

# School District of Altoona's Compensation Model

*"Education is not the filling of the pail, but the lighting of the fire."*

*William Butler Yeats*

## Overview:

The focus of the new compensation model is on professional growth that helps educators improve their performance to increase student learning. The School District of Altoona Professional Educator Compensation Model ("Model") is designed to:

- Be fair, transparent, and easily understood
- Align with (but not based on) Educator Effectiveness
- Encourage teamwork and collaboration rather than individual competition
- Be based on Professional Planning Goals, not Student Learning Objectives (though it is assumed that PPG's will be primarily created to improve SLO's)
- Encourage creative and innovative ways of teaching to increase student learning
- Be objective and measureable

It is well known that the most significant impact on successful student learning is the classroom professional educator. Therefore, the School District of Altoona believes that it is essential to reward and invest in our exceptional educators. The District aims to retain and attract these high-quality professional educators for every classroom. Some major methods of accomplishing this include:

- Providing opportunities for continued professional development.
- Maintaining a practice of compensation for professional educators that is competitive with benchmark districts.
- Providing a fair, progressive avenue for salary increases related to professional growth and leadership.
- Rewarding exceptional practice in the form of optional premium compensation.

- Maintaining a District culture that is positive and collaborative.

## **Background:**

Since the 1970s, salaries for teachers were formally bargained per state law. Under the former state law, increases to total teacher salary and benefit compensation needed to reach the Qualified Economic Offer (QEO) which was set at 3.8%. The QEO did not include advancement on the lanes. Therefore, aggregate total teacher compensation often rose higher than 3.8% annually when lanes were considered.

In 2011, changes were made to state law. This is also known as Act 10:

- Prohibits collectively bargaining with respect to any condition of employment except wages, which includes only total base wages and excludes any other compensation, such as premium pay, bonus pay, pay schedules, and automatic pay progressions.
- Prohibits bargaining over a percentage of a total base wage increase greater than the percentage change in the consumer price index (CPI).

In addition to the Act 10 change in state law, the previous compensation model was economically unsustainable. Salaries and benefits make up approximately 73% of our District budget. To cover wage increases in excess of 3.8%, with revenue increases of 1 to 2%, the District would either need to make annual budget adjustments or quickly become insolvent.

So, the District is in need of a new compensation model based on the legal and economic facts that:

- 1) Collective bargaining over the pay schedule (and any increase beyond CPI) is prohibited; and
- 2) The District can no longer sustain the old compensation system

## Compensation Team:

In January of 2014, the Altoona Board of Education authorized the organization of a committee to develop a professional educator compensation structure. This compensation team consists of:

Robin Elvig, School Board	Connie Biedron, Superintendent	Mike Markgren, Business Manager	Alan McCutchen, Director of Special Education	Jeff Pepowski, High School Principal
Todd Lenz, High school	Karsten Powell, High school	Greg Emerson, Middle School	Kim Wardean, Middle School	Jennifer Bain, Intermediate School
Tammy Van Blarcom, Elementary School	Bonita Norberg, Elementary School	Shelly Pierson, Library Media Center Director		

Work sessions were held in February, March, April, and May of 2014. During this period of time, team members updated their colleagues in all-staff meetings about the work that had been progressing regarding the compensation model. Feedback from staff was brought back to the committee and was carefully considered.

In May, the team made a decision to table the compensation plan for the summer. The primary reason was due to “unknowns”, such as Educator Effectiveness and the outcome of the District referendum.

Work sessions began again in 2015 after the passage of the referendum. Some changes had occurred that enhanced the progress of the work sessions:

- A staff survey had been sent to all staff regarding a new compensation plan.
- Feedback was gathered and themes were identified.
- Additional information was known about Educator Effectiveness. Compensation is not based on (but aligned with) Educator Effectiveness.
- An increased number of school districts within the state had created new compensation plans. This allowed the committee to review compensation plans and choose several that aligned with the goals of our district.

## Recommended Compensation Model

The professional educator has influence over increasing his or her compensation via two different methods:

- 1) Movement on the Professional Career Pathway (increases base wage) through completion of any combination of: Completed PPG, 3 Approved Premiums, Successful PDP, Completed Master’s Degree, Positive Summary Year Evaluation.
- 2) Bonus does not increase base wage, (Leadership Team, Building Significantly Exceeding Expectations on Report Card).

