



Mid-Valley Special Education Cooperative

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Mid-Valley Special Education Cooperative Executive Advisory Board

FROM: Marianne Fidishin, PhD, Executive Director

DATE: June 6, 2018

RE: Vision Itinerant Stipend

According to the collective bargaining agreement between the Mid-Valley Special Education Cooperative and the Mid-Valley Special Education Association, Article 20, section 3 Salaries in Excess of the Guide-Teaching Staff, “The salaries set forth in the salary guide are minimum salaries. The guide does not imply a limitation on the right of MVSEC to pay salaries in excess of the amount stated thereon in recognition of:

1. Exceptional professional effort in aid of MVSEC’s program of education;
2. Critical or unique skills required by MVSEC; or
3. Exceptional contributions to the field of education generally (e.g. research and publication), authorized in advance by MVSEC, which enhance MVSEC’s reputation as an educational enterprise.

The National Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired has 1,000 fewer members nationwide than it did 10 years ago. Meanwhile, administrators at Northern Illinois University and Illinois State University — the only two colleges in Illinois that offer degrees specializing in teaching blind and visually impaired students — say they are graduating far fewer teachers than the states’ students need. Of the 2.4 million kindergarten through 12th-grade students in Illinois, there are 16,737 with low vision or blindness, and only 212 teachers certified to teach them. That’s a ratio of 1 teacher for every 79 students — a scarcity made more pronounced because not all of the students are geographically close to each other.

MVSEC currently has three (3) vacancies for vision itinerant teachers for the 2018-2019 school year. In an effort to acquire certified, qualified teachers to ensure service provision for the district, it is recommended that MVSEC institute a stipend as outlined in the collective bargaining agreement to address the rationale “critical or unique skills” of low incident/high demand vision itinerant teachers. A recommendation of 1.5% of a base salary as the stipend amount. Stipend examples include:

BA- Step 1: $\$43,095 \times 1.5\% = \659.25
BA-Step 4: $\$46,408 \times 1.5\% = \697.20
MA-Step 4: $\$52,436 \times 1.5\% = \786.54
MA-Step 8: $\$56,464 \times 1.5\% = \846.96