IMPACT*plus*

What is IMPACT*plus*?

IMPACT*plus* is the performance-based compensation system for Washington Teachers' Union (WTU) members.

Why does DCPS have a performance-based pay system?

DCPS and the WTU agreed in the most recent teachers' contract to develop and implement a performance-based pay system because we felt it was essential to demonstrate — in the boldest way possible — how much we value the work you do. IMPACT*plus* is the product of this groundbreaking collaboration. We are proud that outstanding DCPS educators are now being paid what they deserve. In fact, some have seen their compensation more than double. We recognize that you did not choose to enter the field of education for monetary reasons. But we also recognize that you deserve to be compensated as true professionals.

Who created IMPACT*plus*?

As noted above, DCPS and the WTU collaboratively developed the system. As part of this process, we examined compensation models from around the country.

Who is eligible for IMPACT*plus*?

All Effective and Highly Effective teachers in high-poverty schools are eligible. Any WTU member who earns an IMPACT rating of Highly Effective is eligible for an annual bonus. Highly Effective and Effective teachers who reach the Advanced Teacher LIFT stage, and Highly Effective teachers who reach the Distinguished Teacher and Expert Teacher LIFT stages will be eligible for base salary increases as outlined later in this section.

How do I know if I am a WTU member?

All teachers, instructional coaches, mentor teachers, librarians, counselors, related service providers, and a handful of other educators are part of the WTU. If you are not sure about your status, please contact the WTU at 202-293-8600.

How will I know if I receive a Highly Effective rating?

You can find out by logging into the IMPACT database at impactdcps.dc.gov. If you need assistance logging in, please contact the IMPACT team at 202-719-6553 or impactdcps@dc.gov.

How will I know my LIFT stage?

You can determine your LIFT stage by referring to your LIFT guidebook, which is available on the DCPS website. Beginning in September, you can also find this information by logging into the IMPACT database at impactdcps.dc.gov.

Do I need to be a "full" union member to be eligible for IMPACT*plus*, or is "agency fee" status enough?

You only need "agency fee" status to be eligible for IMPACT*plus*. To learn more about this status, please contact the WTU at 202-293-8600.

How much can I earn under IMPACT*plus*?

Depending upon which IMPACT group you are in, and depending upon other factors like the poverty level of your school, you can earn nearly $130,000 annually.

How does IMPACT*plus* compare with the previous compensation system?

Under the previous contract, the starting salary was $42,369 and it took 21 years to achieve the maximum salary of $87,584. Under IMPACT*plus*, a Highly Effective teacher with a master's degree has the potential to earn $74,975 in her/his first year, and can achieve the maximum salary of $126,540 in just nine years.

How does it work?

For teachers, IMPACT*plus* has two parts: an annual bonus and an increase in base salary.

PART 1: ANNUAL BONUS

How does the annual bonus work?

As noted in the introduction, to qualify for an IMPACT*plus* annual bonus, you must have an IMPACT rating of Highly Effective. With this rating, you will be eligible for an annual bonus according to the chart below.

YOUR IMPACT RATING	YOUR SCHOOL'S POVERTY LEVEL	YOUR BONUS	YOUR ADD-ON IF YOU ARE IN ONE OF THE 40 LOWEST-PERFORMING SCHOOLS	YOUR TOTAL POSSIBLE ANNUAL BONUS
Highly Effective	High-Poverty	$10,000	Additional $10,000	$20,000
	Low-Poverty	$2,000	n/a	$2,000

How do I know what my school's poverty level is?

Each school's poverty level is listed on the DCPS website at dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/impactplus. If you work at more than one school, we will use the average of your schools' free and reduced-price lunch rates.

Why do teachers in high-poverty schools receive higher bonuses?

One of the goals of IMPACT*plus* is to help our highest-poverty schools attract and retain outstanding educators. This is why we are offering higher bonuses to the individuals who serve in these schools.

In the past, teachers in Group 1 have received an additional add-on to their IMPACT*plus* bonuses. Will this be the case for the 2014-2015 school year?

