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Mesa Public Schools  
**Career Ladder Program**

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## Program Components

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### Individual Component

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Career Ladder Accountability Support System (CLASS) is the individual component. It is an optional program available to contract employees who

- are in a position that requires a current Arizona teacher or professional certificate
- hold a current Arizona teacher or professional certificate
- are evaluated on a teaching evaluation instrument
- meet all MPS Career Ladder documentation requirements, student achievement and placement criteria
- are compensated on an MPS teacher salary schedule
- are eligible under the phase-out participation guidelines

#### **Career Ladder Phase-Out Participation Guidelines (see page 17)**

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### Optional Incentive Component

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The district goal process is available to most certified and classified employees and is based on continuous improvement of goals set in the area of quality service.

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## Individual Component

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# 2013-2014

# CLASS

Career Ladder Accountability Support System

# Handbook

for Application and  
Professional Records

**MESA**  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**Career Ladder Department**  
549 North Stapley Drive, Building 2  
Mesa, Arizona 85203-7203  
480.472.0350  
[www.mpsaz.org/cl](http://www.mpsaz.org/cl)

**Superintendent**  
Dr. Michael Cowan

**Career Ladder Director**  
Patricia Christie

# Table of Contents

## I. Introduction

A. Important 2013-2014 Dates .....	4
B. Letter from the Director .....	5
C. MPS Career Ladder Mission and Goals.....	6

## II. Program Overview

A. MPS Career Ladder Program Administration.....	7-9
• State Level.....	7
Career Ladder Advisory Committee (CLAC)	
Arizona Career Ladder Network (AZCLN)	
• District Level .....	7-8
Career Ladder Program Staff	
Career Ladder Implementation Committee (CLIC)	
• Communication Model .....	8
• Publications .....	8-9
B. Periodic Program Review and Evaluation.....	10

## III. Program Participation

A. Standards for Placement .....	11
B. Professional Writing Standards.....	12
• Six Trait Analytic Writing Rubric – Conventions.....	13
C. Professional Records.....	14-16
• MPS Evaluation for Placement on Resident Level and Career Level .....	15
• Higher Level Instructional Responsibilities (HLIR) .....	15-16
D. Participation Process and Steps .....	17-25
• Career Ladder Phase-Out Participation Guidelines .....	17
• Contract Teaching Experience Guidelines.....	17
• Application and Placement Overview .....	18
• Placement Definitions .....	19
• Active, Exit, and Deferred Placements in 2013-2014.....	19-20
• Active Placement .....	20-21
• Exit Placement.....	21
• Deferred Placement.....	21
• Cessation of Addendum.....	21
• Retired Educators .....	21
• No Placement .....	22
• Reciprocity .....	22-23
• National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Certification Process.....	23
• Non-Classroom Instructional Personnel.....	23
• Catastrophic Event Policy .....	23
• Leave of Absence Policy.....	24
• Technical Issues Prohibiting Submission Policy .....	25
E. Appeal Procedure .....	26-27

## IV. Salary and Compensation

A. CLASS Salary Components.....	28
• CLASS Placement Salary Policy .....	28
B. Compensation.....	29-30
• Hold Placement Policy.....	29
• Compensation Reduction.....	29
• Reduction in Force.....	30
• Prorated Placement Salary .....	30

**Table of Contents** (continued)

**V. Program Services**

Program Services Overview .....31-32

- Student Achievement Workshops and Open Lab Sessions .....31
- Student Achievement Book Study .....31-32
- Student Achievement Coach Cadre .....32
- Optional Incentive Component: District Quality Service Performance Goals.....32

**Appendix**

MPS Evaluation for Placement on Resident Level and Career Level.....33

A wide variety of support is available to assist educators in the CLASS qualification process; however, each applicant is personally responsible for knowing and applying the information and qualification criteria in the

- *2013-2014 CLASS Handbook*
- 2013-2014 Career Ladder Online Application Timeline
- *The Common Key* (program news)
- memos and communications sent to the educator
- appropriate online Click & Learn information or student achievement guide
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) webpage
- 2013-2014 Important Dates

**Career Ladder Implementation Committee (CLIC) policy states that CLASS application materials must be submitted to Career Ladder via the required, stated medium (electronic submission or hard copy). FAX submissions are not accepted.**

# I. Introduction

## I – A. Important 2013-2014 Dates

### for Career Ladder Student Achievement and Professional Records

<b>September 23</b>	<b>Due date</b> for student achievement plan and the Plan Educator-Administrator Conference Form	Student achievement plan and the Plan Educator-Administrator Conference Form submitted on or before <b>September 23</b> will be <b>accepted and not prorated</b> .
<b>September 30</b>	<b>Prorate deadline</b> for student achievement plan and the Plan Educator-Administrator Conference Form	Student achievement plan and the Plan Educator-Administrator Conference Form submitted between <b>September 24</b> and <b>September 30</b> will be <b>accepted and prorated</b> .
<b>December 19</b>	<b>Deadline</b> to submit plan revisions to student achievement coach	Educators not meeting plan criteria by <b>December 19</b> will be <b>referred</b> to Career Ladder specialists.
<b>February 3</b>	<b>Deadline</b> to meet criteria with student achievement plan and the Plan Educator-Administrator Conference Form	Educators not meeting plan and Plan Educator-Administrator Conference Form criteria by <b>February 3</b> will be <b>dropped</b> from the Career Ladder application process. Actively placed educators will receive <b>no further stipend</b> unless they have met Exit Placement criteria.
<b>February 3</b>	<b>Deadline</b> to meet Exit Placement criteria	Exit Placement educators not meeting Exit Placement criteria by <b>February 3</b> will be <b>dropped</b> from Career Ladder placement and receive <b>no further stipend</b> .
<b>April 21</b>	<b>Due date</b> for student achievement results and the Results Educator-Administrator Conference Form	Student achievement results and the Results Educator-Administrator Conference Form submitted on or before <b>April 21</b> will be <b>accepted and not prorated</b> .
<b>April 28</b>	<b>Prorate deadline</b> for student achievement results and the Results Educator-Administrator Conference Form	Student achievement results and the Results Educator-Administrator Conference Form submitted between <b>April 22</b> and <b>April 28</b> will be <b>accepted and prorated</b> .
<b>June 2</b>	<b>Due date</b> for meeting criteria with student achievement results and the Results Educator-Administrator Conference Form	Educators not meeting criteria with student achievement results and the Results Educator-Administrator Conference Form by <b>June 2</b> will be in <b>Hold Placement</b> in 2014-2015.
<b>June 2</b>	<b>Due date</b> for these professional records: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Copy of 2013-2014 MPS teaching evaluation</li> <li>• Completed Higher Level Instructional Responsibility Documentation Form(s) (HLIRs) for the educator's step of application</li> </ul>	Educators not submitting 2013-2014 MPS teaching evaluation and/or any HLIRs on or before <b>June 2</b> will be in Hold Placement in 2014-2015. By <b>June 19</b> , a courtesy notification will be sent to the district emails of educators whose submitted district evaluation or HLIRs have missing information. Educators not meeting criteria due to missing information in the following professional records by <b>June 23</b> will be in <b>Hold Placement</b> in 2014-2015: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2013-2014 MPS teaching evaluation</li> <li>• Higher Level Instructional Responsibility Documentation Form(s) and responses for the educator's step of application</li> </ul>

**For further information regarding Exit Placement Policy, Hold Placement Policy, and Prorate Policy, please refer to the Table of Contents in this *Handbook*.**



## I – B. Letter from the Director

# Welcome to the Mesa Public Schools Career Ladder Program!

In this 2013-2014 *CLASS Handbook* you will find information that

- guides the Career Ladder program implementation,
- describes how the Career Ladder program supports Mesa Public Schools,
- outlines the application process for the individual component, and
- identifies professional opportunities and services that help educators improve teaching skills as they focus on student learning.

Guidelines for administering the optional incentive component can be found in a separate document available on the MPS Educational Services website ([www.mpsaz.org/edservices/planning](http://www.mpsaz.org/edservices/planning)).

On behalf of the Career Ladder Implementation Committee and the Career Ladder staff, I invite you to explore the scope and quality of our Career Ladder performance pay program and to take advantage of Career Ladder opportunities that support professional learning.

To learn more about the application process, we invite you to

- review the table of contents for an overview
- review the performance goals of the individual and district components on page 6
- proceed to Section III for the specifics regarding application and participation criteria
- visit our website at [www.mpsaz.org/cl](http://www.mpsaz.org/cl) to view the Click & Learn student achievement support information or the Franklin Target Package Guide, as is appropriate for your teaching assignment
- visit our website to access FAQs about criteria and application components
- read *The Common Key*, available online
- attend a Student Achievement Workshop or Open Lab in August or September
- call 480.472.0350 to speak with a Career Ladder specialist

Throughout the school year, *The Common Key*, a supplement to this *Handbook*, is published online. In it you will find due date reminders, information about policies and procedures, and timely tips for student achievement application.

