

Highly Needed Educator Salary Supplement - DFE

[Note that Utah Code § 53F-2-504(2) requires each LEA to create a policy for administration of the Highly Needed Educators program which identifies the high-need areas, determines the amount of the supplement, establishes the qualification process, and establishes an appeal process for a teacher who is determined not to qualify. The statute also requires that the LEA update the policy annually and provide notice to teachers. This model policy provides a framework for the required policy but will require completion by each district. The statute takes effect beginning on July 1, 2025.]

Definitions

In this policy:

1. “High-needs area” means a teaching assignment that has been designated by the Board of Education as challenging for the District to fill or to retain educators in, based on data related to teacher shortage areas, high-demand subject areas, and schools facing significant challenges related to student performance or socio-economic factors.. ~~The District’s high-needs areas for the current school year and the amount of supplement for each area are as listed in Exhibit A of this Policy.~~

The Board will identify between two and five high-needs areas annually and publish the updated list at the start of the academic year with the opening of the application period.

Examples may include, but are not limited to:

- Computer Science
 - Computer Information Technology
 - Integrated Science
 - Chemistry
 - Physics
 - Physical Science
 - General Science
 - Secondary Mathematics
 - Special Education
 - Title 1
2. “Qualifying assignment” means an assignment to a high-needs area or which is substantially equivalent to such an assignment.
 3. “Eligible teacher” means a teacher who has a qualifying assignment, has satisfied the requirements of this Policy to demonstrate assignment to a high-needs area and a qualifying teaching background, and is either a new employee of the District or has not received any unsatisfactory ratings on the teacher’s three most recent evaluations.

[Utah Code § 53F-2-504\(1\) \(2024\)](#)

Amount of the Salary Supplement

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The Board will determine the supplement amount annually at the start of each fiscal year, based on available state funding and guidelines from the Utah State Board of Education. The supplement amount will be:

1. A fixed percentage of state-allocated funds, to be determined annually.
2. Paid to eligible teachers once over the academic year.
3. Subject to the District's established budget and the availability of state funding allocated for this program

The District will provide each eligible teacher with a written breakdown of the supplement amount and any conditions attached to the award.

Determining Eligibility for Salary Supplement

To be eligible for the salary supplement, a teacher must apply each year, and be employed by the start of the second semester, for the year in which the teacher applies for the supplement, through the end of the school year.

To determine if a teacher is eligible for the Salary Supplement for Highly Needed Educators, the educator must submit an application for the salary supplement by October 1 of the year for which the educator receives the salary supplement.

Upon receipt of applications, the following process shall be used:

1. Verification of eligibility
 - a. The District will verify that the teacher holds a full-time, permanent position in the District, and is assigned one of the identified high-needs areas or meets the criteria for a substantially equivalent assignment for at least part of the school day.
 - b. Verification will include a review of the teacher's employment records, including their specific teaching assignments and the subject areas or grade levels taught.
2. Qualification Review
 - a. Teachers must be fully licensed in the relevant area(s) of instruction or provide appropriate documentation if they hold alternative licensure or endorsements in high-needs fields.
 - b. The District will review the teacher's qualifications, including certification status, degrees held, and any additional credentials that support the teacher's eligibility for the supplement.

Certification of Eligibility

Once eligible teachers are identified, the District will:

1. Compile a List of Eligible Teachers who meet the eligibility requirements for the supplement based on their assignment and qualifications. HR department will certify that the list is accurate and complete.
2. Award Notification
 - a. After certification, but no later than thirty days following the application deadline, eligible teachers will be notified that they will or will not be

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receiving an award. The eligible teachers will be informed of the amount of the supplement following exhaustion of all appeals.

- b. The District will ensure that the salary supplement is included in the teacher's pay on the June payroll cycle following certification.
3. Monitoring and Accountability
 - a. The District will track the distribution of salary supplements to ensure equitable districtwide distribution and to comply with reporting requirements from the Utah State Board of Education.
 - b. Teachers who become ineligible during the academic year due to assignment changes, licensure issues, or other reasons will be notified, and the salary supplement will be discontinued as appropriate.

~~To demonstrate eligibility for the salary supplement, the teacher shall submit documentation showing that the teacher:~~

- ~~1. Is assigned to one or more of the high-needs areas designated by the Board of Education for the school year or that the teacher's assignment is substantially equivalent to a designated high-needs area;~~
- ~~2. Has a qualifying teaching background for the high-needs area, as shown by education transcripts or other documentation; and~~
- ~~3. Is either a new employee of the District or has not had any unsatisfactory ratings on the teacher's three most recent evaluations.~~

[Utah Code § 53F-2-504\(1\)\(a\), \(2\)\(a\)\(iii\)\(B\) \(2024\)](#)

~~The documentation must be submitted by **October 1, 2025**. The Superintendent or designee shall review the documentation provided by the teacher seeking the salary supplement and determine if the requirements have been satisfied, including verifying the teacher's teaching background. The Superintendent or designee shall promptly inform the teacher of the determination. Once all timely requests have been evaluated, the Superintendent or designee shall certify a list of the teachers who are eligible for the salary supplement.~~

[Utah Code § 53F-2-504\(2\)\(a\)\(iv\), \(v\) \(2024\)](#)

Appeal of Application Denial

Teachers who believe they have been wrongly excluded from receiving the salary supplement may appeal the decision.

1. An appeal must be submitted in writing to the Human Resources Director within five calendar days of the denial of their application.
2. The appeal must explain the basis of the appeal and include any relevant documentation, including:
 - a. Official transcripts and/or proof of qualifications;
 - b. Assignment description, including courses taught;
 - c. Any evidence of equivalency to a high-needs area;
 - d. Any other supporting documentation.
3. Review Process

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- a. Appeals will be reviewed by a Board SHiNE committee consisting of two Board members (or designees) and three district-level directors.
- b. The committee will evaluate the appeal and issue a written decision within 15 calendar days of receipt.
- c. The decision of the Board SHiNE committee is final for that academic year.

~~A teacher whose application for the salary supplement has been denied may appeal that determination to the Board of Education. The appeal shall be in writing and submitted within 30 days of the notice that the application has been denied. The appeal shall explain why the teacher asserts the denial was incorrect (including as applicable why the teacher's assignment is substantially equivalent to a high-needs area) and shall include any appropriate supporting documentation. The Board of Education shall evaluate the appeal in a closed meeting of the Board and determine if the denial was erroneous and notify the teacher and administration of the determination and the grounds for the determination.~~

[Utah Code § 53F-2-504\(2\)\(a\)\(iii\) \(2024\)](#)

Nature of the Salary Supplement

The salary supplement is considered part of the teacher's base pay, subject to the teacher's continuing qualification as an eligible teacher each year, semester, or quarter (as applicable). The amount of the supplement the teacher receives shall be the amount of the supplement established by the Board of Education plus the amount of any employer-paid benefits that the teacher would be entitled to for a corresponding increase in salary.

[Utah Code § 53F-2-504\(4\), \(5\) \(2024\)](#)