No. Due to the transition in assessments from the DC CAS to the PARCC test and the fact that IVA will not be included as a component in final IMPACT scores for the 2014-2015 school year, there will not be an additional Group 1 bonus add-on this year.

Why do teachers who work in the 40 lowest-performing schools receive a special add-on?

One of the goals outlined in DCPS's five year strategic plan, *A Capital Commitment*, is that by 2017, our 40 lowest-performing schools will increase proficiency rates by 40 percentage points. We felt it was appropriate to recognize the most effective educators in these schools with higher bonuses, given the additional challenges they face.

How do I know if I work in one of the 40 lowest-performing schools?

If you are not sure, please ask your administrator. You may also contact the IMPACT team at 202-719-6553 or impactdcps@dc.gov.

If I retire at the end of the 2014–2015 school year, will I be eligible for the bonus?

Yes.

Will the bonus count towards my pension calculation?

No.

If I resign at the end of the 2014–2015 school year, will I be eligible for the bonus?

No. In addition to recognizing and rewarding excellent teachers, IMPACT*plus* aims to retain them. Thus, to be eligible for the bonus, you must be employed by DCPS, or be a new entrant to the teachers' retirement system, at the time of the bonus distribution.

If I am separated from the school system for disciplinary reasons, will I be eligible for the bonus?

No.

If I am employed by DCPS for only part of the school year, will I receive the full bonus?

No. Assuming you are employed by DCPS (or are a new retiree) at the time of the bonus distribution, your bonus will be prorated according to the number of full months you worked during the school year in which you earned the Highly Effective rating.

Are there any conditions attached to accepting the bonus?

Yes. After accepting the bonus, you will no longer have access to the "extra year," early retirement, or buyout options if you are excessed in the future and cannot find a placement at another school. To learn more about these options, please consult the WTU contract (Section 4.5.5) at wtulocal6.org.

Am I required to accept the bonus?

No. If you would prefer not to give up the "extra year," early retirement, or buyout options related to excessing, you may forgo the bonus.

How will I communicate to DCPS whether I want to accept the bonus?

Once final IMPACT reports are available, the IMPACT team will notify you via email if you are eligible for an IMPACT*plus* bonus. You will submit your acceptance decision by logging into the IMPACT database at impactdcps.dc.gov. DCPS will provide more details at that time.

When will I receive my bonus?

All bonuses will be paid by the end of the calendar year in which they are earned.

Will the bonus be subject to District of Columbia and federal income taxes?

Yes.

If I have additional questions about the annual bonus, whom should I contact?

Please contact the IMPACT team at 202-719-6553 or impactdcps@dc.gov.

If I earn a Highly Effective rating again next school year (2015–2016), will I be eligible for another bonus?

Yes. You will be eligible every year that you earn a Highly Effective rating.

If I have additional questions about the annual bonus, whom should I contact?

Please contact the IMPACT team at 202-719-6553 or impactdcps@dc.gov.

PART 2: INCREASE IN BASE SALARY

How does the increase in base salary work?

Base salary increases for teachers align with the Leadership Initiative For Teachers (LIFT)* career ladder.

YOUR SCHOOL'S POVERTY LEVEL	YOUR LIFT STAGE	YOUR SERVICE CREDIT
High-Poverty	Advanced	2 Years
	Distinguished	5 Years†
	Expert	5 Years†

† In addition to the five-year service credit, teachers at the Distinguished Teacher stage will move to the master's degree salary band if not already there, and teachers at the Expert Teacher stage will move to the PhD salary band if not already there.

ADVANCED TEACHER STAGE

At the Advanced Teacher stage, teachers in high-poverty schools will be eligible for an increase in their base salaries in the form of a service credit. Advanced Teachers will be granted a two-year service credit, meaning that they will be paid as if they had two additional years in the system.

For example, let's imagine that it is the end of the 2014–2015 school year, and your IMPACT rating qualifies you to move to the Advanced Teacher stage. Let's also imagine that you just finished your fourth year of teaching in a high-poverty school, and that you have a master's degree. For the 2015–2016 school year — your fifth year of teaching — we would actually pay you as if you were in your seventh year (5 years + 2 year service credit). In this case, your salary would increase from $61,158 to $69,132 — a base salary increase of nearly $8,000.