Career Ladder staff look forward to supporting you as you implement quality instruction, assessment, and services to increase student achievement. Your work is the most important contributor to student success.

*Patricia Christie*

*Patricia Christie,  
Director*

480.472.7240

[pschrist@mpsaz.org](mailto:pschrist@mpsaz.org)

*Career Ladder Department  
549 North Stapley Drive  
Mesa, Arizona  
85203-7203*

[www.mpsaz.org/cl](http://www.mpsaz.org/cl)

480.472.0350

## I – C. MPS Career Ladder Mission and Goals



The Mesa Public Schools Career Ladder program is a performance pay program begun in the 1986-87 school year as a result of Arizona legislation (A.R.S. §15-918) and an approval vote by Mesa educators. The program was restructured in 1994 to include an optional incentive component, thus increasing the focus on contributions that **all** MPS employees make.

The MPS Career Ladder program is designed to

- increase student achievement
- focus on accountability and continuous improvement
- provide incentives to educators and other employees based on meeting high performance standards\*
- support collaborative and collegial efforts of all employees
- attract, retain, and motivate employees
- provide professional learning opportunities to enhance educators' skills and knowledge

Data verifies that program support available in the individual and optional incentive components facilitates an increased focus on student achievement accountability, quality professional development, and quality service. This focus is the key to increased student achievement.

	Performance Goals	Evaluation Documents	Eligibility for Participation
<b>Individual (CLASS)</b>  Career Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased student achievement</li> <li>• Improved and advanced teaching skills</li> <li>• Implementation of higher level instructional responsibilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Career Level student achievement plan and results</li> <li>• Professional records (appropriate to application level/step)                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ MPS teaching evaluation instrument</li> <li>✓ Higher level instructional responsibilities documentation</li> <li>✓ Plan Educator-Administrator Conference Form</li> <li>✓ Results Educator-Administrator Conference Form</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contract educators who                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ are in a position that requires a current Arizona teacher or professional certificate</li> <li>✓ hold a current Arizona teacher or professional certificate</li> <li>✓ are evaluated on a teaching evaluation instrument</li> <li>✓ meet all MPS Career Ladder documentation requirements, student achievement and placement criteria</li> <li>✓ are compensated on an MPS teacher salary schedule</li> <li>✓ are eligible under the phase-out participation guidelines (see page 17)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Optional Incentive**</b>  District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality service (parents and internal customers)</li> <li>• Student satisfaction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent surveys</li> <li>• Internal customer surveys</li> <li>• Student surveys</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All qualified certificated and classified employees</li> </ul> All qualified certificated and classified employees are eligible to receive a stipend** if district goals are met.

\*All Career Ladder funding, including CLASS salaries and stipends, is contingent upon availability of funds.

\*\*Complete MPS optional incentive information is in a separate document on the MPS Educational Services website.

## II. Program Overview

### II – A. MPS Career Ladder Program Administration

The Career Ladder law (A.R.S. §15-918) requires that specified governing bodies be responsible for program oversight and implementation at the state and district levels and for communication about the program occurring through formal publications.

#### State Level

##### Career Ladder Advisory Committee

The Career Ladder Advisory Committee (CLAC), composed of State Board-appointed community and education representatives from Career Ladder and non-Career Ladder districts, is responsible for

- providing recommendations to the State Board of Education on matters related to the implementation, administration, monitoring, and evaluation of all Arizona Career Ladder programs
- developing criteria for the optional incentive component, subject to the approval of the State Board of Education and pursuant to Career Ladder legislation

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##### Arizona Career Ladder Network

The Arizona Career Ladder Network (AZCLN), comprised of representatives from the 28 Career Ladder districts and the State Department of Education, meets several times each year to

- dialogue about instructional and assessment strategies to increase student achievement
- share resources and best practices
- discuss current issues focused on quality performance pay principles
- monitor and influence legislative issues that impact Career Ladder program implementation

The AZCLN meetings are open to all interested persons. MPS Career Ladder specialists attend Network meetings and are actively engaged in supporting AZCLN collaborative endeavors. Brenda Griego, MPS Career Ladder Specialist, currently serves as the chair of the AZCLN.

The 28 Career Ladder districts represent approximately one-third of the teachers and one-third of the students comprising Arizona public schools.

#### District Level

##### Career Ladder Program Staff

The Career Ladder program is directed by Patricia Christie, facilitated by Career Ladder specialists, supported by classified staff, and aided by the oversight and leadership of the Career Ladder Implementation Committee (CLIC). Career Ladder staff manage Career Ladder program components. Collaboration with other MPS departments supports Career Ladder program component goals as they relate to district goals as well as MPS district- and state-approved standards. This work is focused on increasing student achievement; enhancing teachers' professional knowledge and skills; providing consistent, purposeful information to teachers and administrators; and supporting the opportunity to share resources more effectively and efficiently.

###### Certified Staff

- Director ..... Patricia Christie
- Specialists..... Sandee Coppola  
Brenda Griego  
Barbara Stout

###### Classified Staff

- Secretary..... Lynnette Reed
- Senior Records Clerk..... Caroline Cartwright
- Technician..... Vicki Zeller

## II – A. MPS Career Ladder Program Administration

### Career Ladder Implementation Committee (CLIC)

The MPS Career Ladder Implementation Committee (CLIC) is comprised of teachers recommended to and approved by the district Superintendent, the Mesa Education Association (MEA), and Career Ladder; an elementary principal; a secondary principal; a Special Education area director; an Assistant Superintendent; the MEA President (ex officio); a Mesa Governing Board member; and the Career Ladder Director who

- provide assistance in the development and refinement of Career Ladder policies and guidelines
- provide assistance with publications such as the *CLASS Handbook*, student achievement support resources, and *The Common Key*
- work closely with the Career Ladder staff
- provide support to building-level administrators
- approve placement of educators and determine appropriate CLASS salaries

The Career Ladder Director serves as CLIC Chair, and a Career Ladder specialist serves as Vice Chair. Teachers may serve two consecutive three-year terms.

### Communication Model

Effective communication is essential to the success of the Career Ladder Program. Clarity and accessibility of publications help to ensure that those impacted by Career Ladder will have the information they need in a timely manner. Career Ladder Implementation Committee meetings adhere to the state open meeting guidelines, the Career Ladder website ([www.mpsaz.org/cl](http://www.mpsaz.org/cl)) is continually updated, and several publications (described below) are regularly published for various audiences. In addition, Career Ladder information may also be available through the district newsletter and in the administrators' bulletin.

### Publications

#### ***The Common Key*** (Career Ladder Program News)

The purposes of *The Common Key*, a supplement to this *Handbook*, include

- supporting educators in the qualification process
- providing information about program components

*The Common Key* is available at [www.mpsaz.org/cl](http://www.mpsaz.org/cl) and by e-mail subscription.

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#### **2013-2014 CLASS Handbook and Student Achievement Support Resources**

The 2013-2014 *CLASS Handbook* and student achievement support resources (Click & Learn webpage, FAQs, online application documents, Franklin Target Package Guide) are available to all applicants. The contents include a program overview, criteria for placement at each level/step, student achievement information, and checklists/rubrics for self-assessment and documentation of student progress. These resources are revised annually, and current-year editions are available at [www.mpsaz.org/cl](http://www.mpsaz.org/cl).

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#### ***The Coach Connection***

*The Coach Connection*, the student achievement coach cadre newsletter, is regularly published for student achievement coaches and includes a summary of professional learning information; coaching and evaluation information; important coach dates; and the research and philosophical background that support coaching policies and student achievement criteria.



## II – A. MPS Career Ladder Program Administration

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### **Guidelines and Job Descriptions**

Guidelines and job descriptions containing selection criteria and participation requirements for higher level instructional responsibilities are available by calling Career Ladder or visiting the website at [www.mpsaz.org/cl](http://www.mpsaz.org/cl).

These guidelines and job descriptions address professional opportunities such as serving on the Career Ladder Student Achievement Coach Cadre or the Career Ladder Implementation Committee.

## II – B. Periodic Program Review and Evaluation

The Mesa Public Schools Career Ladder program aligns its goals and placement criteria with district goals and policies as well as the district's performance evaluation process. Student achievement criteria focus on aligning assessments with MPS district- and state-approved standards. The Career Ladder department depends on a variety of evaluative data for ongoing review and analysis of all program components.

