



OKLAHOMA STATE  
DEPARTMENT *of* EDUCATION

## **HB 4388 – Teacher Empowerment Program**

### ***Background:***

HB4388 was passed as during Legislative Session in May 2022. Written by Representatives Hilbert and Baker of the House and Senator Pugh of the Senate, this bill created the Teacher Empowerment Revolving Fund to provide progression incentive bonuses to eligible teachers in Oklahoma. This was amended 3A O.S. 2021, Section 713, relating to the Oklahoma Education Lottery Act.

This bill allows the Oklahoma State Department of Education to establish *advanced, lead, and master* teacher certificates and to establish minimum salary increases for the corresponding certificate levels. Additionally, the bill defines additional one-time awards for certain teachers, as well as defining designation requirements by school districts.

The Teacher Empowerment Revolving Fund is supported and provided through the Oklahoma Lottery Commission. This is funded by all profit monies in excess of \$65 million, as the initial amount all goes directly to the Oklahoma Education Lottery Trust with specific allocations noted in the bill.

The key components of this bill as follows; 1) the required creation of the new teacher certifications, *advanced, lead, and master*, where districts shall outline the requirements needed for each level, 2) the establishment of the minimum pay increases for each certification level, at \$3,000, \$5,000, and \$10,000, respectively, and 3) the requirement of the Oklahoma State Department of Education to match the district increases previously noted, not to exceed \$40,000 per individual. Districts are required to have an evaluation process for this program, with minimum requirements to include a teacher observation, out-of-classroom time, and a student performance component. No more than 10% of a districts' teachers may be designated.



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***Program Highlights:***

- There are 3 new teacher certification designations being created, *advanced, lead, and master*.
- Districts can nominate and approve up to 10% of their eligible teachers.
- The Teacher Empowerment Revolving Fund is provided through annual appropriations made by the legislature from the Oklahoma Lottery Commission, from profits in excess of the \$65M in base Oklahoma Education Lottery Trust.
- Teachers can earn a minimum of \$3,000 to \$10,000 from their local district.
- Teachers may receive the corresponding State match, not to exceed \$40,000, to the district allotment, dependent on available funds.

***Frequently Asked Questions:***

**Q: Who is eligible for this program?**

A: Certified teachers employed in Oklahoma that meet their district requirements for a certification designation.

**Q: How can a teacher apply?**

A: Districts apply through the State GMS application system in the teacher single-sign-on (SSO) after designations have been built and approved by the district board.

**Q: How frequently can teachers be nominated?**

A: Nominations & applications happen twice a year, once prior to the start of a school year and once prior to the start of the second semester.

**Q: What are the individual certification designation levels?**

A: The new designation levels are advanced, lead, and master.

**Q: What are the requirements for each designation level?**

A: School districts have the responsibility to create the minimum requirements for each designation level, however, the Oklahoma State Department of Education will provide recommendations to provide consistency throughout the state.



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**Q: How much of an annual salary incentive increase could a teacher earn from their district and State under these designations?**

A: Each teacher will be assessed individually; however, minimum district increases and corresponding matches from the State are set for each designation level. Advanced, lead, and master have minimums set at \$3,000, \$5,000, and \$10,000, respectively.

**Q: Is there a maximum amount of increase that can be earned through a designation?**

A: No, however the maximum state match is capped at \$40,000.

**Q: Is there a maximum number of teachers per district that can participate in the program?**

A: Yes. Each district can nominate and approve no more than 10% of their eligible teachers for the program.

**Q: Will the designation need to be renewed annually?**

A: Yes. The designation is valid for one school year.

**Q: How will this incentive increase be paid out?**

A: The incentive salary increase shall be paid as regular annual compensation through the school district, with all applicable taxes, etc. withheld.

**Q: If a teacher with an active program designation transfers to another district, will they retain the certification in the new district?**

A: The new district will make this determination.