

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Could you please clarify the reasoning behind the Alternative Compensation Plan?

Our District has frozen experience step raises for the past four years due to a lack of funding. In the past months we have had a number of employees that have come to us asking to be paid more based on other job offers or simply because a brand new teacher is making as much or more than they are.

We believe this is the perfect opportunity to create a salary schedule based on what we value. After studying other alternative compensation schedules we decided that we would base our compensation plan on opportunities that would create a strong learning community. Such as: Professionalism, community service, professional development, and creating opportunities for kids.

We believe that this is better than the existing plan of getting raises simply because you exist, or being frozen on your steps of experience. This is an alternative because you are showing your value to the district and community and are getting rewarded with pay.

2. I am currently working on a 1 credit graduate course to get to MA+12. If I get this class done before June 4, will I still move over in the salary column? Will this fall under the current salary advancement?

Yes - Salary increase due to graduate credit will impact placement on new Teacher Alternative Compensation (TAC) scale.

3. Will there still be a cost of living raise in addition to the \$500 teachers will earn for being effective or distinguished?

At this time, no. This may need to be adjusted as the starting salary becomes non-competitive with area districts.

4. Will there still be lane changes when teachers earn a Master's Degree?

No, you will earn a one time stipend of \$1500 upon completion of the degree. There is only one lane.

5. Does everything have to be pre-approved?

If it is not on the list for community outreach and you have checked the examples, then look at the xs. Check the column labeled pre-approval required on the [points sheet](#).

6. With the current points system I was issued one credit. This one credit doesn't move me anywhere. Will it carry over to the new points, and I would have 20 points?

Yes.

7. The duration of unpaid child rearing leave is explained as follows:  
Child born or adopted during the summer vacation – the following two semesters.  
Child born or adopted during the first semester – the balance of that semester plus the second semester.  
Child born or adopted during the second semester – the balance of that semester plus the first semester the following year.

Would a teacher be able to report points while on leave?

Points can be earned during a leave that does not exceed 12 weeks in a school year.  
Leaves exceeding 12 weeks will be addressed on an individual basis by the district administrator.

If they elected to take two semesters of leave, would that year count towards the minimum count of three years before they qualify towards the \$2000?

Any leave beyond 12 weeks will need to be discussed on an individual basis. This will depend on length of leave, unpaid vs paid time, or sabbatical.

8. Would participation in a local youth group program with our students qualify for community service or do community service events need to be void of religious affiliation?

Community Outreach does not need to be void of religious affiliation. However, pre-approval is necessary for all non-listed activity.

9. I have been asked to conduct training outside the district, Would this activity be available for points even if I am paid by the other party?

No.

10. Which category would chaperoning a middle school dance fall under?

This would fall under the category of Community Outreach - supervisor of non-stipend activity.

11. What about unpaid extracurricular duties and clubs? Like Art Club and Key

Club? They are uncompensated is there a different point amount for these?

This would fall under the category of Community Outreach - supervisor of non-stipend activity.

12. Is there a maximum amount that we will reach on this pay scale? It use to be MA +30 and 15 years maxed out. Will we still be eligible for pay advancements.  
Right now, there is a ceiling of 63,500. The board will determine the TAC scale. The example scale attached to the presentation is just an example not the official TAC scale. This is the [official TAC scale](#).
13. In order to foster truly open and honest questions, can this form be recreated to allow questions to be submitted anonymously?  
It was decided to attach names to questions, so that specific follow up could be provided on a very specific basis.
14. What if you only have 6 years left to work before retirement?  
The TAC scale and expectations apply until you retire.
15. I don't understand the special licensure, what happens if you already have a special education license?  
If this is an additional license to your teaching assignment, you could earn points.
16. Am I correct, this means we have about 66 hours to work extra per year if we spread the time out equally per 6 years?  
No, this is incorrect. Everyone's points and hours will look different. Please see the [attached example](#). You must earn a minimum of 280 points outside of license renewal within the 6 years.
17. What does the column "Salary w/correct exp" mean on the salary schedule?  
The column labeled "salary w/ correct exp" is the salary which takes into account the frozen years. This is moving to the location where staff should be had they not been frozen.
18. A point looks like it is equivalent to about an hours time. Am I correct?  
No. Please see attached [point document](#).
19. I got a \$56.00 raise after 4 years of waiting. Makes me sad.  
In addition to rounding to the nearest \$000, or \$500 you will also be placed where you

should be with your years of experience . Therefore, the first year, you should earn more.