All MPS employees have the opportunity to evaluate the performance of the Career Ladder department through the *MPS District Quality Service Survey*, rating the areas of timeliness of services, quality of services, staff and administrator interaction with MPS employees, and overall performance. The survey data support ongoing program refinement in small increments as well as long-range systemic planning.

A survey is distributed to all Career Ladder educators in the spring of each year. The survey seeks feedback about Career Ladder publications and communications (memos and notices), the student achievement process, the skills of student achievement coaches, higher level instructional responsibilities in which educators have participated, staff interactions with educators beyond those described in the District Quality Service Survey; and solicits comments and suggestions.

The Career Ladder staff also complete a thorough analysis of multiple sources of data received from Career Ladder and non-Career Ladder educators and other MPS employees. That analysis provides an evaluation overview of current program effectiveness and is the genesis of future program refinements. The sources of evaluative data are listed below, and many are referenced with the descriptions of the programs they evaluate in section V (Program Services).

### Sources of Evaluative Data\*

- Student Achievement Book Study
- District Quality Service Survey
- Career Ladder Survey
- Informal daily feedback from conversations and staff phone logs
- Professional learning opportunity session evaluations
- Staff and materials processors' feedback on evaluation procedures
- Student achievement coach self-assessment

\*Raw data from each source are available on request.

# III. Program Participation

## III – A. Standards for Placement

1. CLASS placement qualifies an educator for the 2013-2014 CLASS salary or applicable CAP for the Career Ladder level/step for which he/she applied and met criteria in 2012-2013. Certain educators may be eligible for placement after leaves of absence or changes of assignment.
2. Failure to fulfill or maintain all of the application level/step criteria may result in placement on a lower level/step, removal from CLASS, discontinuation of the placement addendum and/or stipends, discontinuation of optional extenders and optional incentives, or educator return of placement monies.
3. An educator will be involuntarily removed from participation in the Career Ladder program if he/she
  - falsifies data on any document submitted to the Career Ladder department
  - knowingly misrepresents any information relating to the individual and/or optional incentive component of the MPS Career Ladder program
  - knowingly misrepresents any documentation submitted to demonstrate any criteria of Career Ladder participation, qualification, performance, or placement
  - breaches any state or MPS policy or procedure
  - does not meet Career Ladder criteria for the MPS evaluation as stated in the Appendix on page 33 of this *Handbook*

The Career Ladder Implementation Committee will not allow an educator who has been involuntarily removed to reapply for CLASS. In addition, the educator may be subject to disciplinary action for misconduct pursuant to governing board policies and required to repay the Career Ladder CLASS addendum received during the placement year in which the violation occurred.

4. If an MPS qualified evaluator determines that an additional evaluation is needed in the same school year, the latest evaluation will supersede evaluations which may have been completed previously and may result in placement on a lower level/step than applied for or removal from CLASS.
5. Records supporting documentation for Career Ladder placement **must be retained by the educator for three years**, should an audit be necessary.

## III – B. Professional Writing Standards

### Material Submissions

Conforming to professional writing standards with your submissions to Career Ladder is essential.

- Your submissions, which are kept on file for three years, reflect who you are, what you think, and your level of professionalism.
- Performance pay programs, such as Arizona’s state-legislated Career Ladder, assume quality and professionalism in documentation.
- You are writing for audiences that may include district administrators, state legislators, governing board members, and evaluators such as student achievement coaches and Career Ladder specialists.

Below is a short, basic list of professional writing standards you can apply to preparing and proofreading documents you submit to Career Ladder in the 2013-2014 school year.

- neat and clear copy quality
- typed
- accurate in spelling, punctuation, grammar and usage
- clear and appropriate to the audience and task

### Student Assessments

Conforming to professional writing standards with student assessments is essential for students to be able to demonstrate their level of proficiency. They are entitled to **user-friendly** assessments that, at the least, meet these criteria:

- neat appearance and clear copy quality
- accurate grammar, usage, and spelling
- directions that are grade level-appropriate and clearly typed
- clear format, including
  - ✓ clearly organized assessment items
  - ✓ sufficient space for writing work/answers

All Career Ladder educators’ student assessments are expected to meet these criteria.

### Resources

Other resources for help with writing and proofing your writing include

- colleagues
- friends
- the Internet (e.g., <http://www.apastyle.org/> or <http://www.mla.org/style>)
- writing handbooks

On the next page, there is a printout of the conventions component of the Six Trait Analytic Writing Rubric from the Arizona Department of Education. It is available at [www.azed.gov/wp-content/uploads/PDF/Grade5Conventions.pdf](http://www.azed.gov/wp-content/uploads/PDF/Grade5Conventions.pdf). We expect a score of “4” from our elementary, junior high, and high school students. This rubric can also serve as a guide for our own professional writing standards, given that we hold ourselves to a higher standard when writing student assessments as well as for fall and spring submissions.

**NOTE: Forms and documents submitted to Career Ladder must demonstrate professional writing standards as outlined above and on the writing rubric presented on the following page.**

## Six Trait Analytic Writing Rubric

### Conventions

<p><b>6</b></p> <p>The writing demonstrates exceptionally strong control of standard writing conventions (e.g., punctuation, spelling, capitalization, paragraph breaks, grammar and usage) and uses them effectively to enhance communication. Errors are so few and so minor that the reader can easily skim right over them unless specifically searching for them. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• strong control of conventions; manipulation of conventions may occur for stylistic effect.</li> <li>• strong, effective use of punctuation that guides the reader through the text.</li> <li>• correct spelling, even of more difficult words.</li> <li>• paragraph breaks that reinforce the organizational structure.</li> <li>• correct grammar and usage that contribute to clarity and style.</li> <li>• skill in using a wide range of conventions in a sufficiently long and complex piece.</li> <li>• little or no need for editing.</li> </ul>	<p><b>5</b></p> <p>The writing demonstrates strong control of standard writing conventions (e.g., punctuation, spelling, capitalization, paragraph breaks, grammar and usage) and uses them effectively to enhance communication. Errors are so few and so minor that they do not impede readability. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• strong control of conventions.</li> <li>• effective use of punctuation that guides the reader through the text.</li> <li>• correct spelling, even of more difficult words.</li> <li>• paragraph breaks that reinforce the organizational structure.</li> <li>• correct capitalization; errors, if any, are minor.</li> <li>• correct grammar and usage that contribute to clarity and style.</li> <li>• skill in using a wide range of conventions in a sufficiently long and complex piece.</li> <li>• little need for editing.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4</b></p> <p>The writing demonstrates control of standard writing conventions (e.g., punctuation, spelling, capitalization, paragraph breaks, grammar and usage). Minor errors, while perhaps noticeable, do not impede readability. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• control over conventions used, although a wide range is not demonstrated.</li> <li>• correct end-of-sentence punctuation, internal punctuation may sometimes be incorrect.</li> <li>• spelling that is usually correct, especially on common words.</li> <li>• basically sound paragraph breaks that reinforce the organizational structure.</li> <li>• correct capitalization; errors, if any, are minor.</li> <li>• occasional lapses in correct grammar and usage; problems are not severe enough to distort meaning or confuse the reader.</li> <li>• moderate need for editing.</li> </ul>	<p><b>3</b></p> <p>The writing demonstrates limited control of standard writing conventions (e.g., punctuation, spelling, capitalization, paragraph breaks, grammar and usage). Errors begin to impede readability. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• some control over basic conventions; the text may be too simple to reveal mastery.</li> <li>• end-of-sentence punctuation that is usually correct; however, internal punctuation contains frequent errors.</li> <li>• spelling errors that distract the reader; misspelling of common words occurs.</li> <li>• paragraphs that sometimes run together or begin at ineffective places.</li> <li>• capitalization errors.</li> <li>• errors in grammar and usage that do not block meaning but do distract the reader.</li> <li>• significant need for editing.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2</b></p> <p>The writing demonstrates little control of standard writing conventions. Frequent significant errors impede readability. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• little control over basic conventions.</li> <li>• many end-of-sentence punctuation errors; internal punctuation contains frequent errors.</li> <li>• spelling errors that frequently distract the reader; misspelling of common words often occurs.</li> <li>• paragraphs that often run together or begin in ineffective places.</li> <li>• capitalization that is inconsistent or often incorrect.</li> <li>• errors in grammar and usage that interfere with readability and meaning.</li> <li>• substantial need for editing.</li> </ul>	<p><b>1</b></p> <p>Numerous errors in usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation repeatedly distract the reader and make the text difficult to read. In fact, the severity and frequency of errors are so overwhelming that the reader finds it difficult to focus on the message and must reread for meaning. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• very limited skill in using conventions.</li> <li>• basic punctuation (including end-of-sentence punctuation) that tends to be omitted, haphazard, or incorrect.</li> <li>• frequent spelling errors that significantly impair readability.</li> <li>• paragraph breaks that may be highly irregular or so frequent (every sentence) that they bear no relation to the organization of the text.</li> <li>• capitalization that appears to be random.</li> <li>• a need for extensive editing.</li> </ul>

