



We Teach
Alabama

ALABAMA STATE DEPARTMENT *of* EDUCATION

TEAMS

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Alabama launches historic Teacher Excellence and Accountability for Mathematics and Science (TEAMS) Act

Ambitious legislation, signed into law by Governor Kay Ivey, offers enhanced pay structure to attract math and science teachers from across the Southeast

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (May 11, 2021) — With the stroke of a pen at the Alabama State Capitol, Governor Kay Ivey on Thursday, May 6, signed into law the Teacher Excellence and Accountability for Mathematics and Science (TEAMS) Act, legislation designed to fill each and every Alabama school with credentialed math and science teachers in grades 6-12. Under this law, highly qualified middle and high school math and science teachers could earn up to an additional \$20,000 annually.

“The quality of education in this state, particularly in rural, hard-to-staff areas, has to be solved to properly prepare our children for their futures in an ever-increasing STEM-based economy,” said Governor Ivey, who is herself a former teacher. “With TEAMS, we are placing emphasis on attracting both in-state and regional teachers in key subjects to move the needle in Alabama school systems.”

State Superintendent of Education and former middle school science teacher Dr. Eric G. Mackey said TEAMS will prove to be a powerful recruitment tool beyond state lines.

“With the focus on a technology-based economy for the future of Alabama, this new pay scale provides a unique recruiting opportunity for Alabama’s schools,” said Mackey. “Here in Alabama, middle and high school math and science teachers can potentially earn a salary that surpasses any grade 6-12 teacher salary in the Southeast.”

Each district may employ one TEAMS math and one TEAMS science teacher for every 105 students in grades 6-12 — equating to roughly 7,000 teachers statewide. Prospective teachers can apply to their district for a TEAMS position if they:

- Hold a valid Alabama professional educator certificate or alternate certificate in middle level math or science OR secondary math, science or computer science;
- Teach full-time approved math and/or science courses in grades 6-12 with the appropriate certificate endorsements; and
- Currently hold or plan to obtain an Advanced Credential from either the National Institute for STEM Education or National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) Certification in math or science.

If the eligible teacher does not hold, but is planning to obtain the specified Advanced Credentials, the teacher is eligible to apply for a one-year Preliminary Teams Contract that is renewable for a limited time to obtain the advanced credentials.

An annual supplement of \$5,000 will be paid to those teaching in Alabama State Department of Education-identified hard-to-staff schools, and teachers on the TEAMS pay remain eligible for already existing state National Board Certified Teachers stipends.

Both House and Senate sponsors and supporters herald TEAMS as a step in the right direction for Alabama's future and its ability to train an ever-evolving, technology-forward workforce.

"The TEAMS Act is an aggressive and innovative investment to attract and reward highly credentialed math and science teachers in public schools," Rep. Alan Baker (R-Brewton) said.

"Alabama is working towards evolving itself as a more capable 21st Century state with a STEM-trained workforce set up for success at jobs of the future," Rep. Bill Poole (R-Tuscaloosa) said. "We are committed to ensuring we find teachers to properly train our children, no matter where they are geographically or economically – and we are working aggressively to make that happen."

"In Alabama, our state takes a lot of pride in being No. 1 in college football, yet we have settled far too long with at or near the bottom in math and science scores," said Sen. Donnie Chesteen (R-Geneva). "The TEAMS Act will not only allow Alabama to attract more math and science teachers and enroll current teachers into the TEAMS program, but also to prepare our state to remain competitive in the recruitment of STEM jobs. I look forward to seeing the positive improvements this will provide students in the future."

Those interested in Alabama's Teacher Excellence and Accountability for Mathematics and Science (TEAMS) Program can learn more about applying at weteachalabama.com/teams.

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TEAMS

Teacher Excellence and Accountability for Mathematics and Science

Determining Eligibility of TEAMS Teacher Positions

Start

Does the teacher hold a valid Alabama professional educator certificate or alternate certificate in middle level math or science OR secondary math, science or computer science

AND

teach [full-time] approved math and/or science courses in grades 6-12 with the appropriate certificate endorsements?

y

THEN
the teacher is eligible to apply for a TEAMS contract with the local superintendent. To determine the type of contract, please proceed below.

n

Next

Does the teacher currently hold or plan to obtain an Advanced Credential from either the National Institute for STEM Education or National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) Certification in math or science?

y

IF
the teacher currently holds Advanced Credentials,
THEN
the teacher is eligible for an **ADVANCED TEAMS** contract for a period up to three years.

