

**Arkansas Department of Education**  
**Rules Governing Incentives for Teacher Recruitment and Retention in High**  
**Priority Districts with an Average Daily Membership of 1,000 or Fewer**  
**July 2005 August 2007**

**1.00 Regulatory Authority**

- 1.01 These rules shall be known as the Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing Incentives for Teacher Recruitment and Retention in High Priority Districts.
- 1.02 These rules are enacted pursuant to the Arkansas State Board of Education's authority under Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-11-105, 6-17-811, 25-25-201 et seq. and Act 1044 of 2007.

**2.00 Purpose**

The purpose of this rule is to establish the procedures to provide incentives for teacher recruitment and retention in high priority districts.

**3.00 Definitions**

Unless otherwise specifically stated herein, the term:

- ~~3.01 Bonus Pay Period – Means the three-year period in which an eligible employee receives a signing or a retention bonus.~~
- 3.01 Department - Means the Arkansas Department of Education.
- 3.02 High Priority District - Means a public school district of ~~one thousand (1000) or fewer students~~ in which eighty percent (80%) or more of public school students are eligible for the free or reduced-price lunch program under the National School Lunch Act based on the October 1 student count of the previous year submitted to the Department of Education and have had a three-quarter average daily membership in the previous year of one thousand (1,000) or fewer students. ~~for the 2003-2004 school year.~~
- 3.03 New Teacher Bonus – Means an incentive bonus provided under Sections 4.01.1 through 4.01.3 of these rules to a teacher that is within the first three (3) years of employment with a single high priority district.
- 3.04 Previous year - Means the school year immediately preceding the current school year.

- 3.05 ~~Retention Bonus - Means beginning in the 2004-2005 school year a one time \$2,000 bonus paid per year for three consecutive years to certified teachers employed by a high priority district during the school year, and who were employed at the high priority district during the previous school year and who have not received or are currently receiving a signing bonus, pursuant to these rules, from the school district. an incentive bonus of two-thousand dollars (\$2,000) to be paid to a teacher who has received a new teacher bonus and enters his or her fourth or subsequent year of service in the same or other high- priority school district or for a teacher employed in a high-priority district who does not meet the requirements of Sections 4.01.1 through 4.01.3 of these rules.~~

~~Signing Bonus - Means beginning in the 2004-2005 school year, a one time \$4,000 bonus awarded to a teacher not employed by a high priority district for the previous school year, who signs a new contract to teach in a high priority district for the current school year and who has not received a prior signing or retention bonus, pursuant to these rules, from the school district.~~

- 3.06 ~~Teacher - Means those certified personnel~~ a licensed classroom teacher who spends seventy percent (70%) of their his or her time working directly with students in a classroom setting teaching all grade-level or subject- matter appropriate classes, including guidance counselors and librarians.

#### **4.00 Incentives**

- 4.01 ~~Beginning in the 2004-2005 school year, a certified teacher~~ 2007-2008 school year, and each school year thereafter, a teacher licensed by the State Board of Education and teaching in a high-priority district shall receive incentive pay. who enters into a teaching contract and who completes the entire current school year teaching in a high-priority district shall, at the end of the school year and upon completion of his or her contracted teaching obligations, be entitled to receive, in addition to all other contracted salary and benefits:

4.01.1 A newly hired teacher who has not previously taught in a high-priority district, a one (1) time signing bonus of four thousand dollars (\$4,000) for the first year of service in the district to be paid upon completion of the full year of teaching.

4.01.2 A newly hired teacher who meets the requirements of Section 4.01.1 of these rules, who continues to teach in the

same high-priority district and who completes the second full year of contracted teaching obligations, a new teacher bonus in the amount of three thousand dollars (\$3,000).

4.01.3 A teacher who meets the requirements of Sections 4.01.1 and 4.01.2 of these rules, who continues to teach in the same high- priority district and who completes the third full year of contracted teaching obligations, a new teacher bonus in the amount of three thousand dollars (\$3,000).

4.0.1.4 A teacher who meets the requirements of Sections 4.01.1 through 4.01.3 of these rules, who enters the fourth or subsequent year of service with the same high-priority district or begins employment with a high-priority district other than the high-priority district where he or she was employed when he or she received any bonuses pursuant to Sections 4.01.1 through 4.01.3 above shall receive a retention bonus in the amount of two thousand dollars (\$2,000) for the fourth and each subsequent complete year of service in the high-priority district to be paid at the end of the school year after completing all contractual obligations

4.01.5 A teacher employed in a high priority district who does not meet the requirements of Sections 4.01.1 through 4.01.3 of these rules, shall receive a retention bonus in the amount of two thousand dollars (\$2,000) for each complete year of service in the high-priority district to be paid at the end of the school year after completing all contractual obligations.

4.02 The Superintendent of the high-priority district where the teacher is employed shall certify in writing to the Department that the teacher has completed all contractual obligations for the school year. The Superintendent shall submit such certification information for applicable teachers to the Department no more than twenty-one (21) calendar days after the end of the high-priority district's school year.