Source: Arizona Department of Education ([www.azed.gov/wp-content/uploads/PDF/Grade5Conventions.pdf](http://www.azed.gov/wp-content/uploads/PDF/Grade5Conventions.pdf))

## III – C. Professional Records

### Required Professional Records

Career Level applicants must submit the following 2013-2014 professional records, in addition to their student achievement documentation, as part of their application:

- a copy of the 2013-2014 MPS evaluation (See Appendix, page 33, of this *Handbook* for additional information and criteria regarding the MPS teaching evaluation.)
- Higher Level Instructional Responsibility Documentation Forms describing the implementation impact of higher level instructional responsibilities on student achievement (See pages 15-16 of this *Handbook* for additional information and criteria regarding higher level instructional responsibilities.)
- Plan and Results Educator-Administrator Conference Forms verifying that the educator and administrator have conferenced about student achievement and higher level instructional responsibilities

### Educator-Administrator Conferences

An educator-administrator conference provides an opportunity for educators and administrators to dialogue about student achievement plan implementation, documentation of individual student progress, and higher level instructional responsibilities which contribute to the achievement of district-approved site academic goals.

The Plan Educator-Administrator Conference Form (online and Franklin FTP BLM 4) should be submitted at the same time as the student achievement plan no later than September 23, 2013, and must meet criteria no later than Monday, February 3, 2014, in order to avoid cessation of the Career Ladder addendum during the year of placement (2013-2014) and to remain in the application process for placement in 2014-2015.

The Results Educator-Administrator Conference Form (online and Franklin FTP BLM 5) should be submitted at the same time as student achievement results no later than Monday, April 21, 2014, and meet criteria.

### III – C. Professional Records

#### MPS Evaluation for Placement on Resident Level and Career Level

Each year, Career Ladder applicants must submit a copy of the appropriate MPS evaluation for that year because an MPS district teaching evaluation is one determining factor of the highest step for which an educator can qualify and be placed. In order to assess the skills of teachers for each level/step of the Career Ladder program, the Career Ladder Implementation Committee (CLIC) has set criteria for each level/step. If criteria at the application level/step are not met, an educator may be placed on a lower level/step than applied for or may not be placed (see Appendix on page 33 for specific criteria).

#### Higher Level Instructional Responsibilities (HLIR)

The Career Ladder law (A.R.S. §15-918) requires that Career Ladder educators assume leadership for higher level instructional responsibilities that contribute to the improvement of instruction, increased student achievement, and school improvement. Forms documenting the impact of these responsibilities are part of the requirements for Career Level placement.

##### Online Applicants

**Resident Level** ..... requires **one** higher level instructional responsibility (satisfied by participation in the online application process for placement in 2014-2015).  
**No documentation form is required.**

**Career Level Step 1** .... requires **one** higher level instructional responsibility (satisfied by participation in the online application process for placement in 2014-2015).  
**No documentation form is required.**

**Career Level Step 2** .... requires **two** higher level instructional responsibilities (one is satisfied by participation in the online application process for placement in 2014-2015).  
**One completed Higher Level Instructional Responsibility Documentation Form is required.**

**Career Level Step 3** .... requires **three** higher level instructional responsibilities (one is satisfied by participation in the online application process for placement in 2014-2015).  
**Two completed Higher Level Instructional Responsibility Documentation Forms are required.**

##### Franklin Applicants and Exit Placement Applicants

**Resident Level** ..... requires **one** higher level instructional responsibility (satisfied by participation in the online application process for placement in 2014-2015).  
**No documentation form is required.**

**Career Level Step 1** .... requires **one** higher level instructional responsibility (satisfied by participation in the online application process for placement in 2014-2015).  
**No documentation form is required.**

**Career Level Step 2** .... requires **two** higher level instructional responsibilities with two documentation forms and responses (BLM 1)

**Career Level Step 3** .... requires **three** higher level instructional responsibilities with three documentation forms and responses (BLM 1)

The responsibilities approved by the administrator as listed on the Plan Educator-Administrator Conference Form and documented on the Higher Level Instructional Responsibility Documentation Form in the spring must clearly document one or more of the following:

- integration of student needs into instructional programs
- collaborative work that impacts school-wide improvement
- implementation of effective instruction and assessment practices to increase student achievement

## Higher Level Instructional Responsibilities (continued)

- leadership roles for school improvement
- active role in district-wide programs
- reflective practices to facilitate continuous improvement

Examples of higher level instructional responsibilities:

- Student Achievement Book Study (see pages 31-32)
- adaptation and integration of instructional strategies
- application of coursework or other professional learning
- club advisor
- colleague coaching
- creation of differentiated instruction units
- department chair
- district in-service presentation
- implementation of integrated curriculum materials
- leadership in a professional organization
- participation in MPS innovative programs
- professional learning community chair/facilitator
- professional development instructor
- reflective practice for assessment of instruction
- resource team member
- school and/or district committee
- school/business or higher education partnership
- school-related presentation to parents or community members
- service learning sponsor
- student mentoring
- student enrichment program

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### Approval of Higher Level Instructional Responsibilities

- The higher level instructional responsibilities, agreed upon by the educator and administrator, must **represent the educator's finest contributions** to MPS students, colleagues, and/or the school community for increased student achievement.
- Higher level instructional responsibilities approved as listed on the Plan Educator-Administrator Conference Form may vary from those documented on the Higher Level Instructional Responsibilities Documentation Form if the administrator approves the change. Administrator approval on the Higher Level Instructional Responsibility Documentation Forms in the spring indicates approval of the documented activity, even if different from those listed in the fall.
- All higher level instructional responsibilities must be reflective of the current school year and occur between June 4, 2013, and June 2, 2014.



## III – D. Participation Process and Steps

### Career Ladder Phase-Out Participation Guidelines

In 2011, the Arizona State Legislature initiated a funding phase-out of the Career Ladder program and placed limitations on participation. In 2013-2014, teachers may apply for the individual component of the Career Ladder program for placement in 2014-2015 if they meet one of the following five criteria:

1. In 2012-2013, completed and met criteria for Resident Level or Career Level placement in 2013-2014.
2. In 2012-2013, completed Exit Placement.
3. In 2011-2012, completed and met criteria for placement in 2012-2013 but were on an MPS-approved leave or retired in 2012-2013.
4. Met criteria for placement in a previous year but have been in an ineligible MPS position since that time, including 2012-2013, and are now in an eligible position.
5. Met placement criteria for 2012-13 in another Career Ladder district and are applying for Reciprocity Placement in MPS in 2013-2014.

If you are uncertain of your eligibility for application/placement, please contact the Career Ladder department at 472.0350.

### Contract Teaching Experience Guidelines

CLASS requires specified years of contract teaching experience at different steps. Career Ladder follows the MPS Human Resources district policies when verifying acceptable experience. Part-time contract experience may qualify, and all out-of-district experience that meets MPS criteria is allowable to meet CLASS requirements.

Educators are encouraged to apply for the highest level/step for which they qualify.

