

ARTICLE XXIV -- CREDENTIAL PAYMENT

Section 1. Statement of Purpose

The purpose of the credential payment is to enhance the quality of education for students in Miami-Dade County by providing M-DCPS employees increased financial incentive for the pursuit of further study and expertise in their respective fields.

Section 2. Oversight

- A. A joint committee shall oversee all procedures, guidelines, and other aspects governing credential payment. Such procedures and guidelines shall be subject to review by the Superintendent and the UTD President or Designee and final approval by the Superintendent.
- B. The committee shall serve to make amendments, as warranted, to ensure the orderly and equitable implementation of these programs and is also empowered to make recommendations for the adjudication of disputes.

Section 3. General Agreements

Credential payments, as stipulated in Appendix E, shall be available to employees who occupy instructional positions listed in Appendix F, Instructional Job Titles, in accordance with the following provisions:

- A. Amount of Payments Above the Bachelor's Degree
 - 1. Master's degree -- \$3,000
 - 2. Specialist degree -- 5,000
 - 3. Doctorate degree -- 7,000
 - 4. Applicable credential payments shall be made to eligible teachers in the vocational program who possess equivalency certification/degree(s), as stipulated in Appendix E.
- B. Changes in Florida Statutes and/or State Board Rules shall not affect credential payment authorized, pursuant to this Article.
- C. Effective Dates
 - 1. The effective date for implementation of the credential payment salary schedule shall be the date of the quarter (January 1, April 1, July 1, or October 1) after completion of eligibility requirements, as indicated on the transcript by the issuing university.

2. Completion of eligibility requirements shall be defined as: (a) filing an official M-DCPS/UTD application for credential payment with the Office of Human Resources (receipt acknowledged and dated by M-DCPS); and (b) completion of course work/degree requirements prior to the date of the quarter for which payment is requested, as indicated by the date on the transcript, or other appropriate evidence provided by the university. M-DCPS shall notify all new employees of the availability of the credential payment program and the procedures for making application.

D. Eligibility

1. Employees who hold or obtain an advanced degree in the subject matter field/position to which they are assigned or in which they are certified shall be eligible, except as noted below.
2. Employees who hold an advanced degree may qualify by virtue of 15 graduate semester hours (or the equivalent) in the subject matter field/position to which they are assigned or in which they are certified.
 - a. Employees who are eligible for the credential payment in one subject field, but who are not teaching in that field, will receive the credential payment. However, when the employee is offered a position in the school system in the subject field of eligibility for the credential payment, the employee must accept the position offered or lose the credential payment.
 - b. Employees with advanced degrees in library science or guidance and counseling, but who have never been appointed as media specialists or guidance counselors, must hold or obtain 15 graduate semester hours or the equivalent in their teaching field in order to be eligible for the credential payment.
3. Employees who are otherwise eligible but who are placed administratively in an assignment other than that in which they meet the requirements shall be eligible.
4. Graduate course work and/or degrees in the area of reading, mathematics, computer education, exceptional student education, and/or ESOL/bilingual education shall be considered infield for all personnel, in recognition of the importance of basic skills and exceptional student education.
5. Descriptions of content, as well as titles, codes, and numbers, shall be valid indicators of the applicability of courses or degrees.
6. In order for a course to be applicable for credential payment, the course must be in the individual's area of specialization, as defined in this Article.

7. Graduate course work in subjects specified as required or germane in a specific subject area shall be applicable for purposes of satisfying eligibility requirements.
8. Subject fields shall be broadly defined. For example, language arts shall encompass subject fields such as reading, literature, composition, speech, debate, drama, grammar, and journalism. Social studies shall include subject fields such as history, geography, sociology, economics, government, civics, political science, and psychology.
9. The concept of broad interpretation of subject field shall apply to all areas. Examples enumerated shall not be construed as limitations to the exclusion of course areas traditionally recognized as related and germane.
10. Infield definitions for determining eligibility for payment of the Professional Incentive Program (PIP) supplement and tuition reimbursement shall be the same as those for credential payment.
11. Agreement upon these guidelines shall not be construed as precluding further agreement subsequently perceived as necessary to implementation of credential payment provisions.
12. Courses in administration and supervision shall not be applicable.
13. The course code/number must be consistent with that used by the university or college issuing the credit for courses offered at the graduate level.
14. To qualify as graduate level, credit must have been earned after the applicant was granted the Bachelor's degree and must be clearly identified as such.

Section 4. Application, Processing, and Appeal Procedures

- A. Applicant must submit an application form approved by the M-DCPS/UTD Credential Payment Committee and made available to employees by M-DCPS.
- B. Applicant must submit graduate transcript(s) bearing the official university seal.
- C. Applications shall be processed as nearly as possible in the order in which they are received.
- D. Applicants whose applications are disapproved because of a technicality (e.g., required documentation not attached or application form incomplete) shall be notified and afforded every reasonable opportunity to complete the application appropriately.
- E. Applications which require interpretation of these provisions shall be referred to a subcommittee of two members of the Credential Payment Committee, one representative each of M-DCPS and the UTD, for review and decision.