20. After you reach the points, does the \$2000 raise include the \$500 that we get every year or is that in addition to the \$500? So, would we actually get \$2500 when we reach the points?

No, the \$2000 raise includes the \$500 - therefore, you will earn \$2000 total.

21. Similar to my last question...let's say I have credits "floating out there" between lanes. Will there be points given for those already completed credits?

Yes.

22. What will cost of living increases look like?

There will not be additional cost of living increases. Effective teachers will receive a \$500 raise each year.

23. I understand that with the "Alternative Compensation Plan" we have a choice in what activities we complete in order to meet the minimum requirement set by the committee. However, we truly do not have a choice in whether we participate in this plan or not. According to Merriam Webster, the definition of alternative is...offering or expressing a choice. From my teaching experience, teachers are supposed to make education autonomous for the kids; give choices, allow choices; let them make their own choices. Where is the autonomy in this plan? Why can't the teachers have a choice in whether or not they participate?

In order to be able to forecast a budget, there can only be one plan. This plan allows the district to forecast the budget. This plan gives autonomy since you control when you receive the bump and what activities you complete to earn that bump. The TAC scale and expectations apply to all district teachers.

24. In addition, any true teaching professional isn't in this profession for the money. We're in it for the kids. And unfortunately it is slowly spiraling out of control and it's no longer about the kids. I understand that this "Alternative Compensation Plan" is trying to show us that the School Board values us, but a good teacher will always be a good teacher no matter what. They will volunteer for school related things; they will build relationships with students/parents in the community; they will participate in community events; and they will do things for the community. They will do this without being asked. In turn, these individuals will fill out the "Alternative Compensation Plan" whether it is required or not because they know it will help them move up the pay scale slowly. I don't think it has to be a requirement. Therefore, I think teachers should have a choice of whether or not they participate in the plan.

(A bad teacher will always be a bad teacher no matter what "plans" our district implements.)

This is not a question.

25. Also, do we really want teachers taking on roles/positions they don't really want? How is that going to create a positive climate if they don't want to be there? Students will not benefit from disgruntled teachers being forced to take on responsibilities that they are not passionate about.

Elective points are not required, therefore, no one is being forced to take on a role or position they do not want.

26. We all took a hit with our salary a few years ago, I have sacrificed some things in my life to continue to live a quality life. I have invested my money and cut back on spending due to the pay freeze. Once again teachers aren't in this profession for the money. Some of us have invested well so that we may spend the additional time with our families, and some of us have taken on second jobs to support our families. Now, you are asking teachers who choose to be family oriented and who support their families with a second job to put their families on the back burner.

I am especially concerned about those with the second job; they are sacrificing minimum wage or more at a second job in order to earn points to move up the pay scale very slowly. Will the compensation they are receiving from the school be of equal value to that of a second paying job?

We do not know what staff members make at a second job.

27. Have we taken into consideration that some people can't commit to extra-curricular appointments because of family, distance they live away from school, and a second job?

No one is being appointed any extra-curricular activities.

28. How will this plan boost teacher morale?

The purpose of this plan is not to boost teacher morale. The plan is designed to improve student achievement which should lead to higher teacher morale. This plan will monetarily reward staff for participating in activities valued by the school district.

29. How will this plan help strengthen teacher collaboration among the professionals in our district?

In the professional development category, higher point totals are given for sharing knowledge through professional collaboration.

30. How many years will it take to get to the top dollar of \$53,000?

The top of the schedule is currently slated at \$63,500. If you start in the district as a brand new teacher, it is possible to reach the top of the scale in 30 years.

31. Once you reach the Master Educator on PI34 you don't renew your license for 10 years. There is a 6 year education requirement of 120 points in this plan. How do you get these points? (120 in six years or you are frozen) Are these people being penalized?

If you hold the Master Teacher level of licensure, you will be given 120 points every 5 years for credit of license held (in instances of a 10 year renewal)

32. Please explain why it is fair to award points for one service provided with compensation in deference to another service that is compensated but can't receive points?

Some positions can not receive points because they are compensated for what they do hourly. Some positions are compensated with a salary and staff are expected to put in the necessary hours for a successful program.

33. If it takes 35 years to make it to the top of this schedule, how many current teachers would have stayed long enough in Wautoma to make it to the top of the proposed salary schedule?

We don't know.

34. Why isn't there a difference in pay between effective and distinguished? What is the incentive to attain a distinguished designation?

