

Frequently Asked Questions Pertaining to Compensation Items in SL 2021-180 for Charter, Regional, and Lab Schools

To assist public school units in efficiently administering the various bonus payments provided for in the Appropriations Act of 2021 (NC SL 2021-180), School Business has developed several “Frequently Asked Questions” documents, available on the DPI Finance and Business Services website [here](#). These FAQs provide guidance for all public school units regarding the various bonuses.

However, additional guidance is provided below pertaining to the bonuses and other new items in the Appropriations Act **that are unique to charter, regional and lab schools**. This document will be updated as additional guidance is requested or additional information becomes available.

1. How will my school receive the funds for employee bonuses that were included in the State Budget?

For the State-funded bonuses, including Teacher Bonuses (\$300), AP, IB, AICE, and CTE Bonuses (\$25-\$50 per qualifying student taught), Principal Bonuses (\$1,800):

- Charter schools will receive their portion of the Teacher Bonus funds through PRC 036 and their portions of the AP, IB, AICE, and CTE Bonuses and Principal Bonuses through PRC 048.
- Regional and Lab schools will receive the Teacher Bonus funds through PRC 038 and the AP, IB, AICE, and CTE Bonus and Principal Bonus funds through PRC 048.

The State Fiscal Recovery Fund Premium Pay Bonuses (Federally funded up to \$1,500):

- Charters and Regional schools will receive the bonuses through PRC 141
- Lab schools will receive their SFRF Premium Pay Bonus funds through the UNC Board of Governors rather than DPI.

ESSER III Teacher Bonuses (\$1,000):

Because they are Federal grant funds, funding for the ESSER III Teacher Bonuses (PRC 203) require the approval of an application for funding by the DPI Federal Programs Monitoring and Support Division before allotments can be made.

- Charters, Regional and Lab schools, if authorized will receive those bonuses in PRC 203.

2. Are charter schools required to pay the employee bonuses?

For the State-funded bonus amounts that a charter will receive through PRC 036 (and that a regional or lab school will receive through PRC 038), the charter has discretion to determine whether or not to provide bonuses through those funds and the amounts of bonus funding to be provided. However, DPI does encourage charters to utilize the funds provided for the purposes of providing the bonuses as outlined in statute.

For the SFRF Premium Pay Bonuses (PRC 141), NC SL 2021-180 Section 39.2(h) makes clear that all local education employees – defined as employees of local school administrative units. Innovative schools, regional schools, and public charter schools – are to be paid the bonuses. **Charter schools must pay their eligible employees the PRC 141 bonuses in the amounts outlined in the Appropriations Act.**

For the ESSER III Teacher Bonuses (PRC 203), if a charter, regional or lab school receives funding, it is required to use the funding for the bonuses as outlined in the Appropriations Act. Funding may not be used for any other purposes, and the charter must pay the bonuses in the amounts proscribed by statute.

3. *Are contracted support staff eligible for the premium pay bonuses (PRC 141)?*

Only employees of the entity receiving the PRC 141 funds are eligible to receive the bonuses; contracted support staff, including staff of a contracted educational management organization, are not eligible to receive the bonuses.

4. *Are temporary staff eligible to receive the ESSER III Teacher Bonuses or SFRF Premium Pay Bonuses?*

No. Only permanent employees are eligible to receive the bonuses.

A charter, regional or lab school must use the definitions of permanent and temporary employees in Policy ID#1.1 within the North Carolina Public Schools Benefits and Employment Policy Manual when determining whether an employee qualifies as temporary or part-time. Per the Manual, a temporary employee is a person who is either:

- Employed to fill a vacancy working less than 20 hours per week; or
- Employed to fill a vacancy for less than six full consecutive months of employment.

DPI will be updating the Compliance Supplements for auditors for the FY 2022 audit cycle to include testing requirements for PRCs 141 and 203 to ensure that only permanent employees of the organization receiving funds are paid bonuses. ***Any bonuses found to be paid to temporary employees or individuals who are not employees of the organization receiving funds will be subject to repayment in full by the organization.***

5. *The definition of teacher listed in FAQ for the \$300 teacher bonuses (PRC 045) states “those who are required to be paid from the legislative certified teacher salary schedule and are typically eligible to be paid from State PRC 001 and/or State PRC 007 and are working and coded at the school level.” As not all charter schools follow the State salary schedule and not all charter school teachers’ have DPI certification, are they eligible for the bonuses?*

Yes. For charter schools who do not use the State salary schedule, bonus payments can be made to teachers and instructional support staff who are coded to object codes in the 120 series and 130 series from your State funds. There is no requirement that the teachers are certified to be eligible for the bonus.

6. Are teachers paid from one of the COVID grant funds eligible to receive the PRC 203 ESSER III Teacher Bonus or the PRC 141 SFRF Premium Pay Bonuses?

No. Only teachers and instructional support personnel whose salaries are wholly, or in-part funded from State funds are eligible to receive the bonuses.

7. Are teachers paid from Federal funds (e.g., PRCs 050, 060) eligible to receive the PRC 203 ESSER III Teacher Bonus or the PRC 141 SFRF Premium Pay Bonuses?

No. Only teachers and instructional support personnel whose salaries are wholly, or in-part funded from State funds are eligible to receive the bonuses.

8. Are teachers paid from local funds eligible to receive the PRC 203 ESSER III Teacher Bonus or the PRC 141 SFRF Premium Pay Bonuses?

No. Only teachers and instructional support personnel whose salaries are wholly, or in-part funded from State funds are eligible to receive the bonuses.

9. Are charter schools eligible to receive funds from the \$100,000,000 appropriated for teacher supplements in the State Budget?

Yes. Per SL 2021-180 Section 7A.12.(d), the appropriations for supplemental funds for teacher compensation (PRC 071) are subject to the allocation of funds for charter schools.

- Charter schools will receive their allotments for these funds as additional allotments through PRC 036
- Regional, and Lab schools will receive their allotments for these funds as additional allotments through PRC 038

Funds were not included in the PRC 036 and 038 allotments made in December and will be updated after the final allotment is completed.

10. Are charter schools eligible to receive funds from the \$4,300,000 appropriated for teacher recruitment bonuses (PRC 062) in the State Budget?

NO. Per SL 2021-180 Section 7A.5 (a) (2), eligible employer is specific to “the governing board of a local school administrative unit...”