

Teacher Supplemental PILOT Pay Program

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) – Award Instructions

Follow-up Surveys

When will we be asked to complete follow-up surveys? How long will we have to complete them?

The survey will be distributed Monday, November 21st. We're asking centers to complete them by Friday, December 2nd. Remember that if an owner/director oversees multiple centers, you will need to complete one follow-up survey for each center. Please reach out to the Louisiana Department of Education or Blanco Center if you do not receive a survey link for each of your centers. first follow-up

We will administer follow-up surveys every 3 months, or about 4 times a year. The next survey is planned for February 2023.

Can the survey be saved so we may work on it over time?

Yes. Qualtrics will save your progress once you click to the next screen. Simply finish a page, click to the next page and close out. Just re-open the link from your e-mail when you're ready to continue again. You may also bookmark the link if that's easier.

If our center expands in the 1st year, can we add new teachers to the supplemental pay program for year 2?

No, a center will still only be approved for the original slots listed on your initial application. New teachers can only join the PILOT program if they are replacing another teacher who has left or if they're filling a previously-approved vacant slot.

On the follow-up survey it says that one of my teachers does not have consent, but we already sent in their form and they received funds. What should I do?

Contact blancocenter@louisiana.edu and they will assist you. As long as you have sent in the teacher's consent form, they are allowed to participate and receive supplemental pay. Our records may take a couple weeks to update.

What if we need more time to complete the follow-up survey?

Please contact blancocenter@louisiana.edu to apply for an extension past the December 2nd deadline.

Payroll

How should I display the supplemental pay on my payroll? What asks will there be from the Department/the auditors, documentation-wise?

- If you can, show it as a line item
- If that's not possible, make sure you keep a record of the regular salary, the extra money, and the total for each teacher

A teacher who was participating in the program quit 2 days into a month. Should they receive their entire month's supplemental pay?

In instances where a teacher leaves before the month has ended, they should be paid half of their monthly supplement, regardless of how many days or weeks they worked that month. If another teacher is hired as a replacement, they will receive the other half of the monthly supplement. Any leftover funds during periods with a vacant teacher will be applied to your year 2 award.

What are the employer costs for?

Each award included an allowance for employer costs based on 12.65% of the annual award per teacher. It is an estimate and centers are not expected to use the full amount. These funds are intended to cover *employer* payroll taxes like Social Security and Medicare and any increase in fringe benefits that would be tied directly to the supplemental pay (i.e. life insurance, retirement, etc.).

Will I (the employer) pay taxes on the teacher stipends? Will the employees be taxed?

Please consult with your accountant or tax professional to determine taxability of awards. There are no special provisions of this program that exempt the funds from tax. To avoid burdening employers with increases in tax or other costs, the 12.65% allowance for employer costs was included in every award (any funds not used in year 1 will be used to adjust year 2 awards). Employees will still be subject to their normal taxes on the supplemental pay.

Are new employees eligible for backpay?

New employees are not eligible for a backpay “catch-up”. For new teachers receiving supplemental pay for the first time in October 2022, or later, you should calculate the amount of supplemental pay based on an annual grant amount and a full year of payments (for example, divide annual amount by 26 for bi-weekly payroll). Begin paying one supplement per paycheck. If you had a gap before a teacher opted in, or between a teacher leaving and filling that position, you may end the year with some unused funds for that position. You are not allowed to use “catch-up” payments to distribute unused funds after September 30, 2022.

I received too much money. What do I do with it?

Please track your grant funds closely during the year and don’t distribute any funds beyond the authorized amounts for each teacher, the \$500 director stipend, and the portion of the 12.65% allowance your center needs for employer costs tied directly to the teacher supplemental pay (you will need to document those costs). We collect data related to your actual costs and unused funds in follow-up surveys and adjust your Year 2 amount to account for unused funds left over at the end of year 1.

Do I need to notify the department when a teacher leaves or we hire a new teacher?

Not immediately. All you have to do is have new teachers complete a consent form [online](#), or email a copy to blancocenter@louisiana.edu. Please do keep records throughout the year and we’ll ask about teacher turnover on the follow-up surveys.