Base Increments	
Completed PPG	\$ 500
3 Approved Premiums	\$ 500
Successful PDP	\$ 500
Completed Master’s Degree	\$ 1,000
Positive Evaluation	\$ 500
National Board Certification	\$ 500
Movement To The Next Career Stage	\$ 1,000

Bonus	
Building Report Card Significantly Exceeds	\$ 500
Leadership Team	\$ 1,000

Premiums
Leadership Team/PLC Team Leader
Approved Committees
Lead Professional Development
Athletic/Co-Curricular Coach
Summer Curriculum Work (minimum 10 hours)
PBIS Leadership
Educator Effectiveness Coach
Approved Accredited Course (2 or more credits)
Writing a Successful Grant/Donation of \$500 or more

## **Professional Career Pathway**

The Career Pathway provides educators with options and flexibility to manage their professional career in Altoona. This rubric is a systematic, coordinated approach to recognizing and Stage 1 effective educators as they progress through various career stages. Though experience and degree attainment are no longer direct indicators of increased salary, they contribute to progression along the Career Pathway.

There are five progressive Career Stages, symbolized by defined growth within an educator's sphere of influence. The progressive Career Stages are "Stage 1", "Stage 2", "Stage 3", "Stage 4", and "Stage 5". Each Career Stage has a salary range.

Movement on the Career Pathway is based upon an educator's consistent and active engagement in professional learning, the creation and implementation of an approved high-quality PPG, and evidence that the educator has applied that professional learning to their instructional practice to improve student learning.

## Levels

Each Career Stage contains Levels. An educator can move to the next Level based on successful implementation of his or her PPG (in the non-evaluation years). This movement of Levels can occur as often as annually. During the summative evaluation years, movement to the next Level is based on both successful implementation of the PPG as well as a positive evaluation.

An educator can advance to the next Career Stage when he or she has progressed through each of the Levels of the previous Career Stage. This advancement to the next Career Stage can only occur with the every-3-year summative evaluation.

### EXAMPLE OF LEVELS & CAREER STAGES

	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
<b>Level 1</b>	Starting Salary-New Educator				
<b>Level 2</b>	Salary Increase				
<b>Level 3</b>	Salary Increase				
<b>Level 4</b>	Salary Increase				
<b>Level 5</b>	Salary Increase				
	<i>Move to next Career Stage after Summative Evaluation with successful PPG, PDP, and indicators of this Career Stage have been met</i>				

## **Brief Descriptions of Career Stages:**

### **1) Stage 1 – Growth related to self as an educator**

These are usually initial educators, likely within their first 1 to 5 years of teaching. The primary focus is on classroom instruction: how best to connect with students and what teaching methods are most effective in order to increase student learning.

### **2) Stage 2 – Growth related to skills in collaboration, such as within PLC's**

These are educators that likely have 4 to 10 years of experience. They have solid instructional practices that have proven to positively affect student learning. Their focus has gone from "Self" to "Team" with shared decision making. They are gaining skills in collaboration and leadership.

### **3) Stage 3 – Growth related to Leadership within the School**

These are likely educators with 8 to 15 years of experience. They have evidence of ongoing formal education such as toward District-approved certifications or master's degrees. They have influence beyond grade-level peers and PLC's. Their positive influence and leadership has spread to many educators within the school building. This is a coach, mentor, Department chair, or grade-level leader.

### **4) Stage 4 – Growth related to Leadership within the District**

These are likely educators with 10-plus years of experience, have a District-approved master's degree and/or additional certifications. They have a positive influence on their variety of students and play a leadership role at the District level through prominent committee work. This may include Teaching and Learning Specialists, those with National Board Certification, etc.

### **5) Stage 5 – Growth related to Leadership beyond the District, such as the region or state**

These educators likely have approximately 15-plus years of experience. They may hold multiple advanced degrees or certifications. They are passionate about reaching each and every student, their role as an educator, and about continued professional growth. They are leaders that extend their knowledge and expertise throughout the region or state through associations, conference presentations, grant writing, etc.

