

CONTRACTUAL BENEFITS: CAREER AWARDS, SALARY LANES, SALARY STEPS, ACADEMIC LADDER CREDITS

This circular will remain in effect unless rescinded or superseded by a subsequent version.

Boston Public Schools offer numerous contractual benefits such as career awards and salary lane increases based on the completion of accredited coursework, degrees, academic ladder credits, and continuing education units. To receive these benefits, employees must submit the appropriate documentation (described below) to the Office of Human Capital. Once their documentation is submitted, employees will receive confirmation via email, within 4 to 6 weeks, except during peak seasons.

1. CAREER AWARDS

Career awards are issued monthly by anniversary date, based on a monthly reporting cycle in the Office of Human Capital, and vary by union affiliation. PS03s are no longer needed to initiate this process, *except for BASAS members*, who are required to submit a request via PS03. If an award is not received, the employee should then submit a PS03 to the Office of Human Capital to address the issue:

- In the “Pay Adjustment” category, place a checkmark in the career award block and specify the career award requested.
- Indicate initial date of employment.
- Sign and date the “Originator’s signature/date” block.

Career awards are effective on an employee's anniversary date. Employees will see their career award reflected within 2-3 pay periods. Denied applicants will receive an email from the Office of Human Capital (to the employee's bostonpublicschools.org email address) providing the reason for the denial.

Paraprofessionals: Career awards are awarded by the number of working days completed, not (wholly) by academic year completed. The schedule of awards is as follows:

Step	Length of Service
2	3 Years
3	6 Years
4	9 Years
5	12 Years
Career Award	1,800 Paraprofessional Seniority Days
Career Award	2,800 Paraprofessional Seniority Days
Career Award	3,800 Paraprofessional Seniority Days
Career Award	4,800 Paraprofessional Seniority Days
Career Award	5,800 Paraprofessional Seniority Days

BTU: Career Awards are awarded at the completion of the threshold year, for the start of the next academic year.

All other collective bargaining units: Career awards are awarded on an employee's anniversary date based on a monthly reporting cycle.

2. SALARY LANES

Employees who qualify by contract for a change in salary lane as

a result of the completion of accredited course work and degrees must submit a PS-03 to receive this benefit. Lane changes are *not* made automatically.

- In the “Pay Adjustment” category, place a checkmark in the salary lane block and specify the salary lane requested.
- Attach *official original transcripts* documenting accredited courses and/or degree completion. Transcripts for accredited graduate coursework must include a passing grade and/or a degree conferred date for acceptance. Electronic transcripts must be sent directly from the institution to EmployeeServices@BostonPublicSchools.org. Boston Public Schools In-Service and Academic Ladder certificate(s) must be printed. An In-service/Academic Ladder transcript summary is not acceptable.
- Sign and date the “Originator’s signature/date” block.
 - Employees should only submit credits/degrees when applying for salary lane advancement; employees should not submit single or multiple credits below the threshold for lane advancement.

Approved applicants can expect to see a change in their salary within 3-4 pay periods following submission of a salary lane application. Denied applicants will receive an email from the Office of Human Capital (to the employee’s bostonpublicschools.org email address) providing the reason for the denial. Please note that this process will take longer in the summer months (June – September).

Salary lane changes will be processed retroactively to September 1 if the application is received in the Office of Human Capital by the close of business on September 30. Otherwise, the change will be effective on the first day of the month following complete

submission of all documentation during the school year. Submissions after May 31 will be effective for the start of the following school year.

Note: Boston Public Schools reserves the right to approve salary lane advancement for only those courses that are related to the field of education or enhance advancement up the educational career ladder. Requests for pre-approval of any courses shall be responded to by the Office of Human Capital promptly. Courses must meet the following criteria:

Accredited College or University Courses

1. Courses must be granted by an accredited college or university listed on the Accredited Institutions of Post-Secondary Education registry and deemed acceptable by the American Council on Education.
2. Courses must award graduate credit. If the transcript does not clearly state the course is at graduate level, then the applicant must supply a letter from the institution verifying the course is offered for graduate credit. Note: for paraprofessionals, undergraduate credit and in-service credits are acceptable for salary lane advancement, up to a bachelor's degree.
3. Courses are evaluated by the semester hour only. Courses taken by the quarter credit hour will be converted by the metric specified by the respective institution. If a conversion rate is not specified, Boston Public Schools will use a .75 to 1.0 ratio.
4. Courses must clearly relate to the field of education in the Boston Public Schools.

Academic Ladder Credit

An Academic Ladder Credit, also known as an “ALC”, is a new “credit” for academic lane advancement. ALCs are equal in value to in-service credits, with no cap on the amount one can earn. Each ALC course has a clearly articulated target competency and a range of options for demonstrating this competency through artifacts or reflections. ALCs require approximately 12 hours of “seat time” per credit. Credit will not be awarded until the educator submits a final product demonstrating successful implementation of a specific instructional practice. Options for demonstrating may include lesson or unit plans, videos, student work analyses, reflections, or some combination of these.

Employees should only submit ALC credits/degrees when applying for salary lane advancement. When doing so, employees should submit the actual ALC completion certificate from Vector. Only ALCs approved by the Boston Public Schools will be awarded credit for salary.

Available ALC courses can be found on Vector. Additionally, a list of frequently asked questions can be found in APPENDIX A.

In-Service Courses

Course credit may be granted for courses previously offered by the Boston Public Schools. Only courses approved by the Boston Public Schools will be awarded credit for salary purposes. Employees should submit the actual in-service completion certificate, available on Vector. The transcript summary is not accepted. Please note that no more than 30 in-service credits may be used for lane advancement during each employee's lifetime career with Boston Public Schools.