- F. In the event the Credential Payment Subcommittee is unable to reach agreement, the application shall be referred to the M-DCPS/UTD Credential Payment Committee for disposition.
- G. Applicants whose applications are disapproved shall be notified that they may appeal the decision to the committee by resubmitting and supplying such additional and germane information and/or documentation as will be helpful in reaching a decision regarding the appeal. The decision of the committee is final and not grievable or arbitrable.

Section 5. Degrees and Course Work Defined as Infield

- A. Teachers at the elementary school level (including specialists, such as music, art, and physical education teachers, as well as regular classroom teachers)
 - 1. Advanced degree(s) in elementary education and/or early childhood education;
 - 2. Elementary and/or early childhood education certification and an advanced degree(s) and/or courses in academic disciplines: language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies;
 - 3. Elementary and/or early childhood education certification and an advanced degree(s) and/or courses in music, art, physical and/or health education, exceptional student education, consumer economics, and career education;
 - 4. Guidance and Counseling Courses - Up to six semester hours in guidance and counseling.
- B. Teachers at the Secondary Level

Advanced degree(s), and/or courses in specific subjects by name (for example):
 - 1. Academic disciplines: language arts; mathematics; science; social studies; and foreign languages.
 - 2. Other fields: music; art; physical education and/or health, safety, driver education; exceptional student education; industrial arts/vocational technical education; business education; or home and family education.
- C. Teachers of English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

Infield definitions shall be the same as those for other teachers of language arts.
- D. Teachers of Languages Other than English
 - 1. Advanced degree(s) with graduate major in the language.

2. Graduate course work related to the country or countries in which the language is spoken (e.g., culture, literature, history, government, economics, and geography).

E. Teachers of Exceptional Students

Advanced degree(s) and/or courses in exceptional student education, as well as degrees or courses in the areas of specific disabilities.

F. Guidance Counselors

1. Advanced degree(s) in guidance and counseling.
2. Graduate course work from among the areas specified for certification in guidance.

G. School Psychologists

1. Advanced degree(s) in psychology or school psychology.
2. Graduate course work from among the areas specified for advanced degree certification in school psychology.

H. School Social Workers

1. Advanced degree(s) in social work, guidance and counseling, or psychology.
2. Graduate course work from among the areas specified for certification as a school social worker (formerly visiting teacher).

I. Teachers assigned to alternative schools, COPE, Centers for Special Instruction, and TRUST Specialists

1. Advanced degree(s) in subject matter field or special education.
2. Graduate course work from among the following areas: individual's subject matter field, guidance and counseling, special education, child growth and development or human behavior, school and society, or health education.

J. Media Specialist

1. Advanced degree(s) in library science or educational media.
2. Graduate course work from among the areas specified for certification.

K. Business Education or Cooperative Business Education Teachers

1. Advanced degree(s) in business education.
2. Graduate course work in any of the following areas: accounting or bookkeeping, economics, shorthand, typing, business law, business mathematics, business English, business administration, business and/or office machines, data processing/computers, sales/marketing, or vocational education.

L. Home Economics Teachers

1. Advanced degree(s) with a graduate major in home economics.
2. Graduate course work in any of the following areas: housing, home management, family economics or consumer economics or family finance, marriage and family relationships, child care and development, career education, food, nutrition, chemistry, bacteriology, physiology, clothing and textiles, interior decoration, or health.

M. Teachers in Work Experience, Diversified Cooperative Training

1. Advanced degree(s) in business education, vocational education, mathematics, or language arts.
2. Graduate course work in any of the following areas: business education, career education, mathematics, language arts, or skill areas in vocational education.

N. Teachers in Cooperative Health Occupation Education (with Bachelor's degree)

1. Advanced degree(s) in nursing.
2. Graduate course work in health occupation areas.

O. Teachers in Cooperative Distributive Education

1. Advanced degree(s) in economics, marketing, sales and merchandising, and vocational education.
2. Graduate course work in economics, sales and merchandising, and vocational education.

P. Industrial Arts Teachers

1. Advanced degree(s) with a graduate major in industrial arts or vocational education.

2. Graduate course work from among the following areas: metals, woods, power and transportation mechanics, graphic arts, drafting and design, crafts, electricity, electronics, or vocational education.

Q. Athletic Directors, School Business Managers, Directors of Student Activities, and Educational Specialists

In recognition that individuals in these positions contribute to the total school program and are administratively assigned, individuals who otherwise satisfy the credential payment requirements in their teaching field shall not be denied eligibility on the basis of their serving in such capacities.

R. Adult Education Teachers

1. Advanced degree(s) in the discipline(s) in which they teach or are certified.
2. Graduate course work in individual's subject matter field.
3. Courses or degrees in adult education are also applicable for teachers in the Adult Basic Education Program.

S. Other Vocational/Technical Education Teachers

1. Advanced degree(s) and/or course work in individual's subject matter field.
2. Course work in professional industrial education and other appropriate technical courses.

T. Vocational, Technical, Industrial, and Cooperative Health Education Teachers Who Hold Equivalency Certificates

Holders of advanced vocational equivalency certificates shall be eligible for credential payment at the level of eligibility stipulated in Appendix E.

U. Occupational and Placement Specialists

1. Advanced degree(s) in guidance and counseling.
2. Graduate course work from among the following areas: career education, occupational placement, guidance and counseling.

Note: Full-time CAP Advisors and Athletic Trainers who are on the AO Salary Schedule are not eligible for the credential payment provisions.