Career Stage Indicators:

	<b>Stage 1:</b>  <b>Growth related to Self as Educator</b>	<b>Stage 2:</b>  <b>Growth related to Collaboration/PLC's</b>	<b>Stage 3:</b>  <b>Growth related to Leadership/Influence within School</b>	<b>Stage 4:</b>  <b>Growth related to Leadership/Influence within District</b>	<b>Stage 5:</b>  <b>Growth related to Leadership/Influence within District and beyond</b>
<b>Education</b>	Bachelor's Degree	Level 1 education plus:  Evidence of ongoing professional learning to include District-approved coursework or conferences and workshops	Level 2 education plus:  Evidence of continued formal learning (enrolled in a District-approved Master's Degree program or Licensure program)	Level 3 education plus:  Evidence of completion of formal professional learning (District-approved Master's Degree or certificate/licensure completion)	Level 4 education plus:  Evidence of ongoing formal professional learning (additional District-approved Master's Degree, licensure/certification.  Board Certification or other professional certification likely
<b>Professional Learning</b>	Evidence of:  Participation in and practice applied related to new teacher orientation.	Evidence of:  Stage 2 a personal capability and understanding that supports the development and implementation of	Evidence of:  Being a key contributor and supporter of the development and implementation of innovative practices	Evidence of:  Being a key leader and supporter in the development and implementation of innovative practice beyond their classroom	Evidence of:  Significant engagement in leadership, mentoring, research, innovation, and District innovation



	<p>Participation in and practice applied related to professional development related to new curricula.</p> <p>Engagement in other learning that is aligned to District initiatives.</p>	<p>creative, innovative practices</p> <p>The learning and support of a purposeful approach to decisions relative to creation and innovation</p> <p>Engagement in other learning aligned with District initiatives</p>	<p>Contribution and support to a purposeful approach to decisions relative to innovation</p> <p>Engagement in consistent learning aligned to District initiatives</p>	<p>(such as to the team or department)</p> <p>Leading and supporting purposeful approaches to decisions relative to innovation</p> <p>Engagement in considerable learning aligned with District initiatives</p>	<p>Leading and supporting the development and implementation of innovative practices beyond their team or department (such as to the District, region, or state)</p> <p>Leading and supporting the purposeful approaches to decisions relative to innovation and its impact is data-supported. Innovation is clearly and strongly aligned to District goals and regional/state trends</p> <p>Engagement in extensive learning aligned with District initiatives.</p>
<p><b>Continuous Improvement</b></p>	<p>Understands and supports school mission and goals.</p> <p>Acquires an understanding of</p>	<p>Develops and supports classroom mission aligned to school mission and goals, and connects the mission with the</p>	<p>Engages in the achievement of the school mission and goals by influencing action planning and implementing determined strategies at</p>	<p>Helps lead the school's continuous improvement efforts at the PLC level both within the school and across the District.</p>	<p>Leads in the achievement of the school and District mission and goals by influencing action planning and implementing determined strategies. Substantial professional influence</p>

	<p>the instructional data team process.</p> <p>Understands and administers SLO's.</p>	<p>work of the students.</p> <p>Engages with and actively contributes to team level continuous improvement process. Works with students to set classroom and individual goals based on class and student needs. Students provide input in action planning to meet their goals.</p> <p>Actively engages in the instructional data team process with PLC's. Implements planned strategies at the classroom level that are predominantly teacher-directed.</p>	<p>the PLC and building level.</p> <p>Engages with and actively contributes to team level continuous improvement process. Works with students to set classroom and individual goals based on class and student needs. Students provide input in action planning to meet their goals. Leads team data literacy efforts.</p> <p>Actively engages in the instructional data team process with PLC's. Shares and supports continuous improvement practices including goals and planning of strategies at the classroom level with students.</p>	<p>Effectively applies and leads school, team, and classroom level student-led continuous improvement processes. Students set learning goals based on individual needs, establish their action plans, and chart and monitor their own progress.</p> <p>Actively engages in the instructional data team process with PLC's. Students apply continuous improvement practices including goals and planning of strategies at the classroom level to support their learning.</p>	<p>may extend beyond the building or District to the region or state level.</p> <p>Demonstrates initiative and innovation in the use of continuous improvement processes to improve quality of performance in new or unique situations. Leads and implements processes beyond the building or District to the region or state level.</p> <p>Actively engages in the instructional data team process and student improvement practices with PLC's. Leads and implements the processes at the school, District and/or regional level. Students apply continuous improvement practices including goals and planning of strategies at the classroom level to support their learning.</p>
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<p><b>Leadership and Collaboration</b></p>	<p>Works cooperatively and collegially with colleagues.</p> <p>Seeks and accepts guidance and mentoring from others.</p>	<p>Participates and contributes to team goals.</p> <p>Supports colleagues that are newer to the District.</p> <p>Shows evidence of collaboration at grade level or department.</p>	<p>Contributes informal leadership and influence at a team level.</p> <p>Supports and formally mentors colleagues that are newer to the District.</p> <p>May seek out or explore additional special school-level projects or task force opportunities.</p> <p>Participates in collaborative partnerships with professional colleagues and/or community entities.</p>	<p>Has increasing responsibility in teams, including formal leader.</p> <p>Consistently serves as a resource or mentor for colleagues.</p> <p>May lead school, grade level and/or department teams or additional special school-level projects or task force opportunities.</p> <p>Seeks and contributes to collaborative partnerships with professional colleagues and/or in the community.</p> <p>Actively seeks to grow as a leader through improved professional practice (via professional development, professional reading, further training, etc.)</p>	<p>Leads team and District initiatives.</p> <p>Provides leadership to the curriculum renewal and design process.</p> <p>Viewed as a key resource by peers and supervisors.</p> <p>Leads collaborative efforts at the school, District, and regional level.</p>
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## Premiums

