###### New York State Grants for Mathematics, Science, and Technology

###### Teachers in Religious and Independent Schools Program

###### 2017-2018 School Year

###### Frequently Asked Questions

**GENERAL DEFINITIONS**

1. **Please define what is meant by secular and non-secular instruction.**

For purposes of this program, the term “secular” means instruction that is not related to or does not involve religious or spiritual matters; and non-secular means instruction relating to or involving religious or spiritual matters.

1. **Please define instructional day.**

For purposes of this program, an instructional day is defined as five (5) hours for grades 3-8 and five and one-half (5 ½) hours for grades 9-12, which is consistent with the length of the school day established by Commissioner’s regulation §175.5.

**ELIGIBILITY**

1. **Who is eligible for reimbursement?**

Nonpublic, not-for-profit schools are eligible to apply to the Department for reimbursement of the salaries of eligible teachers. Education Law §3037 defines eligible teachers as individuals who are:

1. Employed by a nonpublic school;
2. Teaching mathematics, science, or technology in any grades from three (3) through twelve (12) using curricula that support the New York State Learning Standards; and
3. Either,

(a) certified to teach in New York State pursuant to Education Law §3004 (<http://public.leginfo.state.ny.us/lawssrch.cgi?NVLWO>); or

(b) hold a Master’s degree or Ph.D. in Mathematics, Science, Technology, or Education; or

(c) hold a Bachelor’s degree in Mathematics, Science, Technology, or Education **and** is currently enrolled in a Master’s or Ph.D. program in Mathematics, Science, Technology, or Education within five (5) years from the later of April 10, 2017 or the employment start date with the nonpublic school.

D. Provided, however, that the nonpublic school teacher must not also provide non-secular instruction in any capacity within the nonpublic school

1. **What grade levels are eligible?**

Nonpublic schools may seek reimbursement for the salaries of eligible teachers who teach courses in mathematics, science, or technology in any grades from three (3) through twelve (12) using curricula that support the New York State Learning Standards.

1. **Is a teacher with an initial certificate who is not currently enrolled in a Master’s program an eligible teacher?**

Yes, if the teacher meets the criteria for an initial certificate in accordance with Part 80 of the Regulations of the Commissioner and meets the other eligibility requirements, the teacher is eligible as an individual certified to teach in NYS pursuant to Section 3004 of the Education Law.

1. **When does the certification have to be valid?**

When choosing the eligibility category for certified teacher, the teacher must hold a current valid certification to be considered eligible.

1. **Are there any subcategories of mathematics, science, technology or education in which a Master’s or Ph.D. would qualify an individual as an eligible teacher? (i.e. library science, biology, engineering, special education)**

Yes. As long as the individual meets all of the other eligibility criteria and such degree is within the broader categories of mathematics, science, technology or education (e.g., a degree in physics or special education).

1. **Can we hire a teacher going for certification now that will be done by September?**

The teacher needs to have been an employee during the 2017-2018 school year in order to be reimbursed. If a school is seeking reimbursement for a teacher who is not currently certified, they must meet the other options for eligibility. See response to Question # 3.

1. **If a teacher has a Bachelor’s degree in an unrelated field, has a Master's degree in Education is this sufficient to be considered as a math, science or technology teacher?**

Yes. An eligible teacher may be categorized as one of the following:

* 1. certified to teach in New York State pursuant to Section 3004 of Education Law (<http://public.leginfo.state.ny.us/lawssrch.cgi?NVLWO>); or
	2. holds a Master’s degree or Ph.D. in Mathematics, Science, Technology, or Education; or
	3. holds a Bachelor’s degree in Mathematics, Science, Technology, or Education and is currently enrolled in a Master’s or Ph.D. program in Mathematics, Science, Technology, or Education within five (5) years from the later of April 10, 2017 or the employment start date with the nonpublic school;
1. teaches Mathematics, Science, or Technology in any grades from three (3) through twelve (12) using curricula that support the New York State learning standards; and
2. is employed by a nonpublic school.
3. **If a teacher hold’s a Master’s degree in Mathematics, Science, Technology, or Education from an international higher education institution and does not meet any of the other eligibility options, is the teacher an eligible teacher?**

