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## Longview ISD board OKs teacher incentive pay



By Matthew Prosser  
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Longview ISD hopes to distribute about \$600,000 in teacher and campus personnel incentive pay as a reward for good performance during the 2014-15 school year, a marked increase from the \$350,000 it paid out last year.

In a 6-0 vote during Wednesday's special-called meeting, trustees approved the Longview Incentive for Teachers Pay for Performance Award Model, the LIFT Campus Academic Distinction Designation Pay for Performance Payout and the EOC High Stakes Re-Testers Model Payout.

LISD Superintendent James Wilcox said much of the plan remains the same as was approved in 2014, with one notable change — more teachers qualify this year.

"But that's exactly what the board's intention was for this program, to have more staff meeting the requirements," he said.



"The criteria is still the same; we've just had significantly more teachers qualify."

Jody Clements, LISD assistant superintendent of administrative and pupil services, said the district has been using the Education Value Added Assessment System to measure student progress based on statistical data submitted each year.

If a student shows an expected amount of progress, the teacher is not rewarded. But if the student shows greater than expected progress, the teacher is given an incentive based on the exceptional progress amount.

"One of the goals (of the program) is to reward all the many teachers in our district who regularly go above and beyond for their students," Wilcox said.

Based on a "value-added" system and "achievement," core subject area teachers with economically disadvantaged students showing exceptional or more than expected progress in core subject areas could receive about a \$69 incentive or \$100 incentive per student, depending on the level of progress.

The campus distinction designation awards will give \$200 per campus distinction to each full-time staff member at the school, Clement said.

"For example, Foster Middle School has six distinctions, so those employees stand to get a \$1,200 bonus," he said. "Based on the performance of the students at that campus."

Qualifying staff must be full-time and have an attendance rate of 97 percent.

Clement said the funds are scheduled to go out in December's pay period.

"(The \$600,000) is an estimate based on the assumption that all eligible employees will still qualify," he said. "So between now and then, we're going to be working out the calculations before the December paychecks go out."

Later, trustees approved the districtwide campus plans, as well as 2015-16 school improvement plans for Longview Early Graduation, Forest Park Middle School, Bramlette Elementary and Ware Elementary campuses.

According to the Texas Education Code, school improvement plans target the specific areas identified by the state as unacceptable. Schools are ranked on four criteria. Falling short in just one means the campus earned an "improvement required" rating.

Improvement plans are created uniquely for each campus. The district must identify needs and develop programs to help address the shortcomings.

In addition to trustees and other LISD staff, a small group of parents from Hudson PEP were in attendance — though no public comment was on the agenda.

"(Public comment) is never on the agenda for special called meeting," Wilcox said, adding that the district's "Let's Talk" information line remains available to any parents with concerns and that all calls would be returned by the administration.

District spokeswoman Sarah LeBus said regular trustee meetings and most special-called meetings are made well in advance — and that the recent issue with Hudson PEP had no bearing on Wednesday's meeting.

"There will be a public comment agenda item in the next regular meeting, just as there is for every other," she added.

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