~~Beginning in the 2004-2005 school year teachers who sign their initial contract with a high priority district shall receive a one-time signing bonus of \$4,000 at the beginning of the school year.~~

4.02.1 ~~For each of the next two years, that teacher referred to in Section 4.02 shall receive a \$3,000 bonus at the beginning of the school year while still employed at the same high priority district.~~

- 4.03 No teacher is entitled to any incentives outlined in Section 4.01 above unless the teacher has fulfilled all contractual obligations for the current school year.
- ~~4.02.2 If the teacher has received bonus pay under Section 4.02 of this rule and voluntarily leaves the high priority district before the end of the three-year bonus pay period, the teacher shall pay back the amount of the bonus received in the previous year.~~
- ~~4.02.3 If the teacher voluntarily leaves the high priority district during the school year, the teacher shall pay back the previous year's bonus and the current year's bonus.~~
- ~~4.02.4 If a teacher has received a signing new teacher bonus, and the teacher is reassigned involuntarily to a position that is not eligible for signing a new teacher bonus pay or that teacher is dismissed involuntarily by a high priority district, the teacher shall not be required to repay the applicable signing new teacher bonus.~~
- ~~4.02.5 If a teacher qualified to receive a signing new teacher bonus leaves the high priority district due to a serious medical emergency, the teacher shall not be required to repay the signing new teacher bonus provided documentation from a licensed physician validating the need to terminate employment due to medical reasons is filed with the district.~~
- 4.03 Beginning in 2004-2005-2007-2008, all currently employed certified licensed teachers who have been employed by the high priority district in the previous school year and who are not receiving a signing a new teacher bonus, shall be eligible to receive a \$2,000 retention bonus at the beginning of each of the next two subsequent school years end of the school year for each subsequent school year as long as the teacher continues to be employed by the high priority district.
- ~~4.03.1 If a currently employed teacher receives a retention bonus under Section 4.03 of this rule and then voluntarily leaves the high priority district before the end of the bonus pay period, the teacher shall pay back the amount of the retention bonus received in the previous year.~~

~~4.03.2 If a teacher has received a retention bonus and that teacher is reassigned involuntarily to a position that is not eligible for retention bonus pay or a teacher is dismissed involuntarily by a high priority district, the teacher shall not be required to repay the applicable retention bonus pay.~~

~~4.03.3 If a teacher qualified to receive retention bonus pay leaves the high priority district due to a serious medical emergency, the teacher shall not be required to repay the retention bonus provided documentation from a licensed physician validating the need to terminate employment due to medical reasons is filed with the district.~~

~~4.04 No teacher may receive both a signing bonus and a retention bonus in the same year.~~

4.04 Any bonus pay awarded to an eligible, full time equivalent teacher who does not work the entire school year shall be pro-rated based on the portion of the school year that the eligible teacher was employed by the high- priority district.

## 5.0 Documentation

5.01 Beginning in ~~2004-2005~~ 2007-2008, the Department shall issue by September 1 of each year a list of the high priority districts in which eighty percent (80%) or more of the public school students are eligible for ~~free and reduced price meals~~ the free or reduced-price lunch program under the National School Lunch Act and that had a three-quarter average daily membership in the previous year of one thousand (1,000) or fewer students.

5.02 Beginning in ~~2004-2005~~ 2007-2008, the Free and Reduced Price Meal calculation shall be based on the list of eligible students in a district as verified by the Child Nutrition Unit of the Department based on the October 1 list of eligibles for grades K-12 for the previous school year.

5.03 The determination of eligibility for high priority district designation in annexed or consolidated districts is made based on the ~~combining~~ combination of the enrollment, average daily membership and free and reduced price meal calculations for the two or more districts that were annexed or consolidated.

5.04 Beginning in ~~2004-2005~~ 2007-2008, high priority districts shall notify the Department on forms provided by the Department, and identify all eligible teachers employed at the high priority district for

the current school year. The district shall list teachers who were not employed by the high priority district during the previous school year and teachers employed the previous school year who continue to be employed for the current school year.

- 5.05 Upon receipt of the form from each high priority district and the written certification from the Superintendent required by Section 4.02 of these rules, the Department shall distribute the funds to the districts who will distribute the appropriate bonuses to the teachers employed by the high priority districts.
- 5.06 Districts will be responsible for the payment of all matching benefit payments.

#### **6.00 Sanctions Monitoring of Program**

- 6.01 It shall be the responsibility of ~~each the~~ high- priority district to monitor the incentive bonus distribution in their district and provide data to the Arkansas Department of Education.
- 6.02 The Arkansas Department of Education's Teacher Recruitment and Retention Unit will collect the data and monitor the total program for the state.
- ~~6.02 If a teacher receiving either a signing new teacher bonus or a retention bonus voluntarily leaves the high priority district before the end of the three-year bonus pay period or if the teacher voluntarily leaves the high priority district during the school year, the district shall require the teacher to pay back the appropriate bonus amount.~~
- ~~6.03 Upon receipt of the bonus payback from the teacher, the district shall forward the payment(s) to the Finance Section at the Department.~~