 88,434	\$ 94,829	\$ 5,000	27	\$ 16,318	\$ 18,767	\$ 20,240	\$ 21,704	

Q-2. Is this another teacher incentive plan? How do I know this plan will not just disappear the next year?

¹ The information contained in this resource is for general guidance only. Although legal information is provided, this guidance should not be considered legal advice.

A-2. Act 2021-340 created the TEAMS Plan. Additionally, this act created the TEAMS Fund in the State Treasury for an annual allocation from the Legislature to support this plan.

Q-3. Who confirms eligibility of a teacher to the TEAMS plan?

A-3. The local superintendent confirms eligibility once a teacher submits an application. A teacher can only become a TEAMS teacher with the recommendation of the local superintendent and approval of the local Board. Teachers are hired by local school systems, not assigned by the State Department of Education. Not all math and science teachers will necessarily receive TEAMS contracts.

Q-4.* How many TEAMS positions will each school district receive?

A-4. Each school district will receive one math and one science position for every 105 students in combined grades 6-12. [FY22 District TEAMS Allocations](#)

Q-5. If a school or school district qualifies for 6 math and 6 science teachers but has 7 math and 5 science eligible for participation, can this be allowed since they did not exceed the total eligible number of TEAMS positions for the school or district?

A-5. No, the law provides the TEAMS fund shall allocate one position for math and one for science for every 105 students in combined grades 6-12. Districts could fill additional positions from other funding sources, but the TEAMS fund allocates money to local districts in accordance with the law.

Q-6. What is application process?

A-6. Visit www.alsde.edu/teachinalabama to apply for positions around the state and make sure to complete the TEAMS section. Even if TEAMS positions are not specifically posted, you are able to select a district of your choice and your application will be sent directly to that district. If you have previously used this website to apply in Alabama, you will need to make necessary updates under the TEAMS section. See also Q-7.

Q-7. How do I apply?

A-7. The application is available by clicking <http://www.alsde.edu/teachinalabama>. In order to be sure you are applying for a TEAMS position in your school district only, here are some tips you can use when completing the application:

- When choosing where to work on the application, only mark the district you are seeking to work in. This can be found on the [“Where Do You Want to Work”](#) page.
- Next, be sure and only opt out from emails after you are hired.
- Lastly, if you are hired in a TEAMS position by your school district, be sure and go back on the portal and mark yourself as hired, or deactivate your account. This will eliminate other school districts from reaching out to you when they go on to search for potentially candidates.

Q-8. I am an out of state teacher; how can I apply?

A-8. Visit www.alsde.edu/teachinalabama to apply and make sure to complete the TEAMS section. Also, see Q-6 and Q-7.

Q-9.* When will the hard-to-staff school list be released?

A-9. The department shall annually determine which schools are hard-to-staff based on out-of-field teaching assignments, poverty levels, etc. TEAMS employment in a Hard-to-Staff school qualifies for \$5,000 supplement. [FY22 Hard-to-Staff Schools](#)

Q-10. Will the Hard to Staff Schools list change?**

A-10. The hard-to-staff school list is subject to change annually, but we do not anticipate large swings due to the underlying assumptions stated in the law.

Q-11.* If I am a current teacher, will I get to stay at my current school?

- A-11. There is no guarantee a participating TEAMS teacher would stay in a previous teaching assignment. Employment matters and teaching assignments are the determination of your local district.

Q-12. What is considered teaching math and science fulltime?

- A-12. Fulltime means teaching all class periods during the day, except for a planning period. For instance, in a seven-period day, a teacher must teach six periods of qualifying math or science courses. See also Q-17.

Q-13. Will there be an opportunity to apply in future years if you are not accepted this first year?

- A-13. Yes, there will be opportunities to apply in the future. As long as positions are open at your school district, you may apply.

Certification and Courses

Q-14. What must I be certified in to be eligible for the TEAMS salary matrix?

- A-14. To view a full list of certifications, click [here](#).

Q-15. What courses do I have to teach?

- A-15. To view a full list of eligible courses, click [here](#).

Q-16.* There is only one (1) engineering course in the approved list (PLTW Principles of Engineering). Will other engineering course titles / numbers be considered for inclusion given the fact that Engineering is one of the targeted teacher categories in the Act?

- A-16. Act 2021-340 defines MATH as mathematics courses that appear in the Alabama Course of Study, including mathematics for grades 6-12; and SCIENCE as science courses that appear in the Alabama Course of Study, including science for grades 6-12; or other secondary science courses, engineering, and computer science courses, as approved by the department. Currently, PLTW Principles of Engineering is the only course approved as a science credit-eligible course within the CTE STEM Cluster; however, additional courses may be added as each CTE COS is revised, etc. The program is intended to allow those engineering and computer science courses that have been approved as a “core” math or science credit to be approved.