IF

the teacher does not currently hold, but is planning to obtain Advanced Credentials,

THEN

the teacher is eligible to apply for a one-year **PRELIMINARY TEAMS** contract that is renewable from three to six years.

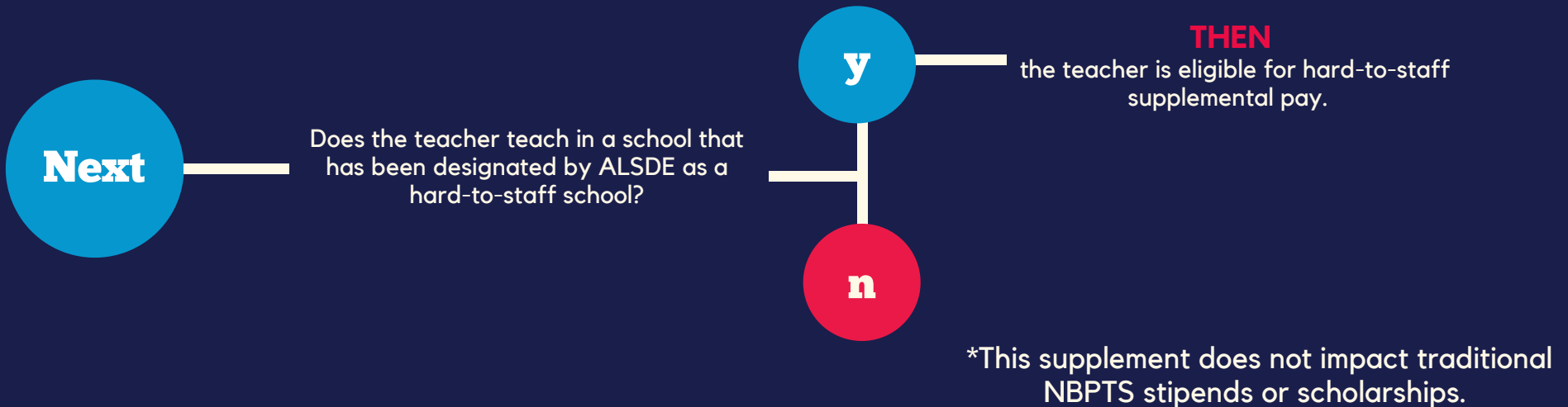
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TEAMS

Teacher Excellence and Accountability for Mathematics and Science

Determining Eligibility of TEAMS Teacher Positions



Employment Terms

- Participating teachers will be on contract for 189 days.
- A teacher who has attained continuing service status with his or her local education agency (LEA), and elects participation in the program under the same LEA, shall be deemed to have voluntarily relinquished his or her status and protections under the Students First Act. Any teacher who has attained continuing service status can revert to previous service status, if they do not pass their advanced credentials test.
- First contract would be PRELIMINARY one-year, unless the teacher already has one of the specialized credentials—then the teacher can obtain an ADVANCED three-year contract immediately. PRELIMINARY contracts must have provision to ensure a teacher's adequate progress to ADVANCED contract qualification.
- Teachers with over 20 years of service have to agree to participation for a term of at least five years.
- Subject to limited waivers, a participating teacher shall only qualify for PRELIMINARY contracts for his or her maximum three- or six-year period.
- At end of PRELIMINARY or ADVANCED contract, the LEA may:
 - Offer the participating teacher a new, ADVANCED three-year contract;
 - Terminate the teacher's employment by not nonrenewing or approving a new contract; or
 - Reemploy the teacher in any position outside of the program.
- LEA may cancel contract for any reason, and pay salary and benefits for remainder of contract.
- LEA may cancel contract for cause, and teacher could request hearing and appeal from said hearing would be to hearing officer through department.



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Frequently Asked Questions

General Questions

Q. Is this a pay bonus, or a completely new salary scale?

A. The Education Trust Fund budget outlines a separate, increased salary schedule for the TEAMS plan. The matrix below illustrates the TEAMS salary increase by year of service and education level, plus the hard-to-staff supplement for TEAMS teachers that are hired by local education agencies. TEAMS teachers must hold a valid Alabama professional educator certificate or alternate certificate in middle level math or science OR secondary math, science or computer science AND teach [full-time] approved math and/or science courses in grades 6-12 with the appropriate certificate endorsements.

