

The Iowa Plan For Teacher Quality

In the face of escalating teacher retirements, increasing shortages of teachers in critical areas and a very high loss of new teachers in their first three years, Iowa must become a more attractive place to teach. Not only must teacher pay become more competitive, but we must also provide professional support for teachers so that they can make a bigger difference for young people in Iowa than in any other state.

As we work to help the best teachers in our nation become even better, we must also help every school and every school district focus on student performance and financially reward the staff in schools where students make the progress that will better insure that our students succeed.

Necessary Steps:

Iowa must establish a multi-year implementation plan including a dedicated funding stream to improve support for teacher compensation and teacher quality. This plan must clearly delineate both state and local responsibilities. Some general responsibilities are mentioned below. More specific detail can be found in the attached *Outline*.

State Responsibilities

District Responsibilities

	State Responsibilities	District Responsibilities
<i>Career Path</i>	1. The state of Iowa must establish an overall framework for compensation that creates a Career Path that responds to the needs of beginning teachers, mid-career teachers, and advanced teachers who are willing to accept leadership responsibilities.	Participating districts must agree to adopt the Career Path framework including the target salary levels and requisite teacher support program for teachers at each level. The district may determine salary steps between levels.
<i>Competitive Salary Targets</i>	2. The state must establish competitive salary target levels for teachers at each of these three career levels. The state must also establish a dedicated funding stream to support district efforts to meet these salary targets.	Participating districts must agree to adopt the minimum salary framework and to raise initial district minimum salary levels by at least 5% per year until the target levels are met or exceeded. Initial minimum salary levels for Beginning teachers and for Career Teacher must be established in year one with the initial minimum salary level for Advanced teachers established by year four. Depending on the schedule of state funding, districts must add additional teacher contract days in order to provide access to continuing education.

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<i>Induction Programs</i>	3. The state must establish the general specifications for the induction program to be offered to teachers during their first two years and also establish a review process to approve induction plans offered by districts. The state will provide \$1,200 for each teacher served by the district's approved induction program.	Participating districts must provide a two-year induction program for all beginning teachers. The district induction program should address both state specifications and local educational program needs. The program plan must be approved by the state. Qualified mentors will receive a stipend of at least \$500 per semester.
<i>Evaluation criteria, process, and training</i>	4. The state must establish core evaluation criteria used to determine entry into the Career and the Advanced levels. The state will also establish general assessment procedures for determining that the criteria has been met and will also establish specifications for the training of assessors. During the initial two years of implementation, the state will provide \$1,000 reimbursement to the district for	The district will adopt the core evaluation criteria and general procedures and will also establish more specific criteria and procedures. All assessors will be trained according to the state specifications.

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	each assessor who successfully completes training.	
<i>Continuing education</i>	5. The state must determine specifications for the Career Development Program with experiences available to all Career and Advanced teachers.	By year two, districts will provide for an approved continuing education program for Career teachers.
<i>Variable Pay</i>	6. The state will establish specifications for districts to offer variable pay plans and will also provide models and other assistance to districts to support the development of these plans	By year four, districts will have variable pay plans in place with at least one school.
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