

Catalina Foothills School District
Tucson, Arizona

~~2024-2025~~

2025-2026

Performance Award Plan



Approved by CFSD Governing Board on: **5/27/2025**

A graphic of a spiral-bound notebook with five dark grey rings at the top. The notebook has multiple pages, with the top page being white and the others slightly offset to the left and bottom. The text is centered on the top page.

Purpose Statement

The Catalina Foothills School District School-based Performance Award Plan, a collective incentive aimed at maximizing student learning, will provide annual monetary awards to certified staff in each school that meets shared and measurable student achievement goals.

Introduction

In November 2000, the voters of Arizona passed Proposition 301 which provided sales tax monies to supplement the current general fund appropriations to education. Proposition 301 requires that each school district allocate the funding as follows:

- 40% must be used for “teacher compensation increases based on performance”;
- 20% must be used for “teacher base salary increases.” All certified staff assigned to a school and employed to provide instruction to students are receiving their share of Prop 301 funds in their base pay. This includes all classroom teachers, gifted specialists, counselors, librarians, speech therapists, ELL certified teachers, special education teachers, alternative education teachers and reading specialists;

and

- 40% must be used for specified “maintenance and operations purposes”

A copy of the current Prop 301 plan for all three funds can be found in the District’s straw budget document.

In looking at how to distribute the performance pay component of Prop 301, the design team made a decision to adopt a school-based approach. It was the team’s belief that, at least for the immediate future, a school-based performance award plan offers these advantages:

- A site- or school-based award plan reinforces the idea that the school as a whole, not any one individual, is responsible for student achievement.
- Such a plan provides all teachers with the incentive to improve student achievement.
- The plan distributes award funds to all eligible employees at each school that meets its established performance goals.
- Legislation in 2005 (ARS 15-977) asked school districts to consider additional elements when adopting a performance based compensation system. School districts must develop and submit to ADE an assessment plan for their performance based compensation system every year.
- It further required that the performance based compensation system include teacher professional development programs that are aligned with the elements of the performance based compensation system.
- Beginning in 2006-2007 the district was required to add a professional development component to the plan. The plan meets this requirement by requiring teachers to participate in Collaborative Inquiry Teams as described below. To receive the award, teachers must qualify and have met the requirements of participation in a school’s Collaborative Inquiry Team.
- House Bill 2823, passed in 2012, stipulates that beginning in school year 2014-15, an individual teacher’s performance on the evaluation be a portion of the performance pay

system required by Proposition 301. It must account for at least 33% of the performance pay distribution.

- Senate Bill 1289, passed in 2015, permits school district governing boards to adopt alternative policies regarding performance based funding pursuant to A.R.S 15-977,(B) for the 2015-2016 and the 2016-17 school years.
- For FY 2022, the Legislature reauthorized Proposition 301 and it is now referred to as the Classroom Site Fund. The 3 areas have been collapsed with more discretion given to districts in how the dollars will be distributed. We have sustained 40% for performance pay.

CFSD Performance Pay Parameters

The following parameters guided the Performance Pay Design Team's work:

- The CFSD performance award plan will focus on student achievement results and reward teachers for undertaking practices that enhance their overall teaching effectiveness.
- School-based awards for performance will be based on goals specific to each school; e.g., schools must either maintain current high levels of performance or improve their performance. Schools will not compete with each other for awards.
- Awards will be given for the overall performance of the entire school. If a school does not earn the award, that school's share will carry forward into the next year and be added to the total pool of district dollars available for distribution the following year.
- Awards will be given for participation in professional learning sessions related to the School Improvement Plan's goals, strategies, and action steps.
- All eligible certified staff who qualify for a performance award will receive an equal dollar amount for the same performance level based on their full-time equivalency (FTE).
- Participation in the Performance Award Plan is not voluntary.
- The core idea behind a performance award is to provide a bonus for performance during a specified time period. The award must be re-earned each year.
- Eventually, there may be a transition from a total school-based award to a program that includes an award component for individual knowledge and skills.
- The plan to distribute performance awards will change over time based on internal and external factors.