DISTINGUISHED TEACHER STAGE

At the Distinguished Teacher stage, teachers in high-poverty schools will be eligible for an increase in their base salaries.

The base salary increase will take two forms. First, teachers will move to the master's degree salary band if they are not already there. Second, they will be granted a five-year service credit, meaning that they will be paid as if they had five additional years in the system.

For example, let's imagine that it is the end of the 2014–2015 school year, and your IMPACT rating qualifies you to move to the Distinguished Teacher stage. Let's also imagine that you just finished your fifth year of teaching in a high-poverty school, and you have a bachelor's degree only. For the 2015–2016 school year — your sixth year of teaching — we would actually pay you as if you had a master's degree and were in your eleventh year (6 years + 5 year service credit). In this case, your salary would increase from $56,655 to $81,335 — a base salary increase of nearly $25,000.

** The Leadership Initiative For Teachers (LIFT) is explained in full in a separate guidebook that is posted on the DCPS website.*

EXPERT TEACHER STAGE

At the Expert Teacher stage, teachers in high-poverty schools will be eligible for an increase in their base salaries.

The base salary increase will take two forms. First, teachers will move to the PhD salary band if they are not already there. Second, they will be granted a five-year service credit.

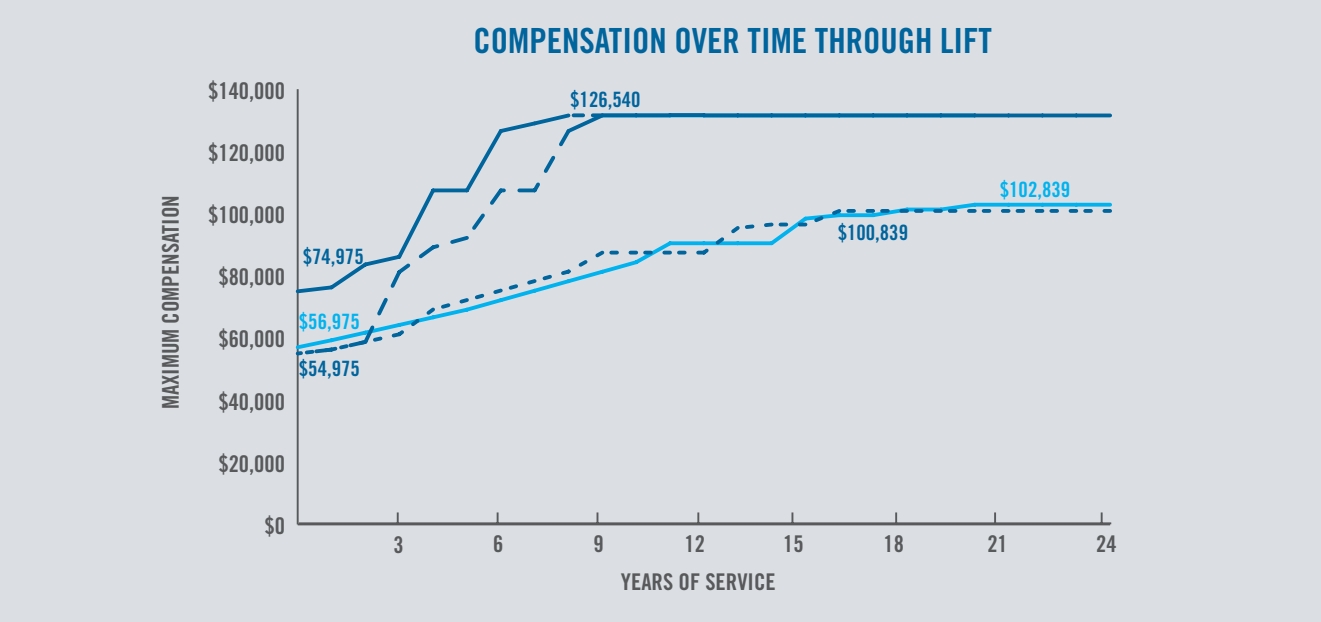
For example, let's imagine that it is the end of the 2014–2015 school year and your IMPACT rating qualifies you to move to the Expert Teacher stage. Let's also imagine that you have a master's degree, and you just finished your ninth year of teaching in a high-poverty school. For the 2015–2016 school year — your tenth year of teaching — we would actually pay you as if you had a PhD and were in your fifteenth year (10 years + 5 year service credit). In this case, your salary would increase from $75,232 to $92,613 — a base salary increase of more than $17,000.