Education Law §3037 provides that a teacher who holds a Master’s degree or Ph.D. in Mathematics, Science, Technology, or Education may be an eligible teacher. However, the statute does not address whether or not such degree must be from an accredited institution within the United States. Therefore, the SORIS will undertake a review of the foreign credentials in the same way as the New York State Education Department Office of Teaching Initiatives reviews such credentials for the purpose of seeking certification.

An eligible teacher is categorized as one of the following:

* 1. certified to teach in New York State pursuant to Section 3004 of Education Law (<http://public.leginfo.state.ny.us/lawssrch.cgi?NVLWO>); or
	2. holds a Master’s degree or Ph.D. in Mathematics, Science, Technology, or Education; or
	3. holds a Bachelor’s degree in Mathematics, Science, Technology, or Education and is currently enrolled in a Master’s or Ph.D. program in Mathematics, Science, Technology, or Education within five (5) years from the later of April 10, 2017 or the employment start date with the nonpublic school;
1. **The application page requires the nonpublic school to certify that the teacher does not provide non-secular instruction in any capacity. Are teachers who provide non-secular instruction eligible for reimbursement?**

No. Education Law §3037 prohibits reimbursement for the salary of an otherwise eligible teacher who provides instruction in mathematics, science or technology if such teacher also provides non-secular instruction in any capacity.

1. **May a nonpublic school seek reimbursement for an eligible teacher who teaches religious studies outside of his/her employment with the nonpublic school?**

Education Law §3037 prohibits reimbursement to the nonpublic school for otherwise eligible teachers who provide instruction in mathematics, science or technology if such teachers also provide non-secular instruction in any capacity. However, if a nonpublic school teacher engages in non-secular activities outside of their employment with the nonpublic school, such employee is still eligible as long as they do not provide any non-secular instruction in any capacity in relation to their employment with the nonpublic school seeking reimbursement.

1. **If a teacher teaches math, science and/or technology as well as one class of religious studies, can he or she be reimbursed or is he disqualified?**

Education Law §3037 prohibits reimbursement to the nonpublic school for otherwise eligible teachers who provide instruction in mathematics, science or technology if such teachers also provide non-secular instruction in any capacity. However, if a nonpublic school teacher engages in non-secular activities outside of their employment with the nonpublic school, such employee is still eligible as long as they do not provide any non-secular instruction in any capacity in relation to their employment with the nonpublic school seeking reimbursement.

1. **If a teacher works in the public school system and then after they complete their teaching day in their public school, they come over to the non-public school to teach MST eligible courses, are they eligible for reimbursement for their non-public teaching salary?**

Yes, as long as the teacher meets the eligibility criteria.

1. **Does the program permit reimbursement for the salaries of teachers teaching specialized subjects within the general subject areas of mathematics, science and technology (e.g. engineering, computer science)?**

Yes, specialized courses that fit within the broader subject areas of mathematics, science, and technology are eligible for reimbursement.

1. **Will the time spent at home for preparations for the lesson, or checking the tests be considered in reimbursement?**

No. Reimbursement is calculated based on the percentage of time the teacher teaches Mathematics, Science and/or Technology courses during the school day.

1. **Is there a minimal number of students that have to be in a class?**

No, provided that the course meets the required standards.

1. **Are schools automatically eligible if we follow the criteria?**

Each submission will be reviewed by the SORIS staff for eligibility. Please note that, if the total eligible reimbursements requested exceed the $5 million appropriation, then each applicant will only be reimbursed in an amount equal to the percentage each such applicant represents to the total of all applications submitted.

1. **Would a submission of curriculum and course descriptions a school plans to teach for the 18/19 school year, be accepted for eligibility?**

No, the curriculum needs to correspond with the courses taught in the 2017-2018 school year.