A staff member's hours have changed due to their nursing school schedule. They have gone from averaging over 30 hours per week to 20 hours per week. Can they continue to participate in the pilot?

Employees who have permanently scaled back their hours below 30 hours per week are no longer eligible to stay in PILOT supplement program. They can be replaced by a full-time teacher who chooses to opt-in and provide a consent form.

I had a full-time teacher that went back to college. I had a full-time teacher that went on maternity leave. Can they still receive supplemental pay?

If teachers on extended leave are still being paid a regular paycheck at a rate equivalent to full time work (e.g. on paid leave), then they can continue to receive the supplemental pay. However, teachers on extended leave not receiving a regular paycheck at a rate equivalent to full time work are not eligible for supplemental pay during that time. If a replacement teachers work full-time, they are eligible after they submit a consent form.

Are we supposed to take taxes out of the supplemental pay or is it covered by the 12.65%?

Employer taxes withheld is covered by the 12.65%, labeled “employer costs” on your award notification form.

If we are closed for the holidays, should the teachers still receive supplemental pay?

Yes. Supplemental pay will be the same each paycheck regardless of hours worked.

How should we handle staff working overtime?

The supplemental pay will not change - regardless of how many hours a teacher works each week.

Can I use the supplemental pay as an incentive for teachers to work more hours?

No, the supplemental pay must be paid regardless of teacher performance or attendance.

Do pay supplements need to follow my normal payroll schedule?

Not necessarily. They need to be paid out at least once a month however. After you have chosen a frequency, you should be sure to distribute the payments in equal amounts.

Awards and Eligibility

Does the final award include the \$500 stipend for directors/owners?

Yes

Some of my teachers are still debating whether to opt-in. When do they have to decide by?

For current teachers, the last date they were eligible to receive August and September backpay was September 30th. Now, new hires or current teachers will still be eligible for the supplemental pay, but the temporary window for backpay has expired.

I’m a director who works in the classroom, am I eligible?

Yes, but you must meet the following criteria:

- a) You were either listed on the initial application *or*
- b) Your center has an extra unused slot from the initial application
and

You can only pay yourself the pay supplement based on hours worked in the classroom (must be 30 hours minimum in the classroom)

How do I know if I received the payment?

You should have received it the first or second week of September. Most payments were labelled “DOE CAPS ARPA”.

What is the plan after 2 years of the study?

The LDOE will use the analysis provided by ULL to make recommendations of teacher pay statewide.

Calculating the supplemental pay – 10% Group Only--

I was selected into the 10% group and am unsure how to distribute payments?

The 10% stipend has a fixed award amount for each teacher calculated based on 10% of base, annual pay. That amount will stay *fixed for the year* and *must be distributed in equal payments* for each teacher throughout the year. The calculation of the annual amount was as follows:

(Hourly Pay) X (Average Hours worked per Week) X (10%) X (52 weeks)

Using this annual amount, divide that number by your number of paychecks per year. For a teacher paid monthly that would be 12, twice a month is 24, bi-weekly is 26, and weekly is 52. The result is the gross pay supplement you would add to each paycheck. You do not need to adjust the amount based on actual hours worked each week as long as the teacher is still considered a full-time employee. Please consult your accountant or tax professional to determine if you need to withhold taxes or other amounts from the paycheck, which could mean your teacher actually receives slightly less than that amount as a “net” stipend. Finally, you are not required to pay these supplements on your regular paycheck cycle if it is easier for you to pay the supplements separately. However, you are required to split up the annual amount so you are paying the supplement at least monthly, if not more frequently.

What if I hire a new employee making more than the original application slot allows? What if they’re making less?

We're asking centers to base payments on the *lower of the two hourly pay rates*. For example, if a teacher on the initial application leaves and was making \$12/hr, and they're replaced by a new teacher making \$9/hr, you'll need to recalculate the annual amount based on the formula above (using \$9/hr), then divide based on your pay frequency to determine the amount to add to each check. Similarly, if a teacher was making \$8/hr and they are replaced by a \$10/hr teacher, that role is only eligible for a pay supplement based on the \$8/hr rate.