State Salary Matrix - FY22 Math and Science - 189 Day Contract					Math & Science Matrix 189 Days Over (Under) Regular Teacher Matrix 187 Days					Hard to Staff School Supplement
Yrs	Bachelor	Master	AA/EDS	Doctor	Yrs	Bachelor	Master	AA/EDS	Doctor	
0	\$ 46,690	\$ 52,941	\$ 56,695	\$ 60,446	0	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000
1	\$ 49,982	\$ 57,479	\$ 61,977	\$ 66,479	1	\$ 8,292	\$ 9,538	\$ 10,282	\$ 11,033	\$ 5,000
2	\$ 52,652	\$ 60,547	\$ 65,304	\$ 70,025	2	\$ 10,962	\$ 12,606	\$ 13,609	\$ 14,579	\$ 5,000
3	\$ 54,192	\$ 62,320	\$ 67,215	\$ 72,075	3	\$ 8,337	\$ 9,587	\$ 10,355	\$ 11,085	\$ 5,000
4	\$ 55,774	\$ 64,139	\$ 69,177	\$ 74,179	4	\$ 9,919	\$ 11,406	\$ 12,317	\$ 13,189	\$ 5,000
5	\$ 57,397	\$ 66,006	\$ 71,190	\$ 76,338	5	\$ 11,542	\$ 13,273	\$ 14,330	\$ 15,348	\$ 5,000
6	\$ 59,063	\$ 67,921	\$ 73,258	\$ 78,554	6	\$ 11,198	\$ 12,878	\$ 13,891	\$ 14,895	\$ 5,000
7	\$ 60,773	\$ 69,889	\$ 75,378	\$ 80,828	7	\$ 12,908	\$ 14,846	\$ 16,011	\$ 17,169	\$ 5,000
8	\$ 61,988	\$ 71,285	\$ 76,886	\$ 82,445	8	\$ 14,123	\$ 16,242	\$ 17,519	\$ 18,786	\$ 5,000
9	\$ 63,228	\$ 72,712	\$ 78,423	\$ 84,094	9	\$ 14,406	\$ 16,568	\$ 17,869	\$ 19,162	\$ 5,000
10	\$ 64,176	\$ 73,803	\$ 79,599	\$ 85,355	10	\$ 15,354	\$ 17,659	\$ 19,045	\$ 20,423	\$ 5,000
11	\$ 65,139	\$ 74,910	\$ 80,793	\$ 86,635	11	\$ 16,317	\$ 18,766	\$ 20,239	\$ 21,703	\$ 5,000
12	\$ 66,116	\$ 76,034	\$ 82,005	\$ 87,935	12	\$ 16,318	\$ 18,767	\$ 20,240	\$ 21,704	\$ 5,000
13	\$ 66,116	\$ 76,034	\$ 82,005	\$ 87,935	13	\$ 16,318	\$ 18,767	\$ 20,240	\$ 21,704	\$ 5,000
14	\$ 66,116	\$ 76,034	\$ 82,005	\$ 87,935	14	\$ 16,318	\$ 18,767	\$ 20,240	\$ 21,704	\$ 5,000
15	\$ 67,112	\$ 77,179	\$ 83,240	\$ 89,260	15	\$ 16,318	\$ 18,767	\$ 20,240	\$ 21,704	\$ 5,000
16	\$ 67,112	\$ 77,179	\$ 83,240	\$ 89,260	16	\$ 16,318	\$ 18,767	\$ 20,240	\$ 21,704	\$ 5,000
17	\$ 67,112	\$ 77,179	\$ 83,240	\$ 89,260	17	\$ 16,318	\$ 18,767	\$ 20,240	\$ 21,704	\$ 5,000
18	\$ 68,128	\$ 78,347	\$ 84,501	\$ 90,611	18	\$ 16,318	\$ 18,767	\$ 20,240	\$ 21,704	\$ 5,000
19	\$ 68,128	\$ 78,347	\$ 84,501	\$ 90,611	19	\$ 16,318	\$ 18,767	\$ 20,240	\$ 21,704	\$ 5,000
20	\$ 68,128	\$ 78,347	\$ 84,501	\$ 90,611	20	\$ 16,318	\$ 18,767	\$ 20,240	\$ 21,704	\$ 5,000
21	\$ 69,164	\$ 79,540	\$ 85,786	\$ 91,989	21	\$ 16,318	\$ 18,767	\$ 20,240	\$ 21,704	\$ 5,000
22	\$ 69,164	\$ 79,540	\$ 85,786	\$ 91,989	22	\$ 16,318	\$ 18,767	\$ 20,240	\$ 21,704	\$ 5,000
23	\$ 69,164	\$ 79,540	\$ 85,786	\$ 91,989	23	\$ 16,318	\$ 18,767	\$ 20,240	\$ 21,704	\$ 5,000
24	\$ 70,221	\$ 80,754	\$ 87,097	\$ 93,395	24	\$ 16,318	\$ 18,767	\$ 20,240	\$ 21,704	\$ 5,000
25	\$ 70,221	\$ 80,754	\$ 87,097	\$ 93,395	25	\$ 16,318	\$ 18,767	\$ 20,240	\$ 21,704	\$ 5,000
26	\$ 70,221	\$ 80,754	\$ 87,097	\$ 93,395	26	\$ 16,318	\$ 18,767	\$ 20,240	\$ 21,704	\$ 5,000
27	\$ 71,299	\$ 81,995	\$ 88,434	\$ 94,829	27	\$ 16,318	\$ 18,767	\$ 20,240	\$ 21,704	\$ 5,000