**REIMBURSEMENT**

1. **How many teachers can be reimbursed from each school?**

Education Law §3037(2)(c) does not limit the number of teachers that can be reimbursed. However, Education Law §3037(2)(c) provides that, in the event that the total eligible reimbursements requested exceed the $5 million appropriation, each applicant will only be reimbursed in an amount equal to the percentage each such applicant represents to the total of all applications submitted. Schools whose eligible teacher salaries exceed their reimbursement amount must support those expenses on their own and will not receive additional reimbursement.

1. **If a teacher teaches in more than one school, does each school submit an application if requesting reimbursement for the same teach**

Reimbursement requests pertain solely to the school that is submitting the application for reimbursement of its own eligible teachers.

1. **Do math, science and technology teachers who teach such subjects remotely "qualify" for reimbursement if the instructor otherwise meets the eligibility criteria?**

Education Law §3037does not prescribe the manner in which the instruction must be delivered. However, please note that nonpublic schools are only eligible to seek reimbursement for the salaries (or a portion thereof) of such eligible teachers employed by the school.

1. **How will reimbursements be calculated and how will we know the total amount of our reimbursement?**

In accordance with Education Law §3037(2)(b), reimbursements will be calculated based on NYSED’s data regarding average comparable teacher salaries and personal services, per subject area, of public school teachers in the school district in which the nonpublic schools are located, multiplied by the percentage of full-time equivalent secular instructional hours completed in the nonpublic school day per subject area (mathematics, science, and technology).

If the total reimbursements requested exceed the $5 million appropriation, then each applicant will only be reimbursed in an amount equal to the percentage each such applicant represents to the total of all applications submitted.

Reimbursement request forms received by NYSED by Wednesday, August 1, 2018 will be reviewed by NYSED staff.

Approved requests will be compared against NYSED data regarding teacher salaries, and after NYSED calculates the total approved requests and proportionate shares, the totals will be posted to the SORIS website and a notification will be sent out via the nonpublic school listserv.

1. **Will each school who applies receive the full amount requested?**

In the event that the total reimbursements requested exceed the $5 million appropriation, Education Law §3037(2)(c) provides that each applicant will only be reimbursed in an amount equal to the percentage each such applicant represents to the total of all applications submitted. Schools whose eligible teacher salaries exceed their reimbursement amount must support those expenses on their own and will not receive additional reimbursement.

1. **Is the grant reimbursement based on the current year or for the coming school year?**

Reimbursement is for teacher’s salaries who were employed during the 2017-2018 school year and taught mathematics, science and technology courses.

1. **When will the schools be notified of the total reimbursement?**

Reimbursement request forms received by NYSED by Wednesday, August 1, 2018 will be reviewed by NYSED staff. Approved requests will be compared against NYSED data regarding teacher salaries, and after NYSED calculates the total approved requests and proportionate shares, the totals will be posted to the SORIS website and a notification will be sent out via the nonpublic school listserv. We anticipate the notification will be sent in late fall 2018.

1. **How will the comparable salaries be computed for a nonpublic high school located in a school district without a high school?**

Reimbursements will be calculated based on NYSED’s data regarding average comparable teacher salaries and personal services, per subject area, of public school teachers in the school district in which the nonpublic schools are located, however that district is configured.

1. **If the reimbursements have to be prorated due to the requests exceeding the $5 million allocation, will the prorated payment be per teacher or per school?**

In the event that the applications for reimbursement under this section exceed the appropriation available for this program, then each applicant shall only be reimbursed an amount equal to the percentage that each such applicant represents to the total of all applications submitted.

1. **How are reimbursements calculated for part-time teachers?**

Part-time teacher reimbursement will be calculated by taking the same percentage of their work schedule (25%, 50%, 85%, etc.) as the average salary by subject for that school district. For example:

If a math teacher works part time at 30%, earns $32,000 and the average relevant full-time salary is $75,000, then the average full-time salary is multiplied by .3 ($75,000 x .3 = $22,500). Therefore, $22,500 is the maximum reimbursement in this scenario (provided funds are available to reimburse at the highest rate).

