

Career Ladder July 1, 2025 Submission Requirements 2/28/2025

July 1, 2025 Career Ladder Submission Requirements Overview

The July 1, 2025 Career Ladder submission marks the second stage of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future Career Ladder initiative being rolled out across Maryland's school districts. This submission should build upon the local Career Ladder plan submitted in 2024. The following components of the Career Ladder are due in this phase and should include all parts of the 2024 submission in one comprehensive plan. Future phases will include additional components of the Career Ladder as envisioned by the Blueprint for Maryland's Future.

The July 1, 2025 Career Ladder submission must include:

- I. Roles and responsibilities for teachers on Level 4 (excluding Professor Distinguished Teacher)
- II. Requirements for movement up the Career Ladder
- III. Salary information for Levels 1-4 (excluding Professor Distinguished Teacher)
- IV. Technical submission requirements

See individual sections below for details on each Career Ladder requirement.

Career Ladder components deferred to a later date (TBD):

- 8-Year plan to phase in collaborative time (TBD after 2025 legislative session)
- Professor Distinguished Teacher on the Teacher Leadership Track Level 4
- Teacher evaluation and Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) system
- Level 3 Assistant Principal requirements including NBC and percentage of time participating in classroom activity
- School Leader/Administrator Track

I. Roles and Responsibilities Requirements

Required components due:

- Description of the role of Level 4 Lead Teachers and Distinguished Teachers (excluding Professor Distinguished Teachers)

Criteria for Success:

The Career Ladder role descriptions:

- Clearly define the distinct roles of Lead Teachers and Distinguished Teachers, on Level 4 of the Teacher Leadership Track in accordance with [§6-1004](#)

- Include the expectation that teachers on the upper levels of the Career Ladder are serving as mentor teachers, especially those teachers who teach at identified low-performing schools in accordance with [§6-1002\(j\)](#)

Notes:

- LEAs may consider explaining how new roles and/or responsibilities for Level 3 teachers prepare those teachers to take on Level 4 roles, should they choose to apply for them.
- Under the Blueprint law, once the AIB has determined that the Career Ladder is well established across the State, certain roles and responsibilities may only be filled by teachers on Level 4 of the Career Ladder (mentor teacher for induction programs and teacher training practicums from the teacher leadership track; expert to write curriculum and assessment items and develop model lessons from the distinguished teacher and professor distinguished teacher tiers of the teacher leadership track ([§6-1004\(e\)](#)).

II. Movement Up the Career Ladder Requirements

Required components due:

- Description of the opportunities available to teachers to develop and demonstrate the competencies to qualify for advancement to Level 4 positions on the Career Ladder
- Overview of the process for selecting teachers to advance onto and up to Level 4 positions on the Career Ladder in accordance with [§6-1004](#) and [§6-1007](#)

Criteria for Success:

Plan for movement up the Career Ladder:

- Explains the structures in place to encourage and support teachers in obtaining and maintaining an NBC (or if there is no assessment comparable to NBC for the teacher's subject area, a teacher with a Master's degree in the teacher's subject area) in order to move to Level 3 and higher on the Career Ladder, prioritizing teachers from groups historically underrepresented in the teaching profession ([§6-1008](#))
- Includes professional learning opportunities available and increased responsibility, authority, and autonomy for making school-level decisions at Levels 3 and 4 to support teachers in developing the necessary competencies to qualify for teacher leadership roles as outlined in [§6-1004](#)
 - Describes how teachers will have equitable access to the different professional learning opportunities outlined
- Includes a documented selection process for teachers moving onto and up Level 4 aligned to statutory eligibility requirements in [§6-1004](#) and [§6-1007](#) including:
 - Demonstrated competence of Level 4 requirements ([§6-1004](#))

- Priority is given to candidates with experience in schools that represent the demographic and socioeconomic diversity of the school system or have received a Concentration of Poverty Grant ([6-1004\(b\)](#))
- Each county board shall strive to place NBC teachers ([§6-1002\(k\)](#)) and Level 4 positions in schools throughout the county in a manner that supports diversity and equity and prioritizes low-performing schools ([§6-1002\(k\)](#)) and community schools ([§6-1004](#))
- Describes how teachers on Level 4 of the Career Ladder will advise or participate in the selection process for teachers to move onto and up Level 4 ([§6-1004\(b\)](#))

Notes:

- Examples of professional learning opportunities might include leadership and mentor training, leading a team of teachers, mentoring newer teachers, coordinating a grade level/subject area/school-wide initiative, NBC supports, etc.