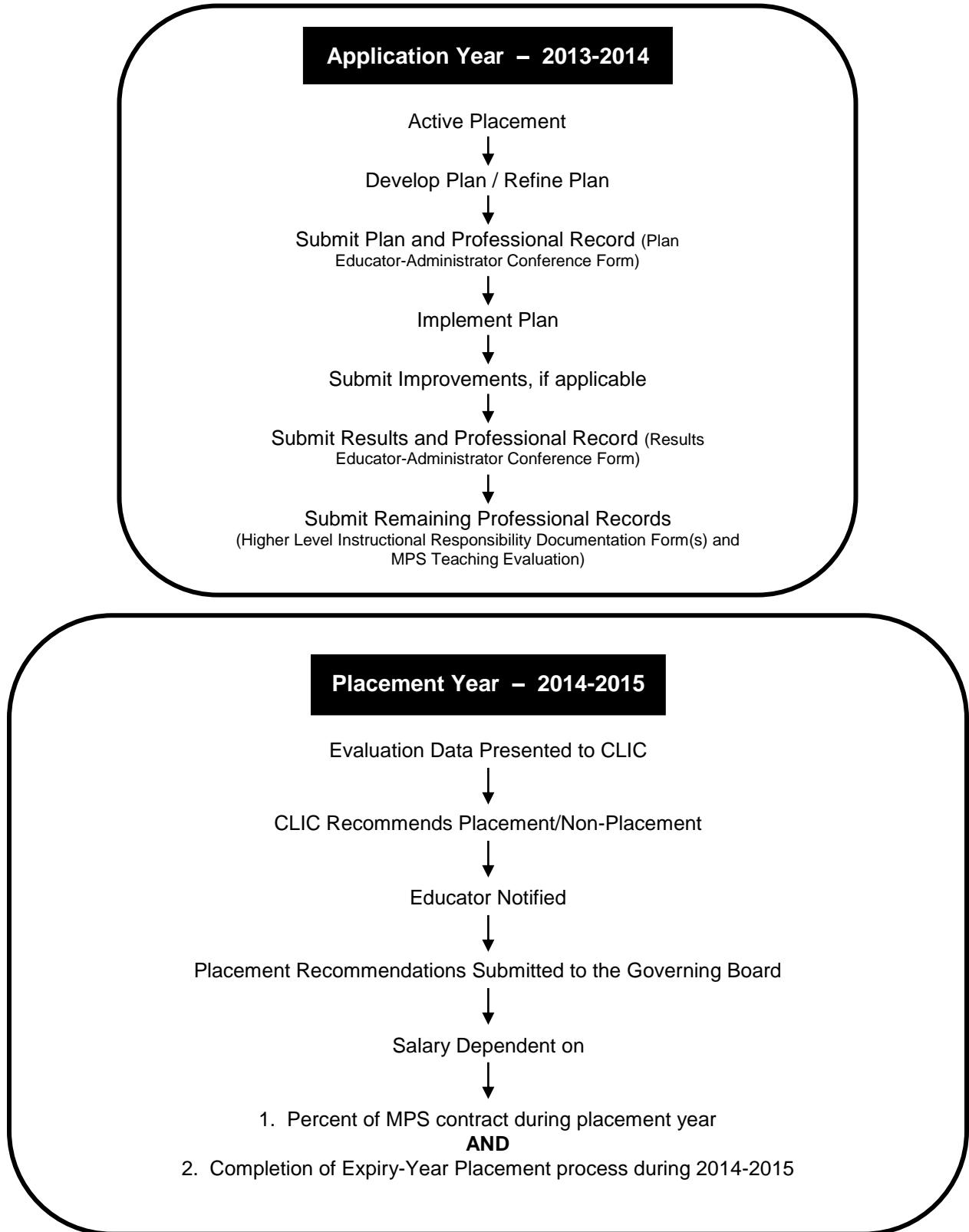
Application for Career Level (Step 1, 2, or 3) is optional and requires that an educator

- meet eligibility requirements (see page 6) including the phase-out participation guidelines
- obtain the appropriate application materials by
  - ✓ accessing the educator's online application folder, or
  - ✓ accessing application documents on the Career Ladder website (Franklin teachers), or
  - ✓ requesting materials from the Career Ladder department
- complete Career Level criteria as described in
  - ✓ the appropriate 2013-2014 student achievement plan and results criteria checklists; and
  - ✓ the online Application Timeline for online applicants; or
  - ✓ the Franklin Target Package Guide for Franklin applicants
- complete MPS-approved contract teaching experience according to Human Resources policies (one may be application year) by June 2, 2014, for the following steps:
  - Step 1: Minimum of three years
  - Step 2: Minimum of six years
  - Step 3: Minimum of eight years except for educators who have achieved National Board for Professional Teaching Standards certification. Teachers with this certification may apply for Step 3 placement regardless of their years of experience.

### III – D. Participation Process and Steps

#### Application and Placement Overview

The graphic below provides an overview of the application and placement processes.



### III – D. Participation Process and Steps

#### Placement Definitions

There are three categories of placements.

**ACTIVE placements are for educators who**

- met criteria for 2013-2014 Resident Level or Career Level placement
- are currently applying for Expiry-Year Placement in 2014-2015

**EXIT placements are for educators who**

- met criteria for 2013-2014 Resident Level or Career Level placement
- are NOT in the application process for Expiry-Year Placement in 2014-2015

**DEFERRED placements are for educators who**

- met criteria for 2013-2014 Resident Level or Career Level placement
- are NOT in the application process for Expiry-Year Placement in 2014-2015 due to working in an ineligible MPS position in 2013-2014
- defer placement to Expiry-Year Placement in 2014-2015, at which time no further Career Ladder deferment will be available

#### Active, Exit, and Deferred Placements in 2013-2014

<b>1</b>	<p><b><u>ACTIVE Placement in 2013-2014</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• met 2012-2013 Career Level criteria for Active Placement in 2013-2014</li><li>• eligible for a higher salary that includes a Career Ladder addendum to the MPS contract</li><li>• eligible for Career Ladder professional opportunities</li></ul> <p><b>2013-2014 Application</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• meet 2013-2014 Career Level criteria with plan and results within deadlines</li><li>• meet 2013-2014 Career Level criteria with professional records within deadline</li></ul> <p><b>2014-2015 Placement (Expiry-Year Placement)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• meet Expiry-Year Placement criteria</li><li>• eligible for Career Ladder professional opportunities</li></ul>
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### III – D. Participation Process and Steps

<b>2</b>	<p><b><u>EXIT Placement in 2013-2014</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• met 2012-2013 Career Level criteria for Active or Deferred Placement in 2013-2014</li> <li>• eligible for a higher salary that includes a Career Ladder addendum to the MPS contract</li> <li>• eligible for Career Ladder professional opportunities</li> </ul> <p><b>2013-2014 Criteria</b></p> <p><b>Option A</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• meet 2013-2014 Career Level criteria with plan within deadlines*</li> <li>• meet 2013-2014 Career Level criteria with plan professional record within deadline*</li> </ul> <p><b>OR</b></p> <p><b>Option B</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• meet 2013-2014 Career Level criteria with appropriate number** of Higher Level Instructional Responsibility Documentation Forms and responses (BLM 1) on or before the deadline of February 3, 2014</li> </ul> <p><b>2014-2015 Expiry-Year Placement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NO placement</li> </ul> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <p>Failure to submit and meet criteria with the appropriate Exit Placement documents by the deadlines noted above will result in the cessation and/or repayment of all CLASS compensation awarded during the year of placement (2013-2014).</p> </div> <p>* Plan and plan professional record submission due date is September 23, 2013. Plan and plan professional record deadline to meet all criteria is February 3, 2014.</p> <p>**Resident and Career Level Step 1 placement require one higher level instructional responsibility; Step 2 requires two; Step 3 requires three.</p>
<b>3</b>	<p><b><u>DEFERRED Placement in 2013-2014</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• met 2012-2013 Career Level criteria for Active or Deferred Placement in 2013-2014</li> <li>• NOT eligible for a Career Ladder addendum to the MPS contract in 2013-2014</li> </ul> <p><b>2014-2015 Placement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expiry-Year Placement</li> <li>• eligible for Expiry-Year Placement if working in an MPS eligible position</li> </ul>

#### Active Placement

Active Placement educators are those who applied for placement in the previous year and

- met student achievement plan checklist criteria and results checklist criteria for the model through which they applied (Phase A, Phase B, Franklin, Special Education);
- met professional record criteria with a plan professional record, a results professional record, higher level instructional responsibilities for their step of application (page 14), and the district teaching evaluation (Appendix, page 33).

Placement on the Career Ladder and qualifying for the Career Ladder salary is contingent upon

- having met placement criteria in the previous year;
- actively applying for placement in the current year or completing the Exit Placement requirement;
- employment by Mesa Public Schools in an eligible position in the current year.

### III – D. Participation Process and Steps

#### Active Placement (continued)

Educators in the application process in 2013-2014 for placement in 2014-2015 must adhere to published deadlines as indicated in this handbook.

- Educators must meet plan criteria no later than February 3, 2014, in order to remain in the application process for placement in 2014-2015 and to continue receiving the CLASS addenda in 2013-2014.
- Likewise, educators who are exiting the program must meet Exit Placement criteria Option A or Option B no later than February 3, 2014, in order to continue receiving the CLASS addenda in 2013-2014.

#### Exit Placement

The Exit Placement process is designed to support placed educators who are not seeking or are unable to qualify for placement in the following school year (see page 20 for additional information).

An educator seeking Exit Placement should call the Career Ladder office as soon as possible to ensure criteria can be met.

