

Budget May Prevent Salary Cut for New Assistant Principals

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School district leaders filling vacancies for assistant principals for 2009-10 may want to consider a provision that is expected to be in the final state budget that would prevent a pay decrease for any teacher who becomes an assistant principal.

“While this is not yet state law, we hope that school districts statewide will take notice of this provision now and ensure that any new assistant principal does not suffer financially for wanting to serve as a school leader,” said Dr. Shirley Prince, the new Executive Director of the North Carolina Principals and Assistant Principals’ Association (NCPAPA).

Both the House and Senate included identical budget bill language that was requested by NCPAPA and NCASA to correct a problem that has faced many other first-time assistant principals in the past and has discouraged numerous others from becoming school leaders.

The budget bills state: "A teacher who becomes an assistant principal without a break in service shall be paid, on a monthly basis, at least as much as he or she would earn as a teacher employed by that local school administrative unit." The budget bills further state that this provision becomes "effective July 1, 2009 and applies to all persons initially employed as assistant principals on or after that date."

Prince said she hopes that the state budget bill that ultimately gets signed into law will include these same provisions and that school districts will honor this likely law change now as they hire new assistant principals for the upcoming school year.

“We also wish there was some way this provision could be retroactive to cover all current assistant principals who took a pay cut when they left the classroom,” Prince said. “While that is not financially feasible due to state budget constraints, we want those assistant principals to know we are actively involved in working to implement a new National Board Certification process for school leaders that we hope they can take advantage of in the near future.”