



TEACHER INCENTIVE FUND

RECOGNIZING AND REWARDING OUR BEST TEACHERS

June 2007

"We know that nothing helps a child learn as much as a great teacher. And we must start rewarding teachers who get great results."

-- Secretary Margaret Spellings

Good teachers are the key to improving student achievement. The *No Child Left Behind Act* calls for schools to show academic improvement each year. It also calls for a highly qualified teacher in every classroom so that every student can achieve at grade level or better in reading and math by 2014. As a result, the share of classes taught by a highly qualified teacher has risen to more than 91 percent.

Unfortunately, many schools suffer from a lack of qualified educators, especially those in high-poverty areas. Studies show that half the math teachers in high-poverty middle and high schools did not major or minor in the subjects they teach. Partly as a result, only half of African American and Hispanic students graduate on time. And a recent study found that half of the nation's dropouts are produced by just 15 percent of our high schools.

Teachers who improve student achievement in challenging circumstances deserve to be rewarded. That is why President Bush proposed and signed into law the Teacher Incentive Fund. The Fund provides support to school districts that provide financial incentives for teachers and principals in high-need schools who have succeeded at raising student achievement levels. Consideration is also given to educators who take on additional responsibilities and receive strong individual performance evaluations.

FUNDING AND PURPOSE OF TEACHER INCENTIVE FUND

The U.S. Department of Education's \$99 million Teacher Incentive Fund supports grants and other activities that help selected schools and districts recognize and reward good teachers in high-poverty schools that do a great job for their students, schools and nation. As Secretary Spellings said, "If we expect results for every child, we must support teachers who are getting the job done in America's toughest classrooms."

A total of 34 grantees have received funding under TIF to align school and district efforts to recruit and reward teachers with the goals of the *No Child Left Behind Act*.

The Fund is designed to:

- Enable **teachers and principals to be more effective** at improving student achievement toward meeting Adequate Yearly Progress goals;
- Reform compensation systems to **reward teachers and principals** for improvements in student achievement;
- **Increase the number** of dedicated and effective teachers in high-poverty classrooms who teach disadvantaged and minority students in hard-to-staff subjects; and
- Create sustainable, **performance-based** compensation systems.

The grantees were selected based on the awardees' proposals to design new teacher compensation systems that would:

- provide educators in high-need schools with differentiated levels of compensation based on student achievement gains;
- provide educators with incentives to take on additional responsibilities and leadership roles; and
- rigorously evaluate teacher performance multiple times during the school year.

OTHER SUPPORT FOR TEACHERS

President Bush has made support for teachers a national priority. In addition to the President's support for a \$100 million increase in funding for the Teacher Incentive Fund, his budget supports the following:

- **Teacher Quality**—the President's FY 2008 budget includes nearly \$4.4 billion to help states meet NCLB teacher quality requirements, and to help ensure that all teachers are effective. In addition, school districts are required to use at least five percent of their Title I funds to support highly qualified teachers in every classroom.
- **Students With Disabilities**— the President's FY 2008 budget includes \$10.5 billion for the Special Education Grants to States Program, a 66 percent increase over 2001 funding levels. On October 5, 2006, Secretary Spellings announced the awarding of \$11.6 million in grants to help train specialists and ensure qualified teachers for students with disabilities.
- **Reading First Program**—to help children learn to read by grade three, more than 100,000 teachers have been trained in proven, scientifically-based instructional methods, benefiting more than 1.8 million students. Since taking office, President Bush has increased federal support for proven reading methods by 300 percent.
- **Advanced Placement / International Baccalaureate [AP-IB] Incentive Program**—the President's FY 2007 budget proposes \$122 million to train 70,000 additional teachers to lead AP-IB math, science and critical-need foreign language courses over the next five years.
- **Adjunct Teacher Corps**—the FY 2007 budget proposes \$25 million to encourage 30,000 qualified math, science, engineering, and technology professionals to share their knowledge as adjunct high school teachers.
- **Teacher Loan Forgiveness**—working with Congress, the President made permanent up to \$17,500 in student loan forgiveness for highly qualified math and science teachers who choose to work in high-poverty communities and classrooms.
- **Teacher-to-Teacher Initiative**—this initiative has enabled more than 300,000 teachers learn and share effective strategies for raising student achievement. All 50 states and the District of Columbia grant professional development credit for participation in the Teacher-to-Teacher program.
- **Classroom Discipline**—the No Child Left Behind Act ensures that teachers, principals, and school administrators may take reasonable steps to maintain order and discipline in the classroom without fear of lawsuits.