

## **FY24 Teacher Excellence Retention Incentive**

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### **I think my school is eligible, but it is not on the list, please add it.**

We are unable to add schools to the list. The list is provided to us from ISBE. If your school is not listed, it is not an eligible school.

#### **How do I get my school on the list?**

We are a third-party payer and are not involved in creating the eligibility list. You will need to reach out to ISBE with school eligibility questions. Our office can only base approval on the school listed on ISBE and this list. ISBE updated their list at the end of 2023. Please only use this new list. Annual Eligibility Report: [FY24 4K Incentive - All Eligible Schools by County](#) Eligibility is not determined by the NBRC. The current eligibility list is provided by the Illinois State Board of Education based on an annual state report. [Contact ISBE - Home Page](#)

#### **When do the two years for eligibility start?**

The incentive covers the 2023-2024 school year only.

#### **Will funding be available next year?**

Continuation of this incentive is based on ISBE's approval and availability of funds from ISBE each fiscal year.

#### **I moved from a non-hard to staff school to a hard to staff school mid-school year.**

##### **When can I apply?**

You have to work at a hard to staff school for a full school year to be eligible.

#### **Are those who became NBCTs this school year (23-24) eligible?**

Yes, new NBCTs from December are eligible for the incentive.

#### **What happens if you move schools after you have been approved?**

As long as you moved into a hard to staff school that is on ISBE's eligibility list you remain eligible. If you move from a hard to staff school to a school that is not on ISBE's eligibility list you are no longer eligible. You will not receive the full \$8000. Funds are disbursed \$4,000 at a time. The purpose of this incentive is to support those working in hard to staff schools.

**Is the Master Teacher designation and working as a teacher the same thing?**

No, Master Teacher Designation must be present on ISBE and you have to be under a teacher contract that can be verified on ISBE's website.

**Can Principals apply?**

No, administrators are not eligible.

**When is the incentive paid out?**

Assuming all documentation is turned in by NBCT, expect payment at the end of June.

**How does eligibility work?**

We base your eligibility on the status ISBE shows. As long as you are still 100 FTE under a teacher contract at a 30% or higher low-income school, you will still be eligible this year. This incentive works on a first come, first serve basis. The window closes March 29th. Eligible candidates will hear from our office in May.

**I have been found approved and eligible but there are not enough funds.**

You will get the funds first next year, provided ISBE approves the funding.

**When can I apply for my second year?**

If you applied during the '23-24 school year, please do not apply for fiscal year '25. Please do not submit more than one application.

**How can I advocate for improved funding?**

Reach out to your legislators and encourage them to support this initiative:

<https://www.ilga.gov/>

**What is a third party payer?**

We are a contractor that ISBE hires to support National Certified Teachers and Candidates.

**I have reached out to your office and have yet to hear back.**

If there are any issues with your application, we will reach out. We are processing thousands of applications and will reach out when/if you are approved.

**My school was on the eligibility list, now it is not.**

The eligibility of the schools for the Teacher Excellence incentive is obtained from the Illinois Report Card created ISBE. The data on the Illinois Report card is generated annually near the end of the year. This report classifies schools as "hard-to-staff" if the percentage of low-income student enrollment is 30% or more. Please check their updated list prior to applying.

**Do you know how many teachers are eligible and if there is enough money for all?**

There are currently over 4,000 teachers currently eligible in Illinois and 2,881 eligible schools statewide. Funds are available on a first come, first serve basis.

**Is this only for public schools?**

Yes, and charter schools that receive public funding.

**Am I eligible to get the \$8000 again after I have received the payout?**

No, the \$8000 is only offered one time. The payment is paid in \$4000 increments for two consecutive years.

**What does consecutive mean?**

You must work in a hard to staff school two school years in a row. If your school is no longer on ISBE's list or you move to a school that is not on ISBE's list you are no longer eligible, will not be paid the second \$4000 disbursement, and cannot reapply.

**Why can't I see an approved/eligible list?**

The eligible list will be posted on our website in May.

**Are school counselors eligible?**

Yes, if they are under a teaching contract and hold a teaching certificate.

**Do I need to apply again for my second year?**

No, if you are eligible, we will review your initial application again in May of 2025.

**Are school social workers or speech pathologists eligible?**

No, unless ISBE shows the current contract as a teacher contract. A current teacher contract in ISBE's database is required for eligibility.

**I serve several schools in my district. My school is not a hard to staff school, but the other schools I serve are. Do I qualify?**

We use what ISBE's database has as your home school to determine eligibility. If a school is not listed, you will not be found eligible. You can contact your HR to request a homebase school that they will need to report to ISBE. Our office will be unable to proceed with your application until that information is updated.

**Another NBCT in my school was approved but I have yet to hear back regarding my eligibility.**

We process on an individual basis. Some applications have a longer wait times due the verification of information and documents.

**I am or I will be on leave (Maternity, FMLA, etc.), will that affect my edibility for the Teacher Excellence Incentive?**

No, that will not affect your eligibility if you are or still employed at an eligible school.

**Why is my school not listed on the report card?**

Please refer to the Illinois School Report Card [business rules](#) to determine why a school may not appear on the report card. If you have questions about the business rules, please reach out to [reportcard@isbe.net](mailto:reportcard@isbe.net).