

**South Texas ISD
Master's Degree in Teaching Field Incentive Program**

Rational: South Texas ISD encourages classroom teachers to obtain a Master's Degree in their content that will increase their knowledge in their subject area. Additional goals of this incentive are to encourage classroom teachers to:

1. start, continue, and complete a Master's Degree in their teaching field
2. demonstrate for students and colleagues the value of lifelong learning
3. stay in the classroom working directly with students and instruction
4. become eligible to teach dual credit high school and college classes
5. improve College Board Advanced Placement classroom instruction
6. conduct content specific staff development for their colleagues

Implementation: Beginning in the 2006-2007 school year, classroom teachers will receive a pay stipend as an incentive for pursuing a Master's Degree in their teaching field from an accredited college or university. Graduate level college courses taken prior to the 2006-2007 school year shall be counted toward the pay incentive if they are part of an authorized Master's Degree Plan in an approved field. Classroom teachers who prior to the 2006-2007 school year have completed a Master's Degree in an approved field shall be eligible and included in this incentive program. Beginning in the 2006-2007 school year, classroom teachers who have completed a Master's Degree in an approved field must annually conduct at least one content specific staff development session to be eligible for this incentive program the following school year. Beginning in the 2006-2007 school year, classroom teachers who are eligible for the two Master's Degree stipend must annually conduct at least two content specific staff development sessions to be eligible for this incentive program the following school year. The content specific staff development session must be available to all South Texas ISD teachers and staff and participated in by three or more colleagues.

The Master's Degree in Teaching Field Incentive Program will be paid in addition to the district's salary schedule, the general Master's Degree supplement, and other supplements annually approved by the South Texas ISD Board of Directors. This incentive pay shall be added to the annual pay, divided by twelve months, and included in the regular monthly paychecks throughout the school year.

The classroom teacher is responsible for submitting an official college transcript and an authorized degree plan to the South Texas ISD district personnel office prior to September 1 of each school year. Beginning in the 2006-2007 school year (first deadline September 1, 2007), classroom teachers with a Master's Degree in a qualifying field must have submitted an approved content specific staff development agenda and participant sign in sheet to the district personnel office prior to September 1 of each school year. Failure to submit the required documents by the September 1 deadline shall disqualify the teacher for all pay incentives available under this program during that school year. Teachers who have not obtained a

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Master’s Degree in a qualifying field and fail to earn 6 hours on an authorized degree plan towards that degree in the 12 months prior to September 1 of a given school year shall not qualify for any Master’s Degree in Teaching Field Incentive pay for that school year.

Qualifying classroom teachers will receive an annual pay stipend according to the following schedule of successfully completed college hours (passing grade documented on an official transcript).

6 hours	=	\$1,000
9 hours	=	\$1,100
12 hours	=	\$1,200
15 hours	=	\$1,300
18 hours	=	\$1,400
21 hours	=	\$1,500
24 hours	=	\$1,600
27 hours	=	\$1,700
30 hours	=	\$1,800
33 hours	=	\$1,900
36+ hours	=	\$2,000

Master’s Degree in an approved content field and conduct at least one content specific staff development session each school year = \$4,000

Completed two Master’s Degrees. One in an approved content field and a second in another area; must conduct at least two content specific staff development sessions each school year = \$6,000

Definitions and Guidelines:

Accredited College or University – Institutions must be accredited by one of the major regional accrediting associations (i.e. Southern Association of Colleges and Schools).

Approved Content Specific Staff Development Agenda – A written document describing a clear and well planned content specific staff development session. The campus principal shall review the plan for all of the items listed below and approve the plan by signing and dating the document. This written plan must include at least the following: 1) a description of the topic(s) of the session, 2) objectives of the

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training describing the content, skills, methods, etc. that the participants will learn, 3) a description of what classroom objectives this training supports, 4) the place, time, length, and intended audience of the session, 5) the method(s) of instruction to be used in the staff development training session, 6) the evaluation methods, formative and summative, to be used with the participants in the training session. This written plan must be submitted to the campus principal at least three weeks prior to the proposed date of the training. The classroom teacher conducting the approved staff development session must post the session on the district staff development website and send a copy of the campus principal signed document to the district personnel office at least two weeks prior to the training date.

Approved Field – Master's Degree must be in a subject area in which the classroom teacher is certified to teach. Degrees whose primary focus is administration, supervision, instructional technology, curriculum, diagnostician, special education, library science, and counseling do not qualify. These fields may be used as the second Master's Degree in the two Master's Degree stipend level. The determination of whether an authorized degree plan is in an approved field will be made by the Superintendent after considering all relevant factors, including the recommendation of the Campus Principal and the Deputy Superintendent.

Authorized Degree Plan – An official degree plan listing the courses required which leads to a Master's Degree in an approved field and signed by a college or university official from an accredited institution.

Content Specific Staff Development Session – A staff development session conducted by a Master's Degreed classroom teacher in their curriculum content area or in methods of delivery of instruction in their content area, or both. The classroom teacher conducting the approved staff development session must post the session on the district staff development website and send a copy of the campus principal signed approved agenda to the district personnel office at least two weeks prior to the training date. The session must be at a time and place available to all district teachers and staff (i.e. sessions may be scheduled on campus after school, evenings, on staff development days, or Saturday; sessions may not be scheduled during the school day or conference periods.)

Classroom Teacher – Teacher who works in the classroom providing direct instruction to students at least 50% of the normal teaching course load.

Qualifying Classroom Teacher – Classroom teachers who have (1) submitted to the district personnel office prior to September 1 of each school year an authorized

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degree plan for a Master's Degree in an approved field, (2) completed at least 6 hours of that authorized degree plan, (3) completed at least 6 hours of that authorized degree plan within the 12 months immediately preceding September 1 of the applicable school year, and (4) submitted to the district personnel office prior to September 1 of each school year an official college transcript with the hours completed toward the authorized degree plan. Classroom teachers who have completed a Master's Degree in an approved field automatically qualify and do not need to meet criteria 1 through 4 above; but must conduct the required annual content specific staff development. A determination of whether, and at what level, a classroom teacher qualifies for the Master's Degree in Teaching Field Incentive Program shall be based on course work completed prior to September 1 of the school year in question.

Participant Sign In Sheet – A written document or a copy of an electronic attendance sheet showing the names of the participants in a content specific staff development session. This document must have the date, time, length, and topic(s) of the session. The classroom teacher conducting the approved staff development session must send a copy of the participant sign in sheet to the district personnel office within two weeks after the training date. In order to be counted as a content specific staff development session toward this incentive program, at least three individuals other than the trainer must have participated in the session.

School Year – September 1 through August 31 of each school year.