There have already been additional engineering courses submitted for department approval, so the list will be updated as additional courses are approved.

Q-17.* Would a math/science teacher teaching the majority of their schedule in traditional math/science classes and ACT prep for eligible math and science classes one or two periods per day be eligible?

- A-17. “Full-time” means a participating teacher teaches every period in the approved math, science, or computer science courses, with the exception of one planning period, equal in duration to the other periods. The [Model Contract](#) should provide additional assistance to districts and teachers in thinking through specific schedule questions.

Any request for core class or teaching permit substitution/deviation would need to come specifically from a local district to the Department. Such request would need to address questions such as:

- Are all students covered with a fully qualified teacher?
- Is the teacher’s caseload at least 105 students?
- Is the period/course in question committed to the improvement of mathematics, science, or computer science?

Q-18.* Will the qualifying course list be updated to include Dual Enrollment or other additional courses for TEAMS?

- A-18. An approved dual enrollment course that fulfills a graduation requirement and as part of an articulation agreement with an higher education entity in science or math counts since it is an accepted substitute course. The driving question surrounding approved courses is whether the course is a 6-12 credit bearing/required course that appears in Math or Science Course of Study. If a course counts as a department approved substitute

for a credit bearing course on the approved list, it could also be approved. However, that course is only an elective, it is not approved.

The list is subject to change as additional courses submitted for review receive approval.

Q-19. I am an out of state teacher who holds a valid math or science certificate in another state, how can I apply for a math or science certificate in Alabama?

A-19. Visit the [Educator Certification Section](#) to apply for certification based on certificate reciprocity.

Q-20. I am an Alabama certified teacher; how can I obtain certification in math or science?

A-20. There are several ways; however, the swiftest option is meeting requirements of the [Additional Teaching Field Approach](#). You must hold a valid Alabama Professional Educator Certificate (in a teaching field), verify two full scholastic years of P-12 classroom teaching experience, and pass the Alabama-approved Praxis subject assessment.

For other certification options, please visit [Educator Certification](#).

Q-21. Is computer science included?**

A-21. Certain computer science certifications and courses are eligible. Generally, only those computer science courses that are approved for math or science core credits are approved. Computer science teaching permits are not included—see full list of approved courses under the Certification and Courses section above for eligibility.

Q-22.* Advanced credential is mentioned in the TEAMS Bill. What is the difference between advanced degree, advanced certification, and advanced credential?

A-22. Advanced Degree – A degree beyond the bachelor's degree (e.g., master's, education specialist, doctorate) earned at an institution that was regionally accredited at the time the degree was earned.

Advanced Certification – Alabama Professional Certificates are issued at the following levels:

- Class B (bachelor's degree level)
- Class A (master's degree level)
- Class AA (education specialist degree level)

The Class A and Class AA Professional Certificates are considered advanced certification.

Advanced Credential -- See the Advanced Credential section.

Q-23.* An individual is currently enrolled in an Alternative Master's program in Elementary Education (grades K-6) at an Alabama university, but would like to teach mathematics in grades 6-8. Can another alternative route be pursued in mathematics while the individual is enrolled in an Elementary Education program?

A-23. This is possible; however, the following should be considered:

- The individual will not be able to hold an Interim Employment Certificate in Elementary Education and another alternative certificate in mathematics at the same time.
- There will be issues for the individual when it is time for the internship in Elementary Education if they are on a TEAMS contract.
- Coursework used for meeting requirements of any alternative approach cannot be used in the Alternative Master's program.
- If the individual has already held one or more Interim Employment Certificates, he/she may not be eligible for an alternative certificate in a different teaching field.

Be advised that there may be other unforeseen circumstances that may adversely impact the individual.

Q-24. Is an Emergency Certificate considered an alternate certificate?**

A-24. No, an emergency certificate is not considered an alternate certificate. The alternate certificates are considered the provisional, interim, and conditional ones listed [here](#).

Q-25. I did not see PLTW-Cybersecurity or Computer Science Discoveries courses on the approved list. Are they approved?**

A-25. The driving question surrounding approved courses is whether the course is a 6-12 credit bearing/required course that appears in Math or Science Course of Study. If the Computer Science Discoveries course counts as an SDE approved substitute for a credit bearing course on the approved list, it could also be approved. However, that course is only an elective, it is not approved.