Included on the Career Pathway, is the opportunity for an educator to earn an increase in base wage that we'll call "Premiums". This is for educators that seek out learning opportunities independently for professional growth. These experiences are not required by the District. These learning experiences often occur outside of the school day. ALL OF THESE EXPERIENCES ARE VOLUNTARY. All professional learning opportunities that are eligible for premiums are aligned to the major goals and initiatives of the District.

Premiums increase the base wage. An educator can earn premiums by sharing their successful professional learning with a wider audience and/or by serving in a leadership position.

Examples of Premiums include:

- Member of the Leadership Team and/or PLC Team Leader
- Member of approved committees (Insurance, Alternative Compensation, etc)
- PBIS Leadership
- Educator Effectiveness Coach
- Procurement of a single Successful Grant of \$500 or more
- Recipient of a Donation for subject area of \$500 or more
- Summer Curriculum work (minimum of 10 hours)
- Lead Professional Development
- Successful completion of an approved, accredited Course of 2 Credits or more
- Athletic or co-curricular Coach/Advisor

## **Bonus**

A one-time bonus of \$500 will be paid to each educator within a school building that receives a “Significantly Exceeds Expectations” on that school’s Wisconsin DPI Report Card. The School Report Card results are determined by the Department of Public Instruction annually in October, and are based upon prior year data. In order for an educator to qualify for this bonus, the following criteria must be met:

- Certified Staff must be employed by the School District of Altoona at the time the bonus will be paid out (the autumn following the previous school year)
- Staff that did not work 100% in the qualifying building the prior year will have their bonus prorated based upon their contract percentage in that building

An annual bonus of \$1,000 will be paid for serving on a building Leadership Team.

## **How will the Compensation Model be Economically Sustainable?**

One of the stated goals for the Compensation Model is that it be a sustaining business model. At the core of any sustainable business model is flexibility: flexibility for the District to adapt while maintaining necessary resources within the classroom.

Each year, the Board of Education will determine the aggregate amount of money available for Professional Educator salary increases. This amount will be based upon multiple budgetary factors including:

- State of Wisconsin’s Biennial Budget
- Resident Pupil Count
- Consumer Price Index (CPI)
- The number of educators who will be progressing to the next Level and the Career Stage
- The number of educators that will be eligible for Premium Pay

## **Annual review of Compensation Model**

An annual review of this framework will be conducted by the Compensation Committee to determine its impact and functionality. This review will consider:

- Sustainability: Can the current pay structure and benefits package be financially sustained for the next three years?
- Relevance: Does the framework still represent district values?
- Outcomes: Has there been a positive influence on student achievement? Are our best professional educators being appropriately rewarded? Has this framework helped the District retain and attract high quality educators?

## **Appeal Process**

The appeals process will be as follows:

- Appeal to your direct supervisor. The staff member would be allowed to bring in more evidence if deemed necessary.
- If the staff member is still unsatisfied, it would be brought to the Superintendent.