Georgia plans to provide bonus payment to every public school teacher, school staff member

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January 14, 2021 – Governor Brian Kemp and State School Superintendent Richard Woods plan to provide a one-time, $1,000 bonus payment to every K-12 public-school teacher and school-level staff member in the state.

The bonus payments are intended for all school-level staff in Georgia's K-12 public schools, including teachers, paraprofessionals, school counselors, school psychologists, school nurses, custodians, bus drivers, school nutrition staff, media specialists, clerical staff and administrative assistants, school principals, assistant principals, instructional coaches, therapists, etc. The funds will be allocated to school districts and must be spent on the bonus payments. Superintendent Woods will officially recommend the allocation for approval at the State Board of Education's February 18, 2021 meeting.

“In a day and age where so much is thrown at those investing in our children on the front lines, the additional burdens of remote learning, social distancing, wearing a mask, adapting to the new normal — honestly made educating overwhelming," **Governor Kemp said in his State of the State address today.** "But the great men and women running Georgia's schools didn't miss a beat. From principals...teachers...custodians....bus drivers...and support staff on down, their actions have inspired all of us, and today, I am proud to announce that, working closely with State School Superintendent Richard Woods, the state will provide additional support to school system reopening efforts, equating to a one-time supplement of $1,000 for every teacher and other employee."

"Our teachers and school staff have done extraordinary work in the last ten months," **Superintendent Woods said.** "At the onset of the pandemic, they essentially reinvented the educational delivery system in the space of a weekend, and since then have continued to show up for their students, whether virtually or in-person. What we've asked of them has been far from easy, and we are providing these bonuses as a tangible gesture of our gratitude and respect for their work and sacrifices, and as a means of retaining these dedicated educators and support personnel who make educating our students possible. This is about restoring hope for our educational workforce – during these unprecedented times, we must continue to invest in the people who directly serve students and make our education system run."

The payments will be provided through two sources — approximately $60 million from the Governor's Office and approximately $180 million from the Georgia Department of Education's reserve portion of CARES 2 stimulus funds.

Bonus payments are not a required or specifically listed use of CARES 2 funds, but they were a top priority for Governor Kemp, Superintendent Woods and GaDOE, and the U.S. Department of Education has verified that they are an allowable expenditure.

GaDOE will provide additional details to school districts as they become available.

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