III. Salary Information Requirements

Required Components Due:

- Career Ladder salary scales for Levels 1, 2, 3 and Level 4 on the Teacher Leadership Track (excluding Professor Distinguished Teacher)
- Salary enhancements for Maintenance of Certification (MOC) for National Board Certification
- Salary scales for all other teachers not on the Career Ladder to determine the financial incentives associated with moving onto and up the Career Ladder

Criteria for Success:

The Career Ladder:

- Includes salary scale for teachers on Level 4 (excluding Professor Distinguished Teacher) aligned with the salary increases required in the law ([§6-1009](#))
- Includes the second and third Maintenance of Certification (MOC) for National Board Certification (NBC) as bargained

Notes:

- Advancement on the salary scale should be driven by new increased authority, responsibility, and autonomy for informing school-level decisions about moving up the Career Ladder
- The following guiding principles from [§6-1002](#) should be taken into account:
 - (1) Progression of teachers in a manner that incentivizes teachers to stay on the teacher track rather than moving to the School Leader/Administrator track;
 - (2) A teacher salary that attracts new teachers to the profession;
 - (3) A teacher salary that incentivizes existing teachers to opt in to the Career Ladder;
 - (4) Teacher salary progression as performance increases as demonstrated by a teacher

achieving NBC; and
(5) Incentives that are successful in all local school systems

IV. Technical Submission Requirements

Required Components Due:

- A fully executed Career Ladder agreement with all required components of the Career Ladder, as detailed in this document, signed and dated by all parties
- Include with your 2025 submission, your complete 2024 approved Career Ladder submission, clearly identifying any changes or additions that have been negotiated to meet the 2025 submission requirements
- All components should be submitted together in one searchable document (scanned documents can not be searched or highlighted)
- Artifacts linked or included should be clearly described within the submission

Submission Instructions:

- Specific instructions on how to submit will be provided separately

Appendices

Appendix 1: Purpose of Career Ladder

The Career Ladder component of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future is intended to support the Blueprint's goal of transforming Maryland's education system into a top-performing system in the world. **Having a great teacher in every classroom is essential to improved student learning outcomes.** The Blueprint requires every LEA to develop and implement a Career Ladder that strengthens the educator workforce through **competency-based advancement and increased compensation for teachers** who qualify for and are selected to serve in advanced teaching roles.

The statutory purpose of the Career Ladder (Education 6-1002) is to:

- Transform teaching into a high-status profession in the State;
- Attract high-performing students to pursue the high-status teaching profession; and
- Retain high-quality teachers who gain additional responsibility, authority, status, and compensation as they gain additional expertise.

The Blueprint law also includes how the Career Ladder can be implemented to support these goals:

- Support the reorganization of schools to provide teachers with professional learning and peer collaboration time during the school day by having more teachers in each school, including time primarily:
 - to work in teams of teachers by subject and grade;
 - to work together with other teachers to continuously improve instruction;
 - to review together with other teachers individual student needs, including needs related to behavioral issues, and develop plans to address those needs; and
 - for professional learning for teachers pursuing NBC; and
- Develop and support highly competent school leaders that are able to lead high-performing schools due to their:
 - knowledge of teaching and learning;
 - experience as teachers, leaders, and mentors of teachers; and
 - knowledge of and experience with organizing schools so that all students are successful in the global economy; and
- Above all, **inspire teachers and school leaders to instill in their students a passion for learning and a mastery of the skills necessary to succeed in the global economy.**

Additional guiding principals appear in [§6-1002](#).

Appendix 2: General Guidance and Best Practices

LEA plans should consider key design principles of Maryland's Career Ladder:

- The Career Ladder aims to empower teachers to lead the work within schools for which they have the greatest knowledge, experience, and expertise.
- The Career Ladder should support and encourage teachers working in teams to systematically improve schools and curricula, and provide teachers with the opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge through job-embedded professional development.
- The Career Ladder should provide teachers with the opportunity to identify and work with students who need extra help.
- Teachers should be involved in the design, implementation and evaluation of the Career Ladder.
- All teachers, regardless of Career Ladder level and role, must be responsible for working directly with a group of students on a regular basis to remain grounded in the realities of today's students and classrooms and maintain credibility with peers.
- There is focus on increasing equity of opportunity across Maryland schools by aiming for higher ratios of Levels 3 and 4 teachers working in schools identified as low-performing.
- All teachers should have equitable resources and opportunities for Career Ladder growth through fair and transparent processes and structures.
- All professional staff should have a thorough understanding of the purpose of the LEA Career Ladder as it relates to improved practice that leads to improved student outcomes.
- All professional staff should understand the process and requirements to move up the Career Ladder for educators.

Appendix 3: Definitions

Required Components Due: Required elements of a local Career Ladder to be submitted by July 1, 2025

Criteria for Success: Quality indicators of a successful local Career Ladder required by the submission including meeting statutory requirements

Notes: Additional information to inform LEAs