Q. Is this another teacher incentive plan? How do I know this plan will not just disappear the next year?

A. Act 2021-340 created the TEAMS Plan. Additionally, this act created the TEAMS Fund in the State Treasury for an annual allocation from the Legislature to support this plan.

Q. Who confirms eligibility of a teacher to the TEAMS plan?

A. The local superintendent confirms eligibility once a teacher submits an application. A teacher can only become a TEAMS teacher with the recommendation of the local superintendent and approval of the Board. Teachers are hired by local school systems, not assigned by the State Department of Education. Not all math and science will necessarily receive TEAMS contracts.

Q. How many TEAMS positions will each school district receive?

A. Each school district will receive one math and one science position for every 105 students in combined grades 6-12.

Q. What is application process?

A. Visit www.alsde.edu/teachinalabama to apply for open positions around the state and be sure to complete the TEAMS section.

Q. When will the hard-to-staff school list be released?

A. The department shall annually determine which schools are hard-to-staff based on out-of-field teaching assignments, poverty levels, etc. The list of hard-to-staff schools is expected to be released by the end of May 2021.

Q. I am an out of state teacher; how can I apply?

A. Visit www.alsde.edu/teachinalabama to apply for open positions around the state and make sure to complete the TEAMS section.

Certification and Courses

Q. What must I be certified in to be eligible for the TEAMS salary matrix?

A. To view a full list of certifications, click [here](#).

Q. What courses do I have to teach?

A. To view a full list of eligible courses, click [here](#).

Q. What is considered teaching math and science fulltime?

A. Fulltime means teaching all class periods during the day, except for a planning period. For instance, in a seven-period day, a teacher must teach six periods of qualifying math or science courses.

Q. I am an out of state teacher who holds a valid math or science certificate in another state, how can I apply for a math or science certificate in Alabama?

A. Visit the [Educator Certification Section](#) to apply for certification based on certificate reciprocity.

Q. I am an Alabama certified teacher; how can I obtain certification in math or science?

A. There are several ways; however, the swiftest option is meeting requirements of the [Additional Teaching Field Approach](#). You must hold a valid Alabama Professional Educator Certificate (in a teaching field), can verify two full scholastic years of P-12 classroom teaching experience, and pass the Alabama-approved Praxis subject assessment.

For other certification options, please visit [Educator Certification](#).

Q. Does out of state experience count on the teams pay scale?

A. Yes, each participating teacher shall be properly placed on the TEAMS salary schedule according to degree earned and years of public education service, either in-state or out-of-state.

Q. Is computer science included?

A. Certain computer science certifications and courses are eligible. Generally, only those computer science courses that are approved for math or science core credits are approved. Computer science teaching permits are not included—see full list under certifications and courses for eligibility.

Contracts

Q. What is the difference between an advanced contract versus a preliminary contract?

A. A teacher who does not hold the required advance credential/certification may be offered a preliminary contract for one year, which can be extended from year-to-year for a maximum of three years.

A teacher meeting all the necessary criteria may be offered an advanced TEAMS contract for up to a three-year contract period.

