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RUSHFORD PETERSON SCHOOL DISTRICT ENTERS MINNESOTA'S NATION LEADING Q COMP PROGRAM

The 43rd School District to enter professional development and achievement-based pay system

RUSHFORD, Minn. – Minnesota Education Commissioner Alice Seagren announced today that the Rushford-Peterson School District will implement Minnesota's nation-leading Q Comp performance and professional pay program. The school district will receive \$165,100 in total revenue for implementation in the 2009-10 school year.

"I commend Rushford-Peterson School District on their decision to participate in this important education reform," said Commissioner Seagren. "Q Comp will give participating teachers an opportunity to enhance their skills and take part in research-based professional development, which will help raise student achievement."

In 2005, Governor Tim Pawlenty proposed and the state legislature approved Minnesota's Q Comp program. Q Comp provides up to \$86 million for districts that join the program. The Q Comp program has funds available for school districts, school sites and charter schools to implement a program for the 2009-10 school year. This funding is available on a first-come, first-served basis until all available funds have been exhausted.

Q Comp is designed to advance the teaching profession by providing structured professional development and evaluation, as well as an alternative pay schedule that compensates teachers based on performance, not just seniority. The program brings together career advancement, professional development and compensation linked to academic achievement. It includes a locally agreed-upon peer evaluation process for every teacher that is based on skills, responsibilities and student academic growth. This plan is voluntary and will add up to an additional \$260 per student in participating districts.

"We are very excited to be a member of the Minnesota Q Comp Program," said Superintendent Charles Ehler. "The program will provide us the opportunity to improve the use of technology in our classrooms, provide for curriculum improvements and provide professional development for our staff. We are confident that it will have a positive impact on student learning and achievement."

The Q Comp program gives participating school districts the flexibility to meet local needs within a comprehensive model of improved teaching and learning. The Rushford-Peterson School District also signed on to the Minnesota Race to the Top application. The Rushford-Peterson School District administration and teacher representatives have agreed to the following:

Provide career ladders or career advancement opportunities for teachers: The career ladder includes three positions with various duties and compensations. These positions are:

- Site Leader: responsible for facilitating a learning community, researching instructional strategies, evaluating members of the learning community, mentoring probationary teachers, and working with the learning community to develop goals.
- Lead Teacher: responsible for working with the Site Leader to develop learning community goals, helping to facilitate learning community meetings, submitting goals to the Q Comp Committee for approval, evaluating members of the learning community, and maintaining and submitting all paperwork and records to the Q Comp Committee.
- Q Comp Committee: responsible for providing program oversight, reviewing and approving learning community goals, and reviewing all Q Comp related paperwork and records submitted by the Lead Teacher.

Job-embedded professional development: As the focus for the Q Comp plan, the district has selected the following student achievement goal from the Educational Improvement Plan (EIP): To show improvement in math scores using the MCA-II test. In alignment with this, each site has chosen the following goals from the site EIP as the focus for student improvement:

- The percentage of all students in grades 3-5 at Rushford-Peterson Elementary, who are proficient on the MCA-II Mathematics test, will increase from 74 percent in 2009 to 77 percent in 2010.
- The percentage of all students in grades 6-8 at Rushford-Peterson Middle School, who are proficient on the MCA-II Mathematics test, will increase from 67.6 percent in 2009 to 70.60 percent in 2010.
- The percentage of all students in grade 11 at Rushford-Peterson High School, who earn an
 achievement level on the Mathematics MCA-II of Meets the Standards or Exceeds the Standards or
 who earn a higher achievement level compared to the level achieved in grade 8, will increase from
 67.24 percent in 2008-09 to 71.74 percent in 2009-10.