CFSD School-Based Performance Award Plan

~~2024-2025~~ 2025-2026 Eligibility

All certified teachers, except those listed below as ineligible, assigned to a school and employed to provide instruction to students will be eligible for the School-Based Performance Award Plan in the year the award is distributed. Only positions required by CFSD to be staffed by a certified person are eligible and only certified teachers are eligible.

Eligible Positions

Classroom teachers
Gifted specialists
Counselors (if holding teacher certification)
Curriculum technology integrators
ELL certified teachers
Special Education teachers
Alternative Education teachers
Reading Specialists

Ineligible Positions

Certified teachers providing indirect support services to students
All classified positions
Administrators
Dean of Students
Psychologists
Nurses
Instructional Coaches
Learning Support Specialists
Speech Therapists (unless they hold teacher certification)
Vocational Education Grant Coordinator
Media Technology Coordinator
Substitute teachers
Employees working under “non-teaching professional” contracts
Co-facilitators for K-12 curriculum design
Teachers on a leave of absence for the full year in which the award is distributed
Teachers who are notified that the district intends to issue a Preliminary Notice of Inadequate Classroom Performance
Teachers who have been notified that the district intends to issue them a written notice of intention to dismiss or not to reemploy
Teachers who are not employed to work on the last day of the contract year

Split assignments

In the case of those eligible teachers who have split assignments, that portion of the assignment that is spent teaching is eligible for the award. That portion of the assignment that is not spent teaching will not qualify for the award. For example, an eligible employee whose responsibilities include .5 teaching and .5 co-facilitating K-12 curriculum design is only eligible for a portion of the award. Only the .5 teaching portion of the assignment is eligible.

Pre-Kindergarten employees

Eligible preschool employees whose preschool students attend kindergarten in CFSD elementary schools may earn awards on a prorated basis according to the number of preschool students enrolled in

kindergarten at each site that receives the performance award. For example, if among 20 preschool students who attend kindergarten, five are in each of the four elementary schools, there will be a 25% proration of the eligible preschool employees' award tied to the expected performance level of each elementary school.

Part-time employees

Eligible employees' awards will be prorated according to their FTE. The basis of the award may range from .2 to 1.0 FTE.

Working at more than one site

Eligible employees who work at more than one site may earn awards on a prorated basis according to the amount of FTE worked at each site that receives the performance award.

Minimum qualifying requirements

Only eligible employees who teach a minimum of 90% of the instructional days (162 days) during the school year may earn the performance award. Employees who teach less than 90% of the instructional days (162 days) are eligible for a portion of the performance award that is pro-rated for the number of whole days taught.

Professional Learning

Teachers will participate in professional learning related to the implementation of Collaborative Inquiry Teams at their site. In collaborative inquiry, teachers work together to identify common challenges, analyze relevant data, and test out instructional approaches to increase student learning. Each teacher will participate on a school-based team in their content or other self-selected area. Teachers must meet the requirements as stated below:

- ~~1. Each site will provide scheduled release time for teachers to meet in Collaborative Inquiry Teams. Staff must participate in a team to be eligible for the performance award. Employees who do not participate on a Collaborative Inquiry Team are ineligible for the performance award.~~
Each site will provide scheduled release time for teachers to meet in Collaborative Inquiry Teams. To be eligible for the performance award, staff must actively participate in a team. Participation requires attendance at a minimum of 12 meetings annually. Employees who do not meet this participation requirement are ineligible for the performance award.
2. Site administrators will be responsible for providing documentation of staff participation on the Collaborative Inquiry Teams.
3. Teachers assigned to multiple schools need to determine the school he/she will commit to Collaborative Inquiry Team participation for the year and communicate that to the principal of that site for monitoring.

Eligible employees not meeting the professional learning expectations do not qualify for any portion of the performance award.

Performance Dimensions

Performance dimensions are areas of achievement that are assessed in a school-based performance award plan. Student achievement is the cornerstone, but non-academic dimensions such as dropout rates, attendance rates, graduation rates, ratings of school quality by parents and students, input of

teachers and administrators, and civic participation may be considered.

The Performance Pay Design Team decided that the dimensions should be:

- closely tied to the district's strategic goals;
- clear enough to support and implement; and
- measurable, with enough data to supply a baseline for demonstrating student academic achievement.