**Quality service to MPS must be maintained and documented during the Exit Placement year in order to retain the Career Ladder addendum attached to current-year placement.**

#### Deferred Placement

Educators who have qualified for CLASS placement may defer their placement to 2014-2015 if they cannot meet application or Exit Placement criteria at an approved MPS site during 2013-2014 due to working in an ineligible MPS position. If these educators are continuously employed with MPS, they will be afforded the opportunity to defer the placement earned in the qualifying year until they return to an MPS position which does meet CLASS criteria as long as the program is available.

**Written requests for a deferment period will be approved if the educator is “on loan” through an MPS-approved partnership with the Arizona Department of Education.**

CLASS salary may vary in 2014-2015 contingent on funding availability, policy, the number of educators participating, and/or percentage of contract. (Refer to Section IV of this *Handbook* for more information regarding compensation.)

#### Cessation of Addendum

An educator who is placed and receiving a Career Ladder addendum for the 2013-2014 school year and will not continue in the application process for Expiry-Year Placement in 2014-2015 must complete and meet criteria with one of the Exit Placement options as described on page 20.

Failure to submit and meet criteria with the appropriate documents for either option by the deadline indicated will result in cessation and/or repayment of all CLASS compensation during 2013-2014.

#### Retired Educators

Upon retirement, MPS educators who meet all application criteria may defer their placement for one year only.

MPS retired educators who return to an eligible MPS contract position in 2013-2014 may be placed on Career Ladder if all criteria for Active Placement in student achievement and professional records were met or all criteria for Exit Placement were met in 2012-2013 or in 2011-2012 with deferred placement due to retirement in 2012-2013 or 2011-2012.

CLASS salary and addendum amounts may vary in the placement and deferment years contingent on funding availability, policy, and/or percentage of contract.

### III – D. Participation Process and Steps

#### No Placement

CLASS placement and salary are dependent on

- the educator's employment in an eligible position
- having met placement criteria
- continued quality service to the students, staff, and other customers of the Mesa Public Schools during the year of placement

The following educators would not qualify for the Career Ladder addendum to contract:

- educators who leave MPS
- educators who do not have an MPS contract
- educators who are on leave of absence and cannot meet student achievement criteria
- educators who are teaching in other than approved MPS sites
- educators whose MPS position does not meet eligibility for CLASS application or placement
- educators who are not on a teacher salary schedule

#### Reciprocity

Educators who successfully completed the application process for Career Ladder placement in another Arizona Career Ladder district during the year immediately preceding employment in Mesa Public Schools (2012-2013) and are interested in MPS Career Ladder placement should contact the Career Ladder office to discuss possible reciprocity placement on the MPS Career Ladder.

If the educator is in an MPS position that is currently ineligible for placement, the reciprocity applicant may defer reciprocity application to the following year when the applicant is in an MPS position that is eligible.

#### Reciprocity Timeline

If the reciprocity applicant meets all timelines and criteria outlined below, the reciprocity placement will be awarded in 2013-2014.

##### 2012-2013 School Year:

The reciprocity applicant successfully completed the application process in another Arizona Career Ladder district and would have been placed in that district for 2013-2014.

##### Tuesday, September 3, 2013:

Educators seeking reciprocity placement must submit their 2012-2013 Career Ladder application materials from the previous district **as soon as possible** to be evaluated for possible placement on a comparable CLASS level/step during the first year of MPS employment. The previous district will be contacted for verification of successful completion.

A Career Ladder specialist will oversee the placement and application process for the reciprocity applicant.

##### Monday, September 23, 2013:

- 2013-2014 MPS plan application materials for the reciprocity educator's application step are due as listed on the
  - ✓ 2013-2014 Online Application Timeline, or
  - ✓ Franklin Target Package Application Timeline
- The reciprocity educator's coach will offer guidance regarding the step for which the educator should apply.

##### September 23, 2013, through February 3, 2014:

- Once reciprocity materials have been received and approved, 2013-2014 MPS plan application materials will be evaluated.
- When reciprocity materials and plan application materials have met criteria, the reciprocity educator will be placed for 2013-2014 with the full, appropriate 2013-2014 addendum.

### III – D. Participation Process and Steps

#### Reciprocity (continued)

- If plan and professional record criteria have not been met by February 3, 2014, the educator will not be awarded reciprocity and will not receive any portion of the 2013-2014 addendum.

#### September 23, 2013, through June 2, 2014:

- All 2013-2014 MPS CLASS application criteria must be met at the step for which the reciprocity educator is applying in order for that educator to be eligible for CLASS placement in the following year (2014-2015).
- There is no Exit Placement available in 2013-2014 for educators in their reciprocity year as educators are expected to go through the entire application process in their initial year in the MPS Career Ladder program.

Failure to submit and meet criteria with all application documents will result in cessation and/or repayment of all CLASS compensation during 2013-2014.

#### National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Certification Process

Due to budget and staff reductions, in 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 there will be no Step 4 application or substitution of National Board certification/recertification.

National Board certified teachers who met Step 4 application criteria in 2012-2013 will be placed at Step 4 in 2013-2014 in accordance with *2012-2013 CLASS Handbook* policy. These same educators may apply for Step 3 of the MPS Career Ladder program in 2013-2014 regardless of their years of experience.

Placed educators who earn National Board certification in 2013-2014 will, upon notifying Career Ladder with a copy of the certificate, be moved to Step 3 placement immediately if they are not already placed at Step 3. Such educators will be afforded the opportunity to apply for Step 3 placement in the 2014-2015 year.

#### Non-Classroom Instructional Personnel

The MPS Career Ladder program allows for the inclusion of non-classroom instructional personnel when the following five criteria are met:

1. the position requires a current Arizona teacher or professional certificate
2. the educator holds a current Arizona teacher or professional certificate
3. the educator is evaluated on a teaching evaluation instrument
4. the educator meets all MPS Career Ladder documentation requirements, student achievement and placement criteria
5. the educator is compensated on an MPS teacher salary schedule

In addition, the student population and achievement data documented for CLASS qualification must be reflective of the educator's MPS contract instructional responsibilities and job description.

**Students may not be documented by more than one educator for the same plan.**

#### Catastrophic Event Policy

If a catastrophic event involving a Career Ladder educator or the immediate family of a Career Ladder educator precludes an educator from meeting criteria in a timely manner, the Career Ladder office must be notified as soon as possible. Career Ladder staff and/or members of the Career Ladder Implementation Committee will determine the best course of action to facilitate the educator's application/placement, continued placement, or closure to the application/placement process.

### III – D. Participation Process and Steps

#### Leave of Absence Policy

CLASS educators on leave have the responsibility of obtaining CLASS information, submission deadlines/due dates, or preapproved extended deadlines. Career Ladder staff will work with educators on leaves of absence to adjust deadlines, if necessary. Specialists will offer support for the educator's continued participation if criteria can be met. The CLASS salary and addendum for additional responsibilities for which placed educators qualify will be adjusted to reflect the amount of the MPS contract in place. Educators should contact the Career Ladder department as soon as possible if a leave of absence is going to be taken. Educators may not continue to participate in Career Ladder professional opportunities while on long-term leave of absence.

#### Short-Term Leave During Application Year

Applicants who are on short-term leave of absence may participate in the qualification process if all application criteria can be met with student achievement and professional records.

Educators on partial-year leave without MPS pay will have their Career Ladder compensations adjusted reflective of their MPS contracts.

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#### Long-Term Leave

Educators may not apply for nor receive Career Ladder stipends or salaries while

- in an ineligible MPS position
- participating in MPS-approved leaves of absence that preclude the educators from fulfilling all requirements of the qualification process.

Placement for the non-qualifying year, however, may be deferred. See Deferred Placement (page 21) for additional information. Contact the Career Ladder department for assistance.

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#### Leave of Absence Occurring During Placement Year

Educators who successfully completed the qualification process in 2012-2013 for placement in 2013-2014 and are then granted a long-term leave of absence must immediately notify the Career Ladder office in writing.

If the absence is less than the full school year and the educator is **unable to meet** qualification criteria for 2013-2014, the educator may select one of the following:

- Exit Placement and receive the CLASS addendum while on MPS contract
- Deferred placement

An educator who selects Exit Placement in 2013-2014 and receives the CLASS addendum only while on contract will not receive an addendum in 2014-2015.

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#### Leave of Absence During Application Year

Career Ladder applicants who are on short-term leave of absence may participate in the qualification process if all qualification criteria can be met with student achievement and professional records.