Elementary teachers will be grouped into two learning communities based on grade levels. Pre-K through grade 3 will be one, and grades 4-5 will be the second Learning Community. All Middle School teachers will be in one Learning Community. All high school teachers will be assigned to a learning community based on subject area. One team will consist of math, science and career and technical education, and the other team will consist of English, social studies and performing arts. Specialists will be assigned to a Learning Community based on Learning Community numbers. Teachers who teach at more than one site shall be assigned to one Learning Community. Each of these learning communities will meet for at least 45 minutes two times per week.

Objective and comprehensive teacher evaluation: Each tenured teacher in Rushford-Peterson School District will be observed and receive formative evaluations three times per year. The evaluation team that will complete these evaluations for each tenured teacher will consist of two observations/evaluations by the Site Leader or Lead Teacher and one observation/evaluation by the building principal each year. All formative evaluations will be based on direct classroom observations and will be scored using Rushford-Peterson Evaluation Form and 2009-10 Rushford-Peterson Teacher Evaluation Scoring Sheet. Teachers will be expected to achieve an annual average of 15 or more (Proficient or higher) in the five identified strands

Each probationary teacher will be observed and receive summative evaluations five times per year: three by the building administration and two by the Site Leader or Lead Teacher. Once achieving tenure, a probationary teacher will transition to once-per-year observation/evaluation by the building principal and continue to receive two observation/evaluations per year by the Site Leader or Lead Teacher. Probationary teachers are expected to score an annual average of 10 or more points (Basic or higher) and show progress toward Proficient and Established in the five strands.

Performance pay: A teacher's compensation will be based on the following factors:

- \$250/25 percent for school-wide gains will be awarded to teachers if the schoolwide goals are met.
- \$250/25 percent for measures of student achievement will be awarded to each teacher whose class meets their goal by the last learning community meeting of the year.
- \$500/50 percent for teacher evaluation will be awarded to each tenured teacher who attains an annual average score of 15 or more points on their teacher evaluations or each probationary teacher who attains an annual average score of 10 or more points on their teacher evaluations.

Alternative professional pay schedule: Rushford-Peterson revised its salary schedule and eliminated traditional steps and lanes as part of the original pilot alternative compensation legislation. The proposed Q Comp plan amends the goal attainment schedule. Teachers will advance on the goal attainment schedule if they meet one of these performance pay requirements:

- A teacher earns performance pay for the attainment of the schoolwide student achievement goal.
- A teacher earns performance pay for the attainment of the appropriate teacher evaluation standard (15 or more points for tenured teachers or 10 or more points for probationary teachers).

A teacher who does not attain at least one of the performance awards outlined will not advance a vertical level on the district goal attainment schedule (salary grid).

Rushford-Peterson School District is the 43rd school district to be approved for the Q Comp program during the 2009-10 school year. School districts that began implementing the Q Comp program during the 2009-10 school year: Rushford-Peterson School District.

School districts that began implementing the Q Comp program during the 2008-09 school year: Annandale - Mahtomedi - North Branch - Edina - Minneapolis (various sites) - Chisago Lakes

School districts that began implementing the Q Comp program during the 2007-08 school year: Princeton - Rosemount-Eagan-Apple Valley - Roseville (three sites) - Orono - Minneapolis (various sites) - Brooklyn Center

School districts that began implementing the Q Comp program during the 2006-07 school year: Grand Meadow - Albert Lea - Alden-Conger - Brainerd - Wayzata - Eden Prairie - Red Rock Central - International Falls - Le Center - St. Louis Park - Osseo - Lac Qui Parle - North St. Paul-Maplewood-Oakdale - Clearbrook-Gonvick - Proctor - Burnsville - St. Anthony-New Brighton - Minnetonka - Delano - Centennial - Pine River - Brandon - South Washington County - South Saint Paul - Farmington - Roseville (various sites) - Minneapolis (various sites)

School districts that started implementing the Q Comp program during the 2005-06 school year: Minneapolis (various sites) - Hopkins - St. Francis - Mounds View - Fridley - La Crescent-Hokah - Marshall

Several districts have indicated they are planning to submit Q Comp applications.