Regarding, PLTW—currently, PLTW Principles of Engineering is the only course approved as a science credit-eligible course within the CTE STEM Cluster; however, additional courses may be added as each CTE COS is revised, etc. The program is intended to allow those engineering and computer science courses that have been approved as a “core” math or science credit to be approved.

For additional information, see Q-17 and Q-18.

Q-26. The 5th-grade math and science teachers at our schools also teach upper-grade math/science. Will this prevent them from being included with TEAMS if they teach two periods of 5th grade Math/Science?**

A-26. Generally, a teacher who has two periods of non-approved courses (5th grade Math/Science) is not eligible. Please also refer to Q-17 that discusses specifics for any requests for approved core class substitution.

Q-27. Is a General Science certificate in secondary education approved for Computer Science positions or is a Computer Science certificate (through passing the computer science praxis) needed to teach computer science for a TEAMS contract? If I do have to be certified in computer science, can I be hired for the computer science position and convert to a TEAMS contract once I have successfully passed the computer science praxis?**

A-27. The TEAMS [Model Contract](#) may assist in thinking through scheduling questions. There are only certain computer science courses that are considered approved, and without more information we cannot say for sure if your certificate would be considered “in-field.” However, if you are not appropriately teaching “in field,” you cannot be eligible for a TEAMS contract.

Q-28. Does an online or ACCESS math course count as being full-time? For example, does teaching 2 blocks of Geometry in-person and one block of Geometry online qualify as full-time on a 4-block schedule?**

A-28. This could be dependent on various factors—such as are you employed through ACCESS or through a school district, are you the teacher of record or a facilitator?

Q-29. Does a virtual or alternative school teacher qualify under the TEAMS plan?**

A-29. We cannot say that all virtual or all alternative school teachers either are or are not eligible, but participation in the TEAMS program is completely dependent on:

- (1) is the teacher appropriately certified and teaching [full-time] in their field (see approved certifications list);
- (2) is the teacher teaching approved courses [full-time] (see approved certification list); and
- (3) does the teacher currently hold or willing to hold and make adequate progress toward one of the advanced credentials?

If the answer to each of these questions is yes, then a teacher who is employed by a district, who teaches virtually or at an alternative school *may* be eligible.

Q-30. Is it a requirement that I have to teach at least 105 students?**

A-30. As long as you are teaching approved courses, you do not have to teach a certain number of students. The 105 number is used to determine how many positions each local school district will receive.

Contracts

Q-31. What is the difference between an advanced contract versus a preliminary contract?

- A-31. A teacher who does not hold the required advanced credential, but is otherwise eligible, may be offered a preliminary contract for one year, which can be extended from year-to-year for a maximum of three years.

A teacher meeting all the necessary criteria, including the advanced credential, may be offered an advanced TEAMS contract for up to a three-year contract period.

Q-32.* What happens at the end of my TEAMS contract?

- A-32. Act 2021-340 provides additional contract details, but generally provides:

After completion of a preliminary contract period a local board shall do one of the following:

- (1) Offer the participating teacher another preliminary one-year advance contract, subject to limitations, or an advanced contract.
- (2) Nonrenew the teacher's preliminary contract and employment entirely, without a stated reason.
- (3) Nonrenew the teacher's preliminary contract without a stated reason and reemploy the teacher in any position outside of the program.

After completion of an advanced contract period a local board shall do one of the following:

- (1) Offer the participating teacher another advanced contract of up to three years.
- (2) Nonrenew the teacher's advanced contract and employment entirely for any stated reason.
- (3) Nonrenew the teacher's advanced contract for any stated reason, and reemploy the teacher in any position outside the program.

Termination: A board may terminate for cause anytime for any of the following reasons: immorality, insubordination, neglect of duty, conviction of a felony or crime of moral turpitude, failure to comply with board policy, incompetency, justifiable decrease in positions, and incarceration. If the board terminates the teacher without cause before the contract ends, the teacher is due the balance of the contract salary and benefits. Bear in mind that participation in the program and all contracts are subject to local superintendent recommendation and local board approval as well.

Q-33. Can a teacher pass the Praxis to add an additional teaching field this summer and begin a TEAMS contract immediately after passing the test?**

- A-33. There is no set deadline for submission of TEAMS contracts. A district may hire to fill one of their TEAMS positions at any time.

Q-34. What if I am working toward the necessary advanced credentials?

- A-34. A teacher may qualify for one-year preliminary TEAMS contracts for up to three years while demonstrating adequate progress toward the advanced credential. Each advanced credential has unique requirements. Under very limited circumstances, some teachers may qualify for additional time, up to six years. The [Model Contract](#) details required "adequate progress" benchmarks for each one-year preliminary contract.