How will my compensation increase over time through LIFT?

All Effective and Highly Effective teachers will continue to earn the annual step increases outlined in the Washington Teachers' Union contract. However, at the Advanced, Distinguished, and Expert Teacher LIFT stages, teachers will earn significantly larger base salary increases, as outlined above.

The graph below represents compensation over time for four hypothetical teachers with master's degrees:

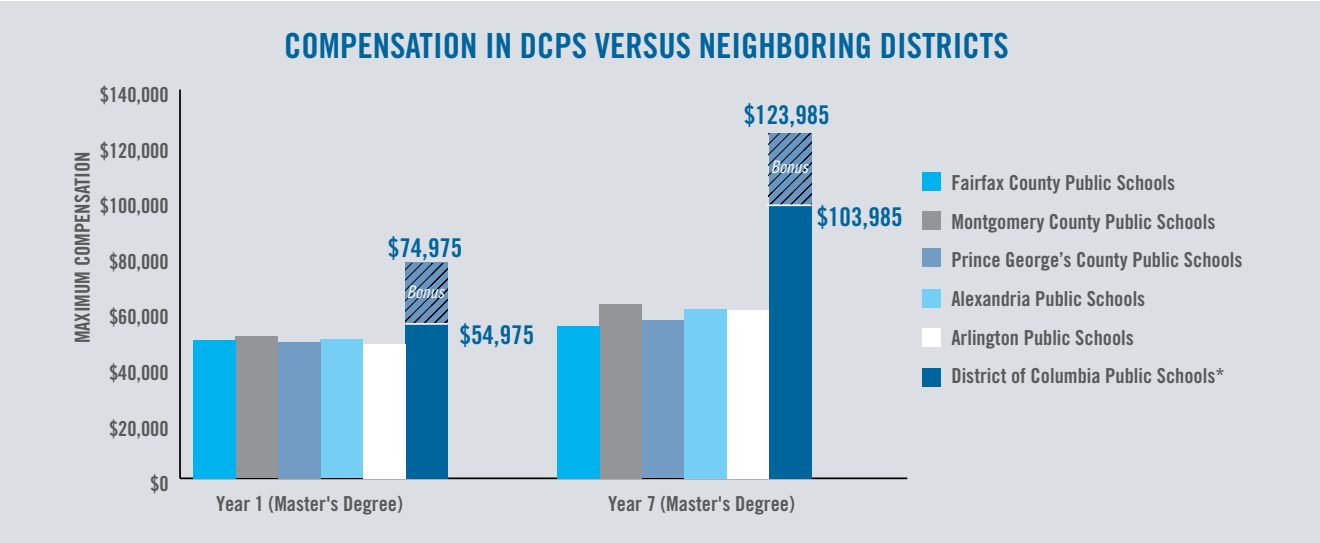
- **Teacher 1:** A teacher who consistently earnes Highly Effective ratings at a high-poverty school*
- **Teacher 2:** A teacher who earns three years of Effective ratings before earning Highly Effective ratings at a high-poverty school*
- **Teacher 3:** A teacher who consistently earnes Effective ratings at a high-poverty school*
- **Teacher 4:** A teacher who earns Highly Effective ratings at a low-poverty school*

