

HANDOUT 3

Merit Teacher Incentive Fund

2023-2024

Jacob Oliva, Secretary, Arkansas Department of Education (ADE)
Karli Saracini, Assistant Commissioner, Office of Educator Effectiveness and Licensure, Division of
Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), ADE



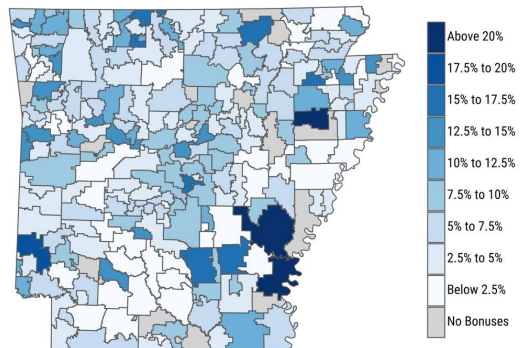
Fast Facts



2023-2024

- Merit Pay Incentive Fund= 10 million (fringe paid out of NBCT leftover)
- DESE used administrative data to identify all eligible recipients
- ≈ 3,000 teachers receiving bonuses (almost 10% of Arkansas teachers)
- Over 500 teachers receiving >\$5,000
- Over 40 teachers receiving \$10,000
- Average bonus ≈ \$3,300

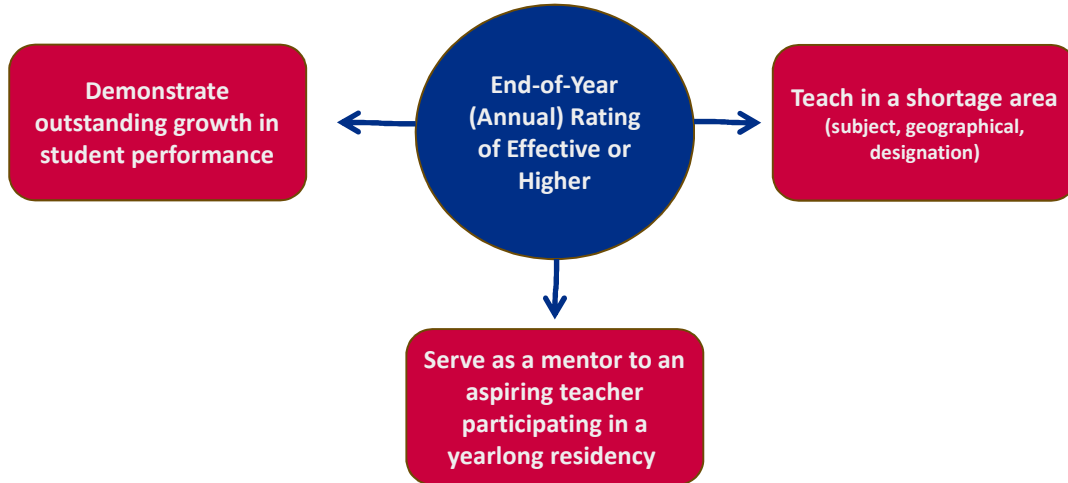
Percentage of Teachers Receiving a Bonus - 5/30



Eligibility Categories



ALL licensed classroom teachers, library media specialists, and school counselors can meet eligibility requirements for at least one category!



Eligibility Categories



Definitions and Exclusions

- Teacher means a:
 - Licensed classroom teacher who spends at least 70% of his or her contracted time working directly with students in a classroom setting teaching all grade-level or subject-matter appropriate classes;
 - School Counselor;
 - Library media specialist;
 - Aspiring teacher employed under an Aspiring Teacher Permit
 - **Districts will confirm all recipients meet the definition of teacher before funds are distributed.**
- Must have an effective or higher annual rating in DESE Educator Effectiveness System
- If a teacher has an average growth score based on three years of data (2021, 2022, 2023) that is showing students are not meeting expected growth (<80), they are not eligible.

Demonstrate outstanding growth in student performance



Who receives this bonus?

Teachers with a growth score for the 2020-21, 2021-22, and 2022-23 school years are considered for outstanding growth merit incentives.

- Teachers with a three-year average student growth score across all subjects in the top 5% of all teachers statewide (up to \$10,000)
- Teachers with a three-year average student growth score in the same tested subject area (ELA, Math, Sci) that is in the top 25% of all teachers in that subject area statewide (\$3,000).
 - Students not meeting reading/numeracy standards can be assigned to these ELA and math teachers (LEARNS Act).

Serve as a mentor to a yearlong resident



Who receives this bonus?

- Evidence of mentoring a yearlong resident submitted by Educator Preparation Program
- Minimum 3 years of teaching experience
- Lead or Master Professional Educator Designation on Arkansas Standard License
- Completion of DESE recognized coaching training
- Effective or Highly Effective rating in DESE Educator Effectiveness System
- Potentially 2,000 mentors will be needed when the yearlong residency becomes a requirement in the 2026-27 school year

Teach in a Shortage Area



Who receives this incentive category?

- **Teachers in a subject area experiencing a critical shortage.**
 - Computer Science, Foreign Language, Secondary Math, Secondary Science, Special Education
- **Teachers in a geographic shortage area.**
 - Arkansas River ESC, Great Rivers ESC, Pulaski Co. Schools, Southeast ESC, Southwest ESC, and **other districts identified as high need** based on unlicensed teacher and attrition data.
- **Teachers holding a Lead or Master Professional Educator licensure designation.**
 - Currently, around 1,300 individuals hold these designations. These designations are needed to:
 - Mentor yearlong residents (approx. 2,000 needed by 2026-27)
 - Students not meeting readiness standards in Math and/or ELA can be placed with a Master Professional Educator

These teachers must demonstrate a positive impact on student growth by:

- Having a 3yr average growth score showing students on average are meeting expected growth (>=80); **OR**
- Receiving an annual rating of “Highly Effective”

Criteria	Amount	Number Receiving
Top 0.5% 3-Year Average Student Growth Score Across Subjects	\$10,000	35
Top 1% 3-Year Average Student Growth Score Across Subjects	\$9,000	35
Top 5% 3-Year Average Student Growth Score Across Subjects	\$6,000	271
Top 25% 3-Year Average Student Growth Score in ELA or Math	\$3,000	746
Top 25% 3-Year Average Student Growth Score in Science	\$3,000	226
Subject Shortage Area	\$2,500	1,103
Geographic Shortage Area	\$1,500	960
Lead or Master Designation Shortage Area	\$1,500	296
Mentor for a Yearlong Resident	\$3,000	2
Total Number Receiving Any Bonus (individuals can receive bonuses under multiple criteria)		2,988

Distribution Map: <http://dese.link/Merit2024>



Next Steps



- Finalize and send Commissioner's Memo by **Tuesday, June 4**
- Distribute merit incentive lists for districts to verify and complete assurances by **Friday, June 7**
- Districts complete verification and assurances and return to DESE by **Friday, June 14**
- Merit Pay Incentives distributed to districts by **Friday, June 21**