Continuing Education Units (CEUs)

CEUs, also known as contact hours, are accepted at the rate of 15 contact hours for 1 graduate credit, not to exceed 30 graduate credits. Please note that .1 CEU is the equivalent of 1 contact hour. This applies to nurses, speech and language pathologists, school psychologists, social workers, adjustment counselors, guidance counselors, occupational and physical therapists, vision teachers, and lead sign language interpreters only. CEUs are only accepted from approved CEU providers. The Boston Public Schools is not an approved CEU provider.

Professional Development Points (PDPs)

Although professional development points may be awarded for the completion of in-service courses, they are not applicable for salary lane advancement. PDPs are most used as evidence toward maintaining professional licensure.

3. SALARY STEPS

Salary step increases are automatically awarded based on the date specified in the applicable collective bargaining agreement. An employee who believes that they are being compensated on an incorrect step of the salary schedule should submit a PS-03 to the Office of Human Capital, as follows:

- In the "Pay Adjustment" category, place a checkmark in the salary step block and specify the salary step requested.
- Include a brief explanation for the request in the "Additional Explanation" section.
- Sign and date the "Originator's signature/date" block.

Salary Steps as Related to Inside and Outside Service

There is no longer a cap on the amount of Inside Service credits available for salary step adjustments/placement. Instead, the credit is based on prior eligible years of service. To qualify, an employee must have worked a minimum of 120 days in a qualifying academic year.

A maximum of three years is awarded for an outside service salary step adjustment. To qualify, an employee must provide original documentation from a previous employer, specifically certifying the named employee has completed a minimum of 160 days in the appropriate licensed capacity for each year.

Individuals should not knowingly falsify information and should understand that applications are signed under the pains and penalties of perjury.

As salary lane and salary step advancements are contractual entitlements, employees should forward these PS-03 requests directly to the Office of Human Capital. No further signatures are necessary.

SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT DATES AND DEADLINES

Date	Activity
May 31	Academic year deadline for salary lane changes to be processed effective in the same year.
June, July & August	Submissions effective for the start of the next school year.
September 30	Deadline for submitting salary lane changes to be processed retroactively to September 1.

4. NATIONAL BOARD-CERTIFIED TEACHERS

When you achieve or renew National Board Certification, please submit the official notification letter and a [PS03 Form](#). The Office of Human Capital will review and verify the candidate's successful completion of board certification, inception and expiration dates via the NBPTS website. The National Board differential is effective on the 1st of the month following an eligible submission. Recertifications will be effective on the renewal date as long as the request is received prior to the expiration date. If recertification received after the original expiration date the renewal will be dated for the first of the month following receipt.

For more information about this circular, contact:

Owner:	Employee Services
Department:	Office of Human Capital
Mailing Address:	Bruce C. Bolling Building, 2300 Washington Street, Roxbury, MA 02119
Fax:	617-635-7957
Email:	employeeservices@bostonpublicschools.org

Mary Skipper, Superintendent

APPENDIX A

Academic Ladder Credits: Frequently Asked Questions

- **What is an Academic Ladder Credit (ALC), and how does it differ from an in-service credit?**

An Academic Ladder Credit, also known as ALC, is a new “credit” for academic lane advancement. ALCs are equal in value to in-service credits, with no cap on the amount one can earn. ALCs require approximately 12 hours of “seat time” per credit, but credit is not awarded until the educator submits a final product demonstrating successful implementation of a specific instructional practice.

- **What do I need to do to earn ALCs?**

ALCs are earned by demonstrating competence in the practices learned in the course. While courses are approximately 12 hours of instruction (in person or online), credits are not awarded simply for attendance and participation. Each ALC course will have a clearly articulated target competency and a range of options for demonstrating it through artifacts or reflections.

- **What kinds of options might be available for demonstrating competencies?**

Each course will be different, but options include: lesson or unit plans, videos, student work analyses, reflections, or some combination of these.

- **Who determines whether I have demonstrated a competency?**

A team of BTU educators and central office administrators

will review product submissions and award credits using a rubric made available to all course participants. Those who do not earn credits on their first submission will receive feedback and an opportunity to resubmit.

- **Am I eligible to take any ALC course I want?**

While any educator is technically able to apply for any ALC course, because earning an ALC requires demonstrating competence in a skill, it will be difficult to complete courses that are not relevant to your context. OHC or APL reserves the right to refuse admittance to those educators for whom the content may not be relevant.

- **Is there a limit to the number of ALCs I can receive in a year or over my career?**

No. ALCs are not subject to the same cap as in-service credits.

- **Can you use ALCs in combination with graduate credits, etc. towards advancement?**

Yes. Employees may use combinations of graduate credits, in-service credits and ALCs for lane advancement. However, a teacher must possess a master's degree to advance to the master's lanes and must possess a doctorate degree to advance to the doctorate lane.

- **How do I submit my ALC credits to the Office of Human Capital for credit toward lane advancement?**

Employees should only submit ALC credits/degrees when applying for salary lane advancement. When doing so, employees should submit the actual ALC completion

certificate from TeachPoint, along with any other graduate or in-service credits, and a completed [PS03](#) to the Office of Human Capital (4th Floor, Bolling Building). Only ALCs approved by the Boston Public Schools will be awarded credit for salary.

- **Are ALC courses portable outside BPS?**

No.

- **Are non-BTU members eligible to earn ALCs?**

While non-BTU members may participate in ALC courses, only BTU members are eligible to receive credits.

- **Are paraprofessionals eligible to receive ALCs?**

Yes. Please note that because earning an ALC requires demonstrating competence in a skill, it will be difficult to complete courses that are not relevant to your role or context. OHC or APL reserves the right to refuse admittance to those educators for whom the content may not be relevant.

- **I have an idea for an ALC course. How can I make that happen?**

Contact the Office of Academics and Professional Learning.