If you are distinguished, you will already be doing many more things in terms of professional growth, and professionalism. These teachers will achieve more points, and therefore, there is a monetary incentive.

35. Will requirements change with a change in Administrative leadership or a change in school board composition or philosophy?

The plan will be reviewed annually.

36. A graduate credit costs on average \$400. If I get 20 points toward a \$2000 bump, in 5 credits I exhaust the value of the earnings increase? What is the incentive to take graduate credits?

License renewal is not dependent on credits, but it is one of the options. All teachers also have the option to renew their license via PDP.

37. What was the philosophy behind reducing points already earned by to 1/6 of their value?

The current point system was inflated compared to the new point scale. Therefore, to set an equal scale, the math came to  $\frac{1}{6}$ .

38. Why does this salary schedule devalue the experienced teacher who is near retirement? They do not have the opportunity to earn the \$2000 bump unless they stay 4-7 more years?

You still receive the \$500 raise for effectiveness. The TAC scale is applied equally to all teachers.

39. How does this compensation plan encourage teachers new to the district to stay in this district concerning the amount of extra hours required to get the salary bump? (Example: \$2000 salary schedule increase divided by 400 hour point requirement = \$5.00 per point/ hour.)

Many of the point opportunities are being completed currently with no increases in pay. It is 400 points, not hours. The example given in the question is incorrect.

40. With the possibility of new board members being elected just prior to the plan being voted on why is there a sense of urgency to take action on this proposal? Wouldn't it be better to slow down to make sure it is what is intended?

We need to plan financially for the 2015/2016 school year, regardless of who is on the board.

41. I prepare to present at a conference. I go to the conference and at the last minute there is a snowstorm and I don't get the minimum required to attend my session. Do I still get credit for my preparation?

The minimum session requirement (3 people) is only for in district presentations.

42. For those of us who work as foster parents for our county, is there a way to earn points for doing that? (Since it is directly related to helping and improving our community)

Since they receive compensation for this service, the foster parents would not be eligible for points.

43. How does a Team Leader position fit into the point system?

Department heads and team leaders would be considered year long extracurricular appointments.

44. How will additional responsibilities such as team leader be compensated?

Department heads and team leaders would be considered year long extracurricular appointments.



45. Can points be earned by serving on an IEP team (as a regular ed rep or translator) during either contracted or non-contracted time?

Currently, the plan states that IEP participants outside of contract time is worth 1 point per hour (up to 10 hours).

46. Can points be earned by translating for Spanish-speaking parents during either contracted or non-contracted time? (i.e. parent-teacher conferences, parent meetings, 8th grade scheduling conferences, etc.)

Yes. One point per hour (up to 10 hours).

47. If a person chose the 3-year "track" and completed the requirements, would they receive two pay increases (2 x \$2000) over the 6 year period?

Yes. You can earn a pay increase after each 3-year "track".

48. Will individuals have constant access to their "point tracking spreadsheets?"

Yes

49. If teachers are receiving points for attending PTO meetings how will that affect the voucher system in place paying teachers for parents and themselves attending PTO meetings? (I know voucher systems are currently in place at Riverview and Redgranite.)

Yes, you may submit for points. Voucher systems are provided by the PTO for classroom supplies.

50. Does the 12.75 extra PD hours requirement go away?

Yes - it is now part of the plan expectations. The 12.75 hour requirement goes away, since teachers are expected to earn points in the professional development and district initiatives (curriculum) categories.

51. Does the cost of living raise go away or is it replaced by the \$500 tied to the Teacher Effectiveness Score

Yes, the cost of living raise goes away, and is replaced by the \$500 tied to effectiveness.

52. Which leads to: Remember when we were first introduced to Teacher Effectiveness and every Administrator and CESA employees said, “Oh, Don’t worry, this won’t impact your salary at all.” Just saying....This goes right along with, “This is the definitive program we’re using and you’ll never have to learn another one again.” Please stop making the assurances to people. It’s deflating. This is not a question.

53. The required professional development hours total 120 in 6 years. That comes to 20 hours a year over six years. This is a marked increased from the 7.25 that has been required in the past. How was the amount of new required hours were determined?

When earning PD hours outside of contracted time, you will earn 2 points/hour. 120 points/6 years = 20 points Which equals 10 hours per year. You will also earn additional 1 point/hour for all PD done during contracted time.