After consideration of these criteria, the team decided to rule out the use of non-academic dimensions because they are not easily measured or influenced by teachers. As a result, student achievement is the only performance dimension in the CFSD School-Based Performance Award Plan at this time. Increasing student achievement is our principal mission as a school district and most clearly reflects our work as teachers.

Performance Measures

A number of potential assessment instruments were considered, in particular some that the district or individual schools might have created to focus on highly customized issues. The design team decided that for the pay awards, student achievement will be measured by students' scores on standardized tests. The team was guided by the following criteria:

- The measures must be statistically sound, with enough baseline data to calculate change.
- The measures must be recognized by the public as valid indicators of student achievement.
- Data management must be simple so it does not generate an undue burden for teachers or administrators.

The 2016-17 school year was the last safe harbor year for AzMERIT and School Accountability A-F letter grades for schools. An ad hoc committee was formed to study and recommend a new A-F Accountability system to the State Board of Education. Due to the uncertainty of the impact of the new accountability system on schools, it was decided to use Achievement Level Descriptors from AzMERIT for both English Language Arts and Math. These Achievement Level Descriptors were continued through the 2018-2019 school year.

State achievement testing was canceled in spring 2020. It was intended to be the first year of Arizona's Statewide Achievement Assessment for English Language Arts and Mathematics (AzM2). The Achievement Level Descriptors used in previous years were also used in 2020-2021 for AzM2 state achievement testing.

The state achievement tested changed to the Arizona Academic Standards Assessment (AASA) in 2021-2022 school year. The AASA uses the same Achievement Level Descriptors to describe student performance. These Achievement Level Descriptors are used for both English Language Arts and Math.

Performance Level Requirements

Arizona Academic Standards Assessment (AASA) provides Achievement Level Descriptors for both English Language Arts (ELA) and Math for grades 3-8. There are four achievement level descriptors; minimally proficient (Level 1), partially proficient (Level 2), proficient (Level 3), and highly proficient (Level 4).

A minimally proficient shows minimal understanding of the expectations for his or her tested grade. The student is highly likely to need support to be ready for the next grade.

A partially proficient student shows partial understanding of the expectations for his or her tested grade. The student is likely to need support to be ready for the next grade.

A proficient student shows a strong understanding of the expectations for his or her tested grade. The student is likely to be ready for the next grade.

A highly proficient student shows and advanced understanding of the expectations for his or her tested grade. The student is highly likely to be ready for the next grade.

For each tested content in grades 3-8 (ELA and Math) scaled scores are used to determine the achievement level of each student. The overall school's scaled score for each grade level will be used to determine what achievement level is obtained for the grade. The achievement levels are then assigned a rubric score:

Minimally Proficient= 1
Partially Proficient= 2
Proficient=3
Highly Proficient=4

The Arizona Statewide Achievement Assessment for Science (AzSCI) is Arizona's statewide achievement test that assesses the Arizona Science Standards. It is administered to students in grades 5, 8 and 11. Like the AASA assessment, it provides Achievement Level Descriptors for Science. The same achievement level descriptors are used. Again, the overall school's scaled score for each grade level will be used to determine what achievement level is obtained for the grade. The achievement levels are then assigned a rubric score (listed above).

Each grade level content rubric scores are then averaged for a school's achievement level. Schools scoring an average of 3.0 or above receive 100% of the performance award. Schools whose average is below 3.0, receive the percentage of the earned rubric score from 3.0. Example, a score of 2.88 is 96% of a score 3.0, so the school would receive 96% of the award.

High school students in grade 11 take the ACT assessment. It is anticipated that the Arizona Department of Education will determine the cut scores for the four performance levels. When cut scores have been determined and reported, the district will use the performance levels set for the ACT assessment in the same manner as we use the AASA performance levels for K-8.

In response to House Bill 2823, 33% of the performance award will be based on the individual teacher's overall performance classification on the Teacher Assessment Program evaluation as follows:

- Highly Effective- 100%
- Effective- 100%
- Developing 90%

- Ineffective- 0%

*This award amount 2025-2026 is based on the State's notice to the district that the Classroom Site Fund will be funded at \$842.00 per weighted student count for performance pay. In the event the actual per student amount is reduced or eliminated during the year, the performance pay award amount will be reduced accordingly.