



NEWS RELEASE

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TWO DISTRICTS TO PARTICIPATE IN ALTERNATE PAY PLAN FOR STAFF

Cross County School District and Lincoln Consolidated School District have been approved to implement restructured pay plans for their teachers as part of a state pilot program, Rewarding Excellence in Achievement Program. The program was created through Act 1029 of 2007, part of Governor Mike Beebe's legislative package.

"I am proud of the initiative taken by Cross County and Lincoln Consolidated school districts. They are part of an innovative and historic pilot program. It is past time to pay better wages to our teachers and reward them for their successes," Governor Beebe said. "The dedicated men and women who work every day in classrooms across Arkansas deserve to be recognized and more fairly compensated for their commitment to investing in the future of our children, our state and our country."

Beverly Williams, Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) assistant commissioner for human resources and licensure, oversaw the approval process. "Both of these school districts submitted applications that reflect the intent of the law, which is to recognize excellent teachers through a pay plan that rewards success in the classroom," she said.

To be approved, applicants had to show how they would pay teachers based both on knowledge and skills and on performance, with each overall factor accounting for between 40 percent and 60 percent of the individual's salary. School districts were allowed to design their own models within those parameters, with knowledge and skills reflecting such factors as education level and years of experience and performance reflecting such criteria as students' gains on performance assessments

and evaluations by peers and supervisors. Also, 70 percent of the teachers had to have signaled support of the school's or district's REAP plan and 50 percent of teachers had to have elected to participate.

Cross County will receive a \$289,870 grant from the state to implement its plan, and Lincoln Consolidated School District will receive a grant for \$522,960. A total \$2.5 million was appropriated by the state legislature to fund the pilot program.

Applications to participate in the program during 2009-2010 are due to the Arkansas Department of Education on January 5, 2009.

"We anticipate we'll have a number of other districts and schools apply to participate for the 2009-2010 school year," Williams said. "Several expressed interest but weren't ready to put plans together for this coming school year."

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The Arkansas Department of Education strives to ensure that all children in the state have access to a quality education by providing educators, administrators and staff with leadership, resources and training.