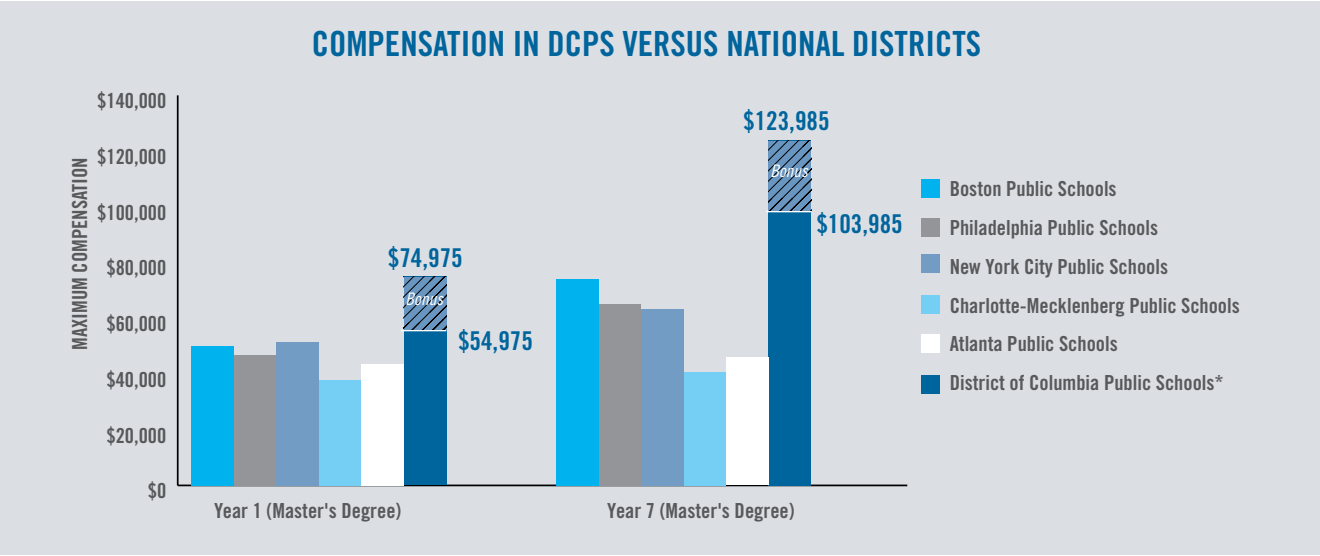


** Note: In these two cases, the compensation figures above assume that the teacher earns the maximum annual bonus amount of $20,000 because she or he earns a Highly Effective IMPACT rating and works in one of the 40 lowest-performing schools. In cases in which teachers in high-poverty schools earn Highly Effective IMPACT ratings but are not in one of the 40 lowest-performing schools, they will be eligible for a bonus of $10,000.*

How are DCPS teachers compensated compared to teachers in other districts?

Outstanding DCPS teachers are compensated at unprecedented levels. As shown in the following figures, DCPS teachers earn significantly more than teachers in other districts in the DC metro area, as well as teachers in similar urban school districts across the country. In fact, teachers' salaries in DCPS exceed those in other districts even without including the annual bonuses and base salary increases that are available to high performers.





** Note: The compensation figures for DCPS reflect the maximum salaries for Highly Effective teachers who earn the maximum bonus amount of $20,000 because they work in one of the 40 lowest-performing schools. In cases in which teachers in high-poverty schools earn Highly Effective IMPACT ratings but are not in one of the 40 lowest-performing schools, they will be eligible for a bonus of $10,000.*

Will the service credit count for retirement eligibility?

No. Your retirement eligibility will still depend on the actual number of years you have worked in the school system.

For how many years do I need to teach in a high-poverty school in order to qualify for the base salary increase?

You must be teaching in a high-poverty school during the year in which you qualify for a service credit and during the following school year.

For example, imagine that you are at the Established Teacher stage during the 2014–2015 school year. If you earn a Highly Effective rating at the end of the year, you will begin the 2015–2016 school year at the Advanced Teacher stage. In order to qualify for the two-year service credit at the Advanced Teacher stage, your school in 2014–2015 and in 2015–2016 must be high-poverty.

Are there any conditions attached to accepting the increase in base salary?

Yes. After accepting the increase, you will no longer have access to the "extra year," early retirement, or buyout options if you are excessed in the future and cannot find a placement at another school. To learn more about these options, please consult the WTU contract (Section 4.5.5) at wtulocal6.org.

Am I required to accept the increase in base salary?

No. If you would prefer not to give up the "extra year," early retirement, or buyout options related to excessing, you may forgo the increase in base salary.