Will teachers still receive supplemental pay if they work less than 30 hours in one week (i.e. due to sickness, vacation, etc.)

Yes, payments are the same regardless of hours worked once it is established that a teacher is full-time. If a teacher is permanently working less than 30 hours, they must be removed from the supplemental pay program.

What if my teacher is working more hours a week on average than the original application states?

You should benchmark supplement calculations to the original application. If they were enrolled at 30 hours and work 40 hours regularly now, the pay supplement is based on the original 30 hrs/week.

What if a teacher was registered for 40 hours and wants to permanently cut their hours down (i.e. to 30 hours/week)?

In the unique scenario where a teacher wants to work less hours, *but still maintain full-time status*, you must revise their 10% per-paycheck pay supplement based on the less hours (in this case 30 hours a week). We want to avoid teachers permanently scaling down their hours but making the same amount of money because of the stipend.

If we gave an employee a raise after application was completed do we base supplement pay on the initial application or current (higher) rate?

For now, supplemental pay has to be based on the (lower) approved application rate. If there is leftover funding for year 2, we may consider allowing an increase in supplemental pay based on a mid-year raise.

Can I use the leftover money in Year 2 for increasing benefits or for increasing teacher stipends who received raises?

Depending on available funding for Year 2, you may be able to provide increased stipends to accommodate teachers who have received a base pay raise since the initial application was completed in July 2022. The Blanco Center and Louisiana Department of Education will provide an update on this in the summer of 2023 as we continue to track program expenditures.

Can you provide an example of how the payments work? Will it change if an employee works overtime?

Let's say you have an employee who was approved at \$10/hr and they worked on average (at the time of the application) 40 hours a week. Their annual PILOT supplemental would be:

$$\text{\$10/hr} \times 40 \text{ hrs/week} \times 10\% \text{ bonus} \times 52 \text{ weeks} = \text{\$2,080}$$

For this teacher we sent you \$2,080 + \$263 (12.65% employer costs), totaling \$2,343

Let's say you run payroll every week. That means this teacher receives \$40 per paycheck before taxes (\$2,080/52 weeks). This \$40 will be subject to employee withholding taxes from federal income/state income/medicare/ etc. Therefore, this teacher will actually end up receiving closer to \$30 per paycheck.

This \$30 **stays the same every paycheck, regardless of how many hours they work.** This means working overtime or less than 30 hours in a random week will not affect their supplemental pay paychecks. You only need to adjust paychecks if an employee decides to permanently reduce their hours.

For the employer, your taxes will go up slightly. The \$263 in employer costs will be more than enough to cover your annual **increase** in payroll taxes for this employee.

My center award notification had all teachers making \$12 hour. Should I base pay off that amount or actual pay rates?

For centers who had not provided teacher consent by the time *Final Awards* were determined, your year 1 grant was based on \$12/hr for each teacher. Your teachers are only eligible to participate *after* completing a teacher consent form. For teachers that ultimately completed a consent form and agreed to participate, you will re-calculate an award amount based on their actual pay rate. Calculate with the provided formula above. In this case, your center may not use all year 1 funds. We will adjust your year 2 amount – it is important to continue tracking the use of funds throughout the year.

Miscellaneous Questions

I was selected into the \$2,080 group but chose to pay my teachers the 10% supplement. What should I do?

Centers are not allowed to choose which group they are in. The researchers at the Blanco Center followed a rigorous randomization process to determine this, and your award funding was based on this specific group. If you accidentally started paying your employees a supplement that was for a different group, please stop and pay them the correct amount. In this specific example, employees should have received \$2,080 per year. Divide that number by the number of paychecks you distribute yearly. If you pay your employees weekly, that means 52 paychecks and \$40 per week ($\$2,080/52$). This may mean a reduced or surplus amount for the first correct supplemental payment as a "catch-up".

Please contact the blancocenter@louisiana.edu if you started paying your employees the wrong amount and we'll help you get back on track.

If you have any other application questions, please feel free to contact the Louisiana Department of Education at (225)-252-9543 or (225)-250-7635 or at earlychildhood@la.gov or the Blanco Center at blancocenter@louisiana.edu.