

BOARD AGENDA ITEM

March 12, 2024

SUBJECT:

Request Related to School Psychologist Pay Scale Placement

BACKGROUND:

The District continues to contend with staffing shortfalls among its school psychologist positions. There are currently three vacancies. Because these services must continue to be offered despite staffing issues, the District ultimately contracts at a cost that exceeds the cost of having an ACPSD-employed school psychologist.

ADMINISTRATIVE CONSIDERATION:

The Administration is seeking ways to address the staffing shortages. We have found difficulty attracting psychologists (despite a show of interest from candidates) from other districts and States due to pay. Newly hired school psychologists' pay scale placements are currently based on the service credit formula that is used for all non-teacher scale positions. The Administration believes that step placement based on the years of experience on a school psychologist's certificate would provide a more beneficial placement and be more attractive to candidates, in most instances. [For example, a school psychologist with 20 years' experience would currently be placed 20% higher (approximately, depending on the closest step) than the beginning step. Step placement would be \$73,671/step 13 in this example. In comparison, step 20 placement would be \$81,293.]

The Administration recommends basing placement on a school psychologist's certificate or the results of the service credit formula, whichever is more beneficial. Furthermore, in fairness to existing school psychologists, the Administration recommends applying the handling to current employees. Upon review, we found that two current employees would benefit from the proposed handling, if approved.

The cost of this change would ultimately depend upon the experience of individuals filling vacant positions; however, costs would still be lower than contracting services.

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve for (1) newly hired psychologists' placement to be based on certificate years or based on service credit, whichever is more beneficial and (2) adjustment of placement for current school psychologists who would benefit from the new handling with an effective date of March 1, 2023.

PREPARED BY:

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