Teachers who teach math, science, and/or technology and another secular subject (e.g., gym, library, language arts, etc.) will be reimbursed for the portion of their time (based on a full-time teaching schedule) that they spend teaching math, science, and/or technology. For example:

If a teacher spends 50% of his/her time teaching science and the other 50% teaching physical education, and the average relevant full-time salary is $64,000, then the average full-time salary is multiplied by .5 ($64,000 x .5 =$32,000). Therefore, $32,000 is the maximum reimbursement in this scenario (provided funds are available to reimburse at the highest rate).

1. **If the average comparable public-school teacher salary in the public school district is higher than the nonpublic school teacher salary, will the school be reimbursed the public school average or just the actual salary we paid?**

Reimbursement for eligible teachers shall be the average comparable teacher salary and personal service, per subject area, of public school teachers in the school district in which such nonpublic schools are located, multiplied by the percentage of full time equivalent secular instructional hours completed in the school day per subject area.

**SUBMISSION**

1. **What is the deadline for submission?**

Pursuant to Education Law §3037(2)(a), applications for reimbursement must be **received by** August first of each year for schools to be reimbursed for the salaries of eligible teachers in the prior year. Therefore, the deadline for submitting request forms for the 2017-2018 School Year is Wednesday, **August 1, 2018**.

1. **When will you start accepting the applications?**

Application submissions have already started. The deadline for submitting the reimbursement form and documentation is August 1, 201087. Notification of reimbursement totals are anticipated to be announced late fall 2018.

1. **On the reimbursement form, should the nonpublic school calculate the percentage of time a teacher spends teaching eligible subjects, multiply that by the teacher salary to calculate the reimbursement requested?**

No, NYSED will calculate this.  Enter the teacher’s 2017-2018 salary in the reimbursement request box.

1. **How do you calculate percentage of time on math/science? If we have a full schedule as teaching 5 subjects and they teach 5 subjects is that full time.?**

SORIS staff will calculate the percentage of time spent on MST courses based on the submitted teacher and master schedules.

1. **What if the teacher teaches a different amount of time on different days of the week?**

SORIS staff will calculate the percentage of time spent on MST courses based on the teacher and master schedules submitted by the school.

1. **Will we receive notification that our reimbursement submission form has been received?**

No. We will not notify schools of receipt. If schools would like to confirm receipt, please email SORIS@nysed.gov

1. **Do we submit one application per school or one application per teacher?**

Each nonpublic school must submit a separate reimbursement form for each eligible teacher for whom the school is seeking reimbursement.

1. **Can we apply for this for every teacher in our building who meets the criteria or only one teacher?**

The law does not state a limit of the number of eligible teachers who can apply from each school.

1. **What is the difference between a school master schedule and the teacher’s schedule?**

The master schedule encompasses the entire school’s schedule including the teachers, and the subjects taught by period of each day. The teacher’s schedule is specific to daily schedule of the individual teacher for whom you are seeking reimbursement.

1. **Does every class within the master schedule need to align with the NYS Learning Standards?**

No. Only the classes within in the master schedule for which the school is requesting reimbursement.

1. **As we are only using secular instruction hours, must the master schedule include the whole school day, including religious studies, or is it to only include the secular study segment of the day?**

The master schedule must encompass the entire school schedule

1. **In what format should the master schedule be submitted? These schedules are quite large.**

The master schedules can be submitted on paper or on a flash drive. If the schools need to submit in an alternative method, please contact the State Office of Religious and Independent Schools to discuss further. SORIS@nysed.gov

1. **Is it required to share the teacher’s salary on the application?**

Yes. Schools must submit the salary of the teacher(s) for whom they are seeking reimbursement on the application.

1. **Is a copy of the teaching certificate, or a diploma sufficient?**

Yes. As long as it states the area of certification or degree type.