Q. What are some reasons my contract could be non-renewed?

A. A board may terminate for cause anytime for any of the following reasons: immorality, insubordination, neglect of duty, conviction of a felony or crime of moral turpitude, failure to comply with board policy, incompetency, justifiable decrease in positions, and incarceration. If the board terminates the teacher without cause before the contract ends, the teacher is due the balance of the contract salary and benefits.

- Q. Can a teacher pass the Praxis to add an additional teaching field this summer and begin a TEAMS contract immediately after passing the test?**
- A. There is no set deadline for submission of TEAMS contracts. A district may hire to fill one of their TEAMS positions at any time.
- Q. What if I am working toward the necessary advanced credentials?**
- A. A teacher may qualify for one-year preliminary TEAMS contracts for up to three years while demonstrating adequate progress toward the advanced credential. Each advanced credential has unique requirements. Under very limited circumstances, some teachers may qualify for additional time, up to six years.
- Q. What are the necessary advanced credentials?**
- A. A participating teacher shall have an advanced credential from the National Institute for STEM Education or the National Board of Professional Teacher Standards—Early Adolescence or Early Adolescence and Young Adulthood Math or Science.
- Q. What if I am a new teacher with insufficient teaching experience to begin the advanced credential?**
- A. A participating teacher with insufficient experience to obtain the advanced credential within three years may have his or her preliminary contract extended for a maximum of six total years.
- Q. What happens if I have been working toward, but do not obtain or maintain the required advanced credential for an advanced TEAMS contract.**
- A. Any teacher who is unable to obtain or maintain the advanced credential will no longer be eligible for the TEAMS plan.
- Q. What happens if circumstances beyond my control prevent me from finishing an advanced credential and I want to try again later.**
- A. A superintendent, on behalf of a participating teacher, may request a teacher be allowed to opt-in a second time after the teacher's previous failure to timely qualify for an advanced contract. These status exemptions, including but not limited to health conditions, family emergency, or change in county of residence, must be approved the State Department of Education.
- Q. What does a TEAMS teacher contract contain?**
- A. The department is developing a model participating teacher contract which is expected to be released by the end of May 2021. Each model preliminary contract must include a provision to ensure a participating teacher's adequate progress toward advanced contract qualification—with demonstrable benchmarked advancement.

National Board for Professional Teaching Standards

Q. Does the state provide a grant or scholarship to assist in becoming NBCT certified?

- A. Yes, the state offers a scholarship for any teacher who applies and is accepted. Visit the [scholarship details](#) page for additional information.

A teacher is required to complete the NBCT portfolio (all four components) within the time allowed by the National Board. The scholarship will only pay for up to four components (up to \$1,900) and does not pay for section that have to be retaken. If the teacher does not have sufficient experience to apply for the advanced credentials/certification upon initial TEAMS application, a preliminary TEAMS contract may be extended year-to-year for a maximum of either three or six years—depending on the teacher’s experience level.

The state also provides a \$5,000 base stipend to teachers that receive and currently hold a NBCT certification and an additional \$5,000 stipend for certain NBCT teachers. See the [2020-2021 NBCT memorandum](#) for additional information.

Q. What if I am already receiving the NBCT stipend currently?

- A. You will still receive the NBCT stipend in addition to the new TEAMS salary matrix.

Professional Development

Q. What are the details on the four days of professional development requirement?

- A. Teachers on this plan are required to be employed on 189-day contracts, and at least four of the nine professional development days must be approved by the State Department of Education.

Retirement and Tenure

Q. I am a current teacher. What happens to my tenure if I apply for a TEAMS position?

- A. A participating teacher voluntarily relinquishes continuing service (i.e. “tenure”) status under the Students First Act. Years of service in TEAMS do not count toward earning tenure under the Students First Act.

Any teacher who has attained continuing service status with his or her local board, and elects participation in the program under the same local board, shall be deemed to have voluntarily relinquished his or her status and protections under the Students First Act. The only exception is any teacher who has attained continuing service status with his or her local board as of June 30, 2021, and elects participation in the program under the same local board and maintains adequate progress toward the advanced contract qualifications, but fails to obtain the credential or certification shall have one-time reversion rights to the previous service status at the end of his or her preliminary contract period(s).

Q. What if I am close to retirement?

A. Teachers with more than 20 years only qualify for an advanced contract for a period of five years, and are not eligible for the preliminary contract.

For additional questions regarding the TEAMS plan please email TEAMS@alsde.edu.