PD during contracted time (does not count - PLC, inservice, staff meeting)	1	Per Hour
PD outside of contracted time	2	Per Hour

54. I currently have 18 credits and am set to get 6 more in the next few years. I would have then been able to move up on the old pay scale. I accumulated those 18 credits over the last 15 years. Is there any compensation for those credits?

Yes. Each credit that is not currently being used in your salary placement, will be compensated at the rate of 20 points per credit.

5/1/2015 Clarification

Up to 6 credits that were not used to compensate a person on the old scale, can be applied to the further education section. However, past credits must be submitted by July 1, 2015.

55. Is this taking the place of the 12.75 hours, or do we not get credit towards this new plan until those 12.75 hours have been earned?

The 12.75 requirement will become part of this plan.

56. I am wondering if points should be offered for teachers who earn or are awarded grants? I realize sometimes there is extra compensation offered for extra time put into working on grant related initiatives and it would not be fair to also earn points - however, often times the normal daily workload is greatly increased during a grant period and or sometimes there isn't extra compensation offered to those working on the grant - should this be something to add?

This is listed in the elective category. You will earn up to 10 hours of points.

57. Is everything on the table to consider paying for this plan including Health Savings Accounts, current retirement language, elimination of credit reimbursement, etc.?

This is the board's decision, but yes, everything is on the table. The recommendation by this committee to the board will be to not impact the health savings accounts or current retirement language. Credit reimbursement and the innovation grant will be used to help fund this account.

58. Will all new hires be placed on the first step of the schedule?

New hires will be placed according to experience when possible.

59. What happens to points that are left over after the bump?

Points will carry over within their same category. However, you will not be able to "bump" for another 3 years.

60. What about covering someone during your prep (in-house sub)? Payment or points?

This would still be covered as an hourly payment.

61. Is the top of the scale comparable to other districts in our area? Is this going to keep people around or bring them here?

We are currently #1 in starting salary and #2 in the max category in our conference.

62. I heard from many that if you calculate the cost of credits, and the district won't be helping pay for those, it really seems cheap /rip off to only get 2000 in 6 years when you spent 4000

This is not a question.



63. Will people who live outside of the district be able to get the community outreach points?

All staff members will be expected to have 30 community outreach points in 6 years within communities in our district. There are options to fulfill the community outreach points:

Supervisor of non-stipend activity (1 hour, up to 10 hours) nonpaid tutoring after school or lunch hour	1		Per Hour up to Ten Hours per year
Community Outreach (preapproval needed for nonlisted activities and no more than 20 points can be accumulated each year, must be in district communities) non-paid	5		1-5 hour event
	10		6-12 hour event
	15		13-20 hour event

64. After 4yrs of waiting, what is our actual increase in salary?

Everyone is different. Everyone will be placed on the TAC equitably.

65. I'm not as concerned about people who have resigned from the district and taken a position elsewhere, but what about our loyal employees who have retired in the last four years who were also frozen? (This potentially affected their retirement benefits if those final years were their 3 highest-paid years and retirement benefits are now set.) Will they also at least receive "back pay" as well?

This plan to give people "back pay" is only in effect for people who are employed by the district in the 2015-2016 school year.

66. Since compensation doesn't start until after 3 years into this as I understood it, what if someone resigns or retires within the next 3 years? Will they receive anything for the points they have accumulated?

No. In order to receive compensation for the points accumulated, staff would need to be working in the district the year following the completion of point requirements.

67. How much is a “bump”?

The “bump” is \$1500. You would still receive the \$500 raise for effectiveness - therefore, you will earn \$2000 total.

68. What if you fail to have enough points in the six years? Will the ones you have accumulated continue into the following year, or do you automatically start from scratch every six years?

Staff who fail to reach the point requirements in six years will be placed on an improvement plan. Part of that plan will be a timeline for completion of points. Upon completion of points, the teacher would receive the “bump”. The points that are accumulated at the six year mark do not go away.

69. What if I have enough points total, but am short from a particular area? Do I still get the "bump"

No. In order to receive the “bump” staff need to earn all required points, including the minimums in each category.

70. I just renewed my license this past year. It is good for 5 years. I plan to retire within that time. Will I get points for my license renewal? If not - how do I get those points to get my bump?

No. A staff member who has renewed their license prior to the 15-16 school year, will not receive retro-active points. In the next 5 years, you would need to take additional credits or complete a PDP to earn the bump.

Additional Information: In the old pay scale, a staff member would not receive any credit movement in the last 5 years before retirement, if no additional credits were taken. Therefore, this is not any different than the previous scale.

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