Q-35. What if I am a new teacher with insufficient teaching experience to begin the advanced credential?

- A-35. In limited circumstances, participating teacher with insufficient experience to obtain the advanced credential within three years may have his or her preliminary contract extended for a maximum of six total years.

Q-36. What happens if I have been working toward, but do not obtain or maintain the required advanced credential for an advanced TEAMS contract.

- A-36. Any teacher who is unable to obtain or maintain the advanced credential will no longer be eligible for the TEAMS plan.

Q-37.* How will my progress toward an advanced credential be monitored?

- A-37. Each individual contract must include a provision to ensure adequate progress toward the advanced contract qualifications, to include benchmark advancement during the teacher's preliminary contract period. The [Model](#)

Contract provides the required “adequate progress” benchmarks and spell out the penalties and/or recourse for failing to maintain progress toward the advanced credential.

- Q-38. What happens if circumstances beyond my control prevent me from finishing an advanced credential and I want to try again later.**
- A-38. A superintendent, on behalf of a participating teacher, may request a teacher be allowed to opt-in a second time after the teacher's previous failure to timely qualify for an advanced contract. These status exemptions, including but not limited to health conditions, family emergency, or change in county of residence, must be approved by the State Department of Education.

Q-39. What does a TEAMS teacher contract contain?**

- A-39. See all provisions of model contract [here](#).

Q-40. Are advanced TEAMS contracts guaranteed for three years (provided a teacher is not fired for cause)?

- A-40. The law states that advanced contracts can be up to three years. They are not required to be for three years.

Advanced Credential

Q-41.* Does the state provide a grant or scholarship to assist in becoming NBCT certified?

- A-41. Yes, the state offers a scholarship for any teacher who applies and is accepted (see [2021 NBCT scholarship memorandum](#)). Visit the [scholarship details](#) page for additional information.

A teacher is required to complete the NBCT portfolio (all four components) within the time allowed by the National Board. The scholarship will only pay for up to four components (up to \$1,900) and does not pay for sections that have to be retaken. If the teacher does not have sufficient experience to apply for the advanced credentials/certification upon initial TEAMS application, a preliminary TEAMS contract may be extended year-to-year for a maximum of either three or six years—depending on the teacher’s experience level.

The state also provides a \$5,000 base stipend to teachers that receive and currently hold a valid NBCT certification and an additional \$5,000 stipend for certain NBCT teachers. See the [2020-2021 NBCT memorandum](#) for additional information.

Q-42. What are the necessary advanced credentials?

- A-42. A participating teacher shall have an advanced credential from the National Institute for STEM Education or the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards—Early Adolescence or Adolescence and Young Adulthood Math or Science.

The Act states: A participating teacher shall have obtained a specialized certification or credential issued by one of the following within three years of admission to the program:

1. The National Institute for STEM Education.
2. The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards - Early Adolescence or Adolescence and Young Adulthood Math or Science.
3. Any other credential established by the Department.

Currently, the State Department of Education has no plans to create a new rigorous certification or credential—therefore, NISE and NBCT are the only options.

Q-43.* What is the STEM Advanced Credential?

- A-43. National Institute for STEM education details can be found on their [website](#).

Q-44. National Board Certification expires after 5 years. Does the STEM certification expire? If they both expire, do I have to go through the whole certification again to be qualified to be in the TEAMS program?**

- A-44. We are aware that the NBCT certification must be renewed, but they have their own process for renewal. Once you complete your renewal, you would remain qualified for the TEAMS program. We are unaware of STEM certification renewal details. Please visit <https://nise.institute/> for more information.

Q-45. Are there advantages to NBCT over the NISE STEM advanced credential?**

- A-45. There is no NISE STEM scholarship available through the state, but there is a possible NBCT scholarship in pursuit of the NBCT. Also, there are no additional stipends on top of this new math/science schedule when one obtains a NISE STEM advanced credential. Those who obtain NBCT receive an independent NCBT stipend on top of this new salary schedule—see the NBCT stipend [memo](#).

Professional Development

Q-46. What are the details on the four days of professional development requirement?

- A-46. Teachers on this plan are required to be employed on 189-day contracts, and at least four of the nine professional development days must be approved by the State Department of Education. The Department may publish pre-approved PD options in the future. TEAMS teachers will have nine (9) days of PD, and four (4) of them must be SDE approved.

Retirement and Tenure

Q-47. I am a current teacher. What happens to my tenure if I apply for a TEAMS position?

- A-47. A participating teacher voluntarily relinquishes continuing service (i.e. “tenure”) status under the Students First Act. Years of service in TEAMS do not count toward earning tenure under the Students First Act.