1. Career Level applicants should contact the Career Ladder department regarding the leave of absence to determine if qualification criteria can be met.
2. Career Level components required of applicants include
  - a student achievement plan that meets plan qualification criteria
  - direct instruction and assessment by the applicant that meets documentation requirements regarding student population and duration
  - student achievement results that meet results qualification criteria
  - higher level instructional responsibility documentation and district teaching evaluation that meet qualification criteria



### III – D. Participation Process and Steps

#### Technical Issues Prohibiting Submission

Specified application materials for the 2013-2014 school year, fall and spring, must be submitted electronically (except for Franklin Target Package application) no later than the deadlines indicated in this *CLASS Handbook*, in the Important 2013-2014 Dates (page 4), and in the 2013-2014 Online Application Timeline (see MPS Career Ladder website, Application Resources).

Educator submissions will be validated by the electronic timestamp at the time of submission. If there is a district-documented interruption to the Google submission process, Career Ladder staff and/or members of the MPS Career Ladder Implementation Committee (CLIC) will determine the best course of action to facilitate the educator's application.

Career Ladder cannot be responsible for issues that occur with educators' personal technology. Educators are encouraged to submit early in order to avoid last-minute technical issues.

## III – E. Appeal Procedure

Career Ladder deadlines are published multiple times and in multiple locations.

### Definitions

An appeal will be based on an alleged violation of any of the written MPS Career Ladder program applicable at the time of the alleged violation. **Missed deadlines do not meet the criteria for an appeal.**

The term “working day” for the sole purpose of the Career Ladder appeal procedure means a contract working day for the educator making the appeal.

The Career Ladder Appeal Committee (CLAC) is comprised of five members as described in Level Two.

### Informal Procedure

If an educator believes that a written criterion of the MPS Career Ladder program has been violated, he/she will first discuss the matter informally with the Career Ladder Director or designee in an attempt to resolve the matter.

Such discussion will take place no longer than 14 working days following the time when the educator becomes aware, or should have become aware, of the alleged violation.

If, after such a discussion, the educator is not satisfied with the disposition of the matter, he/she will have the right to have the matter considered following the formal procedure.

### Formal Procedure

#### Level One

If the educator is not satisfied with the disposition of the matter through the informal procedure, he/she will submit a written appeal to the Career Ladder Director no later than 40 working days following the time when the educator becomes aware, or should have become aware, of the violation. The period of 40 working days includes the 14 days included in the informal procedure.

The written appeal must include all of the following:

1. a complete statement specifying the alleged violation
2. factual detailed information concerning the alleged violation
3. a proposed remedy

The Career Ladder Director will convene the Career Ladder Implementation Committee for consideration of the matter and render a decision within 20 working days after receipt of the written appeal.

The educator will have the opportunity to appear before the Career Ladder Implementation Committee and present his/her position, as well as present any additional information or documentation that the educator believes may be helpful to the committee in making its decision. At the educator’s discretion, a representative other than an attorney may present the educator’s position to the committee in the educator’s place. Neither the educator nor the representative may be present for or participate in the deliberations of the Career Ladder Implementation Committee as it considers the matter presented.

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#### Level Two

If the educator is not satisfied with the disposition of the matter by the Career Ladder Implementation Committee in Level One, he/she may appeal the decision in writing to the Career Ladder Appeal Committee within 40 working days from the date of written receipt of the decision of the Career Ladder Implementation Committee.

The Career Ladder Director and the MEA President will convene the Career Ladder Appeal Committee who will render a written decision within 20 working days following receipt of the written appeal.

### III - E. Appeal Procedure

#### Formal Procedure – Level Two (continued)

The Career Ladder Appeal Committee will be composed of

- one Career Ladder educator selected by the Mesa Education Association
- one non-Career Ladder educator selected by the Mesa Education Association
- one Career Ladder educator appointed by the superintendency
- one non-Career Ladder educator appointed by the superintendency
- one administrator selected by the four educators appointed to the Career Ladder Appeal Committee

The five members of the Career Ladder Appeal Committee will determine a chair for the committee who will act as liaison for the committee to work with a Career Ladder specialist to facilitate meetings, materials needed, and communication.

The educator will have the opportunity to appear before the Career Ladder Appeal Committee and present his/her position, as well as present any additional information or documentation that the educator believes may be helpful to the committee in making its decision. At the educator's discretion, a representative other than an attorney may present the educator's position to the committee in the educator's place.

The Career Ladder Director or designee will present the decision and position of the Career Ladder Implementation Committee. In addition, one ex officio member representing the Career Ladder Implementation Committee may appear before the Career Ladder Appeal Committee to present the decision and position of the Career Ladder Implementation Committee. The educator, representative, or the ex officio member representing the Career Ladder Implementation Committee will not be present for or participate in the deliberations of the Career Ladder Appeal Committee as it considers the matter presented.

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#### Level Three

If the educator is not satisfied with the decision of the Career Ladder Appeal Committee, he/she may appeal to the MPS Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee within 40 working days from the date of written receipt of the Career Ladder Appeal Committee decision.

The Superintendent or his/her designee will review the original written appeal along with the written decisions of the Career Ladder Implementation Committee and the Career Ladder Appeal Committee.

The educator will have the opportunity to meet with the Superintendent or his/her designee to present his/her position. At the educator's discretion, a representative other than an attorney may present the educator's position to the Superintendent in the educator's place.

In addition, the Superintendent or his/her designee, at his/her sole discretion, may meet with a member representative of the Career Ladder Implementation Committee and/or a member representative of the Career Ladder Appeal Committee to obtain information on the positions of the committees.

The Superintendent or the designee will render a decision within 15 working days after receipt of the written appeal.

The Level Three decision is final and may not be appealed in any other process.

# IV. Salary and Compensation

## IV – A. CLASS Salary Components

CLASS salaries, addenda, and stipends are contingent on the availability of appropriated funds and the number of persons qualifying. There are no quotas in any component, so the amount of compensation may be adjusted annually contingent on the number of qualified participants, and must be approved by the Career Ladder Implementation Committee.

### CLASS Placement Salary Policy

Receipt of a Career Ladder CLASS salary is not “payment for work done.” It is a higher salary in the placement year resulting from meeting placement criteria during the previous year’s application process and actively applying for placement in the current year or completing the Exit Placement requirement. The salary increase is contingent on

- having met specific application-year criteria and
- maintaining placement-year criteria

It is issued as an addendum to a current MPS contract. For educators who resign during the placement year, the Career Ladder addendum to contract will cease once their MPS contract ends. The CLASS salary is computed based on the percentage of the contract in the placement year. For example, a qualifying educator with a .6 MPS contract would be issued a .6 Career Ladder addendum.

Career Ladder legislation A.R.S. §15-918 governs the policies set by the MPS Career Ladder Implementation Committee (CLIC) to meet yearly reapplication program funding criteria. This legislation directs CLIC policy that

- requires a CLASS salary at each level/step
- allows for CAPs (a maximum amount of salary at each level/step which is the difference between the educator’s MPS contract salary and CLASS salary)
- prohibits quotas for CLASS placement
- requires CLASS placement salaries and CAPs be published in The Common Key at the beginning of each school year
- requires that an educator have an MPS teacher or professional contract at an approved MPS site during the placement year
- allows MPS to set additional placement criteria not specifically delineated in Career Ladder law, but not in conflict with A.R.S. §15-918

### Definitions

MPS contract salary ..... base amount of the educator’s MPS contract

CLASS Addendum ..... Career Ladder monies for the educator’s placement level/step

CLASS salary ..... MPS contract salary + addendum

CLASS CAP ..... the maximum difference between the CLASS salary and the MPS contract salary

Below are examples of CLASS placement salaries for educators on both full and partial contracts. This table is illustrative only and does not represent the actual MPS or Career Ladder amounts.

If the educator’s MPS contract salary is greater than the maximum CLASS salary, the educator will receive \$0 CLASS addendum.						
CLASS Level/Step Placement	MPS Contract Salary	Maximum CLASS Salary	Difference between Salaries	CLASS CAP	Contract Percent (%)	CLASS Addendum
Resident Level	\$32,000	\$35,000	\$3,000	\$1,000	100%	\$1,000
Career Level Step 1	\$35,000	\$39,000	\$4,000	\$2,000	50%	\$1,000
Career Level Step 2	\$39,000	\$49,000	\$10,000	\$2,500	60%	\$1,500
Career Level Step 3 or 4	\$48,000	\$59,000	\$11,000	\$3,000	100%	\$3,000

## IV – B. Compensation

### Hold Placement Policy

The Hold Placement policy provides an additional opportunity for educators to meet full placement criteria for 2013-2014 by submitting improved or missing previous-year materials which meet criteria no later than September 23, 2013, as stated in the fall 2013 Hold Placement letters mailed to educators who qualify for Hold Placement. The prorated five-day window does not apply to the Hold Placement policy, and a missed Hold Placement deadline does not qualify for an appeal.

