

FAQ for the 2016-2017 Georgia's Pre-K Annual Rates and Teacher Salaries

This document is designed to help Georgia's Pre-K Program Grantees understand the *2016-2017 Georgia's Pre-K Annual Rates* chart and the factors that influence a teacher's salary.

What changes will grantees find in the *2016-2017 Georgia's Pre-K Annual Rates*?

- The following are additions and/or changes to the Rates Chart:
 - Benefit and non-instructional funding has been combined into *Operating*.
 - A Master's pay level has been added for lead teachers.
 - Salary amounts for lead and assistant teachers reflect increases.

Does the Rate Chart reflect the reimbursement amount for my Pre-K class?

- The Rate Chart does not give an exact reimbursement amount; it provides a 'per class' budget estimate. The actual class reimbursement amount may vary based on class size, changes in teacher credentials, and number of days of service. Other factors that impact the reimbursement amount include transportation services for Category 1 students, start-up funds for newly funded classes and supplemental compensation for lead teachers.

The budget includes an increase in benefits for Pre-K lead and assistant teachers. Are grantees required to provide benefits to Pre-K teachers?

- Grantees are not required to provide benefits to Pre-K teachers. A grantee may choose to provide benefits or they may choose to combine benefits and non-instructional costs as needed.

The budget does not include a salary increase from FY2016 for Certified (T4) teachers. Why is that?

- There was no increase for the Certified (T4) rate because that rate is currently comparable to the entry level salary for most public school teachers. The rate for the Certified (T4) level does, however, include the 3% base increase.

What factors should be taken into account when calculating the percentage of benefits?

- When calculating benefits, use the total salary amount which includes the base pay and supplemental pay for the teacher.

If a grantee is already paying above the salary minimum, is the program required to increase lead or assistant teacher salary?

- To meet the grant budget requirements, a grantee must meet the minimum salary requirements for each lead and assistant teacher. For lead teachers, the requirement is 90% of the individual teacher's base salary and 100% of the individual teacher's supplemental compensation. For assistant teachers, the requirement is 100% of the salary.

What is the difference between a Certified (T4) and a Certified Master's (T5)?

- Teachers at the T4 level hold a minimum of a Bachelor's degree and have completed requirements for Georgia teacher certification. Teachers at T-5 hold a minimum of a Master's degree and have completed requirements for Georgia teacher certification.

My teacher has a Master's degree but does not hold T5 certification. Does the teacher qualify for the T5 salary level?

- A teacher with a Master's degree but not T5 certification does not qualify for the T5 certification salary. To qualify for the Certified Master's (T5) level, the teacher must hold T5 certification.

The budget includes a new supplemental compensation model for Pre-K lead teachers. What is that?

- The supplemental compensation model will provide additional compensation for all Pre-K lead teachers in public and private programs. The model includes a 3% increase in base salary for each 2 years of creditable years of experience up to 20 years. Supplemental compensation is cumulative and will be based on the teacher's history as a Georgia's Pre-K lead teacher and/or history as a certified lead teacher in a K-12 public school.

My program has certified Pre-K teachers who already receive a Training & Experience supplement (T & E). Their T & E was capped at the end of the 2010-2011 school year. Will my program continue receiving a T & E supplement for them, and are they eligible for the new supplemental compensation?

- Public school grantees with Pre-K lead teachers that are currently receiving a capped T & E supplement will continue receiving the T & E supplement for those teachers. These teachers are eligible for the new supplemental compensation. However, because they have already been compensated for previous years taught (T & E compensation), the new model will apply to their history after the 2010-2011 school year.

What are *Creditable Years of Experience*?

- For Georgia's Pre-K Program, Creditable Years of Experience are defined as all years taught as a lead teacher in a Georgia's Pre-K Program (public or private) with an approved credential and/or all years taught as a certified lead teacher in a K-12 public school. A teacher must have taught for at least 6 months of the school year (60% of the year) to receive credit for one full year.

What if the lead teacher did not work a full year in Georgia's Pre-K and/or a full year as a certified teacher in a K-12 public school? Does any time worked count toward Creditable Years of Experience?

- To receive credit for a year, the lead teacher must have worked at least 6 months of the school year (60%) to receive a *Creditable Year of Experience*.

What if the years taught in Georgia's Pre-K and/or a K-12 public school were not consecutive? If a teacher left and then came back, does *Creditable Years of Experience* start over?

- *Creditable years of experience* do not have to be consecutive. If a teacher leaves and returns, the creditable years of experience picks up where the teacher left off.

If a teacher taught in a public school in another state, do those years count toward *Creditable Years of Experience*?

- Years of experience taught in another state will count toward *creditable years of experience* if the teacher held a valid, in-field state education certificate related to the field of employment and was under contract during the period in which the experience was earned.

My teacher never taught as a lead teacher in a Georgia's Pre-K Program (public or private) with an approved credential and the teacher never taught as a certified lead teacher in a K-12 public school. How should I report the teacher's *Creditable Years of Experience*? Should I report 0 or 1 year since this will be the teacher's first year?

- If the teacher never taught as a lead teacher in a Georgia's Pre-K Program (public or private) with an approved credential and/or the teacher never taught as a certified lead teacher in a K-12 public school, a grantee should report 0 for *Creditable Years of Experience*. *Note: A teacher must have taught for at least 6 months of the school year (60% of the year) to receive credit for one full year.*

How will *Creditable Years of Experience* be determined and who will be responsible for verification?

- Grantees will be responsible for developing written processes and/or policies regarding verification of *Creditable Years of Experience* for their program. Teacher contracts, PANDA roster information, and teacher history data are examples of what can be used to determine a teacher's creditable years of experience. Bright from the Start will conduct audits and reviews to verify creditable years of experience reported by grantees.

When determining *Creditable Years of Experience*, should I only count the years the teacher worked at my program?

- When determining a teacher's creditable years of experience, a grantee should count the years at their program as well as the years the teacher taught in another Georgia's Pre-K Program (public or private) with an approved credential and/or all the years taught as a certified teacher in a K-12 public school.

My teacher has a T6 certification level. Which level will the teacher be paid?

- Teachers with T6 certification (Specialist) will be paid at the Certified Master's (T5) level. Teachers with a T7 (Doctorate) will be paid at the Certified Master's (T5) level.

How do I know if my teacher's degree qualifies as a Pre-K lead teacher?

- Grantees will not know for sure if a teacher's degree qualifies as a Pre-K lead teacher until the teacher has enrolled in the Professional Development Registry (PDR). The Registry (PDR) reviews transcripts and credentials to help determine if teachers meet the educational requirements for their role in a Georgia's Pre-K class. PSC certification is verified through review of www.gapsc.com for all certified teachers. The "Issue Date" is the beginning date of certification for Georgia's Pre-K teachers.

How will programs receive the funding for lead teacher supplement?

- Each lead teacher supplement for CYE will be part of the programs' monthly payment. All funds are distributed across the 10 payments including all components of salary.

Can the salary supplement be paid as a quarterly or end of the year bonus?

- No, the supplement is part of the teacher's salary and may not be paid as a bonus. It must be paid in accordance with the salary schedule (monthly, weekly, etc.)