Any teacher who has attained continuing service status with his or her local board, and elects participation in the program under the same local board, shall be deemed to have voluntarily relinquished his or her status and protections under the Students First Act. The only exception is any teacher who has attained continuing service status with his or her local board as of June 30, 2021, and elects participation in the program under the same local board and maintains adequate progress toward the advanced contract qualifications, but fails to obtain the credential or certification shall have one-time reversion rights to the previous service status at the end of his or her preliminary contract period(s).

Q-48. Do years on the TEAMS plan count toward my retirement?

- A-48. Years of teaching on the TEAMS plan would count toward retirement, but any specific retirement questions should be directed to the Retirement Systems of Alabama. Each teacher on the TEAMS plan, is properly placed on the TEAMS salary schedule according to degree earned and years of public education service, either in-state or out-of-state.

Q-49. What if I am close to retirement, can I still qualify for a contract?

- A-49. Generally, any otherwise eligible teacher may qualify for preliminary one-year contract(s) while obtaining a necessary advanced credential. Each individual contract must include a provision to ensure adequate progress toward the advanced contract qualifications, to include benchmark advancement during the teacher’s preliminary contract period. The [Model Contract](#) provides the required “adequate progress” benchmarks and spell out the penalties and/or recourse for failing to maintain progress toward the advanced credential.

Once a teacher obtains the advanced credential, he or she may qualify for advanced contract(s) for up to a period of up to three years.

However, teachers with more than 20 years of service who hold an advanced credential qualify to be offered an advanced contract for a period of 5 years.

Q-50. Are current retirees eligible to come out of retirement to be a TEAMS teacher? If so, is there a different process they would follow? I understand that they would have to submit paperwork to TRS to stop retirement. I am trying to get an understanding on the TEAMS contract side. Do they get to count their previous years of service, contract length, etc.?**

A-50. Years of teaching on the TEAMS plan would count toward retirement, but any specific retirement questions should be directed to the Retirement Systems of Alabama. Each teacher on the TEAMS plan, is properly placed on the TEAMS salary schedule according to degree earned and years of public education service, either in-state or out-of-state.

Funding**

Q-51. What if I am already receiving the NBCT stipend currently?

A-51. Subject to annual verification, you will can receive the NBCT stipend in addition to the new TEAMS salary matrix.

Q-52. Will a teacher that is on a preliminary contract while working on advanced certification for the three-to-six-year period receive the TEAMS supplement during those preliminary contract years or will they only receive it when advanced certification is achieved?

A-52. The TEAMS pay scale and hard-to-staff supplement is for all eligible teachers on a preliminary or advanced contract.

Q-53. Does out of state experience count on the teams pay scale?

A-53. Yes, each participating teacher shall be properly placed on the TEAMS salary schedule according to degree earned and years of public education service, either in-state or out-of-state.

Q-54. Do the TEAMS act teachers count as foundation units for schools or are they in addition to? I was thinking I had read in the bill language or one of the summaries that these teachers would not count in the foundation units for schools?

A-54. Act 2021-340 provides the department shall allocate “the appropriate incremental TEAMS salary increases net of the State Minimum Salary Schedule” on a monthly basis. Essentially, the TEAMS fund in the treasury will pay the difference between the TEAMS Salary schedule and Regular Salary Schedule. The Act does not add additional teacher units or make any changes to the foundation program (school funding mechanism).

Q-55. Will we as the district receive notification that a TEAMS application has been approved? How will districts receive funding?

A-55. There is no technical “ALSDE pre-approval” of a contract. There is however, review or monitoring of TEAMS contracts (See Section 22 of the [model contract](#)). Once each district has hired/executed TEAMS contracts, they will be required to submit certain data to the ALSDE as their request for TEAMS funding. In accordance with the Act, the “department shall allocate funding to local boards...the appropriate incremental TEAMS salary increases net of the State Minimum Salary Schedule and the hard-to-staff supplement on a monthly basis.”

Q-56. At what point will a district begin receiving funding for said teacher?

A-56. Districts will receive TEAMS funding as contracts are executed and they submit the request to ALSDE.

Q-57. Which masters level and above will get paid on the TEAMS schedule?

A-57. If a current teacher was already approved for masters or higher pay on the Regular Teacher Salary Schedule, ALSDE will provide funding for the comparable salary cell under the TEAMS schedule. All verification of higher degree (VHD) forms and processing of such will remain the same. Although a local district may choose to pay at a higher rate, only those higher degrees recognized by ALSDE certification section will equate to what TEAMS funding the district will receive.

For additional questions regarding the TEAMS plan please email TEAMS@alsde.edu.