1. **Where and in what format do we submit the reimbursement form?**

Please submit the Nonpublic School Reimbursement Request Form for Mathematics, Science and Technology Teachers in Religious and Independent Schools along with the required documentation including original signatures to:

New York State Education Department

State Office of Religious and Independent Schools

89 Washington Avenue, Room 1078 EBA

Albany, New York 12234

**REMINDER – Forms must be received by NYSED no later than August 1, 2018.**

1. **Are all the documents listed in each category of the reimbursement request form required?**

Yes. Nonpublic schools must submit the applicable documentary evidence with the Nonpublic School Reimbursement Request Form for Mathematics, Science, and Technology Teachers in Religious and Independent Schools.

1. **Certified to teach in NYS pursuant to Section 3004 of Education Law**
* Teacher’s NYS Teacher Certificate(s)
* Copy of the school’s master schedule
* Copy of the teacher’s schedule for the school year
* Religious and independent school course descriptions, with evidence that curricula support the New York State learning standards
* Signed employment agreements or other evidence of employment by the religious or independent school
1. **Holds a Master’s degree or Ph.D. in Mathematics, Science, Technology, or Education**
* Official documentation from college or university stating Master’s degree or Ph.D. has been earned in an eligible program
* Copy of the school’s master schedule
* Copy of the teacher’s schedule for the school year
* Religious and independent school course descriptions, with evidence that curricula support the New York State learning standards
* Signed employment agreements or other evidence of employment by the religious or independent school
1. **Holds a Bachelor’s degree in Mathematics, Science, Technology, or Education and is currently enrolled in a Master’s or Ph.D. program in Mathematics, Science, Technology, or Education within five (5) years from the later of April 10, 2017 or the employment start date with the nonpublic school**
* Official documentation from college or university stating Bachelor’s degree has been earned in an eligible program
* Official documentation from college or university stating teacher is a current student enrolled in an eligible program within five years from the later of April 10, 2017 or the employment start date with the nonpublic school
* Copy of the school’s master schedule
* Copy of the teacher’s schedule for the school year
* Religious and independent school course descriptions, with evidence that curricula support the New York State learning standards
* Signed employment agreements or other evidence of employment by the religious or independent school
1. **Education Law §3037(a) states that a candidate for reimbursement may be an individual who “holds a Bachelor's degree in Mathematics, Science, Technology or Education and is currently enrolled in a Master's or Ph.D. program in Mathematics, Science, Technology or Education “within five years from the later of the April 10, 2017 or the employment start date with the nonpublic school” What has to occur within five years?**

Education Law §3037(a) requires that for a teacher who only holds a bachelor’s degree to be eligible under this provision, he or she must be enrolled in an eligible Master’s or Ph.D. program by April 10, 2022 or within five years of commencing employment with the nonpublic school, whichever date is later Please note that for a school to seek reimbursement for a teacher under this criteria, such teacher must be enrolled in the Master’s or Ph.D. program at the time reimbursement is sought.

1. **What evidence do we need to provide to show that the curricula support the NYS Learning Standards? Are course descriptions sufficient? Are there resources available?**

Evidence that the curricula supports the NYS Learning Standards shall include, but is not limited to, a description of the course and the corresponding curriculum, and curriculum maps. For information on current New York State Learning Standards please refer to the following links:

New York State Education Department’s website has resources available

Engage NY: <https://www.engageny.org/>

Next Generation Learning Standards:

[http://www.nysed.gov/next-generation-l earning-standards](http://www.nysed.gov/next-generation-l%09earning-standards)

Office of Curriculum and Instruction:

<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/ciai/standards.html>

1. **If the name on the teacher’s certificate or other documentation is not the same as the name on the school’s documentation due to marriage or other reasons, does the school need to submit proof of the teacher’s name change?**

In such circumstances, the school should submit official documentation of the teacher’s legal name change from the teacher or a notarized statement regarding the name change from the teacher along with the application.