If an educator who qualifies for Hold Placement submits all required materials no later than September 23, 2013, and all materials meet criteria, he/she will receive full placement salary (contingent on amount of contract) unless the materials were received late for the fall and/or spring deadlines of the application year as described in the prorated salary policy (see page 30).

### Compensation Reduction

Under some circumstances, the compensation received by an educator in any component of the Career Ladder program may be reduced or eliminated, including, but not limited to, the following situations:

- an educator no longer meets the five application criteria stated on the cover and page 6 of this *Handbook*
- sufficient funds are not appropriated by the Arizona State Legislature and/or MPS to meet the MPS proposed Career Ladder salary schedule
- the legislature repeals the Career Ladder program
- the legislature reduces or does not appropriate funds
- MPS terminates its Career Ladder program with Governing Board approval or directive
- the MPS reapplication is not approved by the Arizona Career Ladder Advisory Committee or is approved at a lower percentage rate
- the educator voluntarily terminates his/her participation in the program
- the educator fails to maintain an appropriate level of performance to qualify for a given Career Ladder salary and moves down or off the ladder
- the educator qualifies for and receives compensation for an additional Career Ladder opportunity for one year but not for the next year
- the educator is involuntarily terminated from participation in the program for breaching any state or MPS policy or procedure
- the educator is required to return compensation previously received because of inadequate completion of any Career Ladder component
- the educator on a partial-year, MPS-approved leave of absence elects to receive a partial addendum through Exit Placement during the placement year

Under any of the above situations, an educator in any component of the Career Ladder program who is receiving Career Ladder compensation would return to an MPS salary schedule or receive a reduced Career Ladder salary, receive no salary, or return compensation not merited, which may result in a reduction in salary. Any reduction in salary which may occur as set forth above will not be construed as a reduction in salary in contravention to A.R.S. §15-544.

## IV – B. Compensation

### Reduction in Force

Educators who successfully complete the CLASS qualification process but whose employment with Mesa Public Schools is severed due to Reduction in Force may, upon being rehired by the district in an eligible position for any portion of the following year, receive the placement (including Hold Placement) for which they qualify. Upon return to MPS in the year immediately following employment severed by the Reduction in Force, these educators will receive current CLASS salary amounts for that placement, contingent on funding availability, MPS salary contract portion, and the educators maintaining placement-year criteria (see page 28).

Qualifying educators may apply for Expiry-Year Placement in 2014-2015 with timelines adjusted accordingly with hiring dates.

Qualifying educators may apply for Exit Placement in 2013-2014 with timelines adjusted accordingly with hiring dates.

### Prorated Placement Salary

Prorated placement policy provides a five-working-day window of opportunity during which specified late or missing documentation may be submitted as delineated below.

- A set of fall application materials (student achievement plan and professional record) must be submitted within five working days of the fall submission deadline of September 23, 2013.
- A set of spring application materials (student achievement results and professional record) must be submitted within five working days after the spring submission deadline of April 21, 2014.
- The June 2, 2014, deadline for professional records (MPS teaching evaluation and Higher Level Instructional Responsibility Documentation Form[s]) **does not include** a five-day prorate deadline.

Hold Placement requirements do not qualify for the five-day prorate opportunity as explained in the Hold Placement policy on page 29 of this *Handbook*.

If all Career Level criteria are met, and submission has occurred within one or more of the specified timeline extensions as described above, the applicant qualifies for a prorated placement salary addendum. The CLASS portion of the educator's placement salary is reduced on a prorated basis of five contract days. Therefore, the prorated placement salary addendum is one that has been reduced by the educator's CLASS level/step daily rate of pay (Career Ladder addendum divided by MPS contract days) multiplied by five days.

## V. Program Services

Mesa's Career Ladder program provides support and services to Career Ladder educators and district employees. Services consistently support program goals focused on

- increased student achievement and
- professional development learning opportunities to enhance educators' skills and knowledge

The Arizona State Career Ladder law (A.R.S. §15-918) requires that, in addition to the placement salary (vertical salary) at each level/step, Career Ladder programs provide opportunities for currently placed educators to earn additional Career Ladder compensation (horizontal salary opportunities).

Some of the following opportunities (as noted in the description) require qualified educators to meet additional criteria beyond the placement criteria and typically involve a job description, application, and an interview. These professional opportunities are advertised in *The Common Key*. Compensation is issued as an equal-pay-for-equal-performance stipend.

### Program Services Overview

Service Title (descriptions follow)	Eligible Participants
Student Achievement Workshops and Open Labs	Career Level Applicants
Student Achievement Book Study	All Educators
Student Achievement Coach Cadre	Active Placement Educators
Optional Incentive Component <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• District Quality Service Performance Goals</li> </ul>	School/Site Employees

#### Student Achievement Workshops and Open Lab Sessions

Prior to the fall submission deadline, applicants are offered optional informational workshops and open lab work sessions where they can ask questions and receive feedback about their student achievement plan or the application criteria and process.

Workshops and open lab work sessions are advertised in *The Common Key* newsletter feed. Workshop registration is through the ERO system on the Professional Development website. Open labs are available on a first-come, first-served basis. The workshop/open lab schedules are published on the Career Ladder home page.

#### Student Achievement Book Study

Student Achievement Book Study is available to groups of at least three teachers who select a current research-based, Career Ladder-approved book on a topic related to their work as educators. The teachers may or may not be Career Ladder educators. Through reading, discussion, and reflection, the teachers expand their professional knowledge and discuss potential application in their classrooms or at their sites. The Book Study process includes a final dialogue/presentation or submission of typed responses regarding the impact of the Book Study on the group's learning.

Student Achievement Book Study provides a meaningful process for

- problem-solving issues concerning implementation of instructional strategies, curriculum standards, and assessments

## V. Program Services

### **Student Achievement Book Study** (continued)

- examining research that may impact professional practice and student learning
- analyzing student work as it relates to student achievement data and standards

Topics of study may include subjects such as classroom instruction, assessment, data analysis, behavior management, differentiated instruction, curriculum mapping, standards-based learning, and brain research implications for classroom practice.

Participation in a Student Achievement Book Study

- qualifies for recertification hours for all participants who complete the process; and
- qualifies as a higher level instructional responsibility for Career Ladder educators who complete the Book Study process without the need to complete a corresponding Higher Level Instructional Responsibility Form.

Participation in a Book Study does not qualify for a Career Ladder professional development stipend.

Book Study guidelines and applications are found on the Career Ladder website under Professional Opportunities.

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### **Student Achievement Coach Cadre**

Each educator applying for Career Ladder is assigned a student achievement coach. To promote interrater reliability, evaluation trainings and meetings throughout the year focus on team evaluation of student achievement plans and results as well as the research and philosophical background that support coaching policies and student achievement criteria.

Student achievement coaches are Career Level educators who must apply annually for the position.

They

- provide individual and group coaching for self-directedness and decision making
- provide support for all Career Level applicants in developing, implementing, evaluating, and analyzing student achievement plans and results
- communicate with educators beyond the school day, as cadre members have full-time teaching assignments
- participate in required professional learning on current research, and coaching and evaluation skills
- collaborate with and receive feedback from their team leaders (Career Ladder specialists)

After each training, the coaches respond to evaluation prompts that assess presentation of coaching and student achievement concepts needed to support educators throughout the application process. The evaluations guide the development of content and mode of presentation for subsequent trainings. Following each meeting/training, the team leaders meet to debrief and plan additional follow-up support for coaches.

All Career Level educators have the opportunity to evaluate the support and services that their student achievement coaches provide. Survey data are used to support coaches in the refinement of their coaching skills, set goals for learning, as well as support the Career Ladder staff in refinement of coach training and department services.

Serving as a student achievement coach qualifies as a higher level instructional responsibility.

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### **Optional Incentive Component: District Quality Service Performance Goals**

Quality service goals are measured by internal customers and by parent and student surveys. Support in data analysis is provided by the MPS Research and Evaluation staff.



# Appendix

## MPS Evaluation for Placement on Resident Level and Career Level

Each year, Career Ladder applicants must submit a copy of the appropriate MPS evaluation for that year because an MPS district teaching evaluation is one determining factor of the highest step for which an educator can qualify and be placed. In order to assess the skills of teachers for each level/step of the Career Ladder program, the Career Ladder Implementation Committee (CLIC) has set criteria for each level/step. If criteria at the application level/step are not met, an educator may be placed on a lower level/step than applied for or may not be placed.

**Pending**