

Policy Statement Concerning High-Need District and Schools

Subject: Implementing Department of Education Troops to Teachers Operating Rules

Date: 13 September 2005

Reference: Federal Register: July 1, 2005 (Volume 70, Number 126)

The Department of Education has established operating rules that defines those schools where Troops to Teachers participants who accept financial assistance may fulfill their three-year teaching obligation. As of 15 September 2005, the following rules will apply for any Troops to Teachers participant registering for the program on or after the implementation date: Troops to Teachers participants who accept financial assistance in the form of a Stipend or Bonus incur an obligation to teach for three years in schools or school districts that meet specified criteria as outlined below:

- **STIPEND:** Participants accepting the \$5K stipend are obligated to teach for three years in:
 - (a) Any school within a school district that has at least 20% of the students who come from families living below the poverty level,
or
 - (b) A school house where at least 50% of students are eligible for the free or reduced cost lunch program or have a “high percentage” (determined annually) of students with disabilities, so long as that school is in a school district that has between 10 and 20% of students who come from poverty level families.
- **BONUS:** Participants may accept a bonus of \$10K in lieu of the stipend if they are employed as a teacher in a school district that has at least 10% or greater of the students who come from families living below the poverty level and are:
 - (a) Teaching in a school house where at least 50% of students are eligible for the free or reduced cost lunch program,
or
 - (b) Teaching in a school house that has a “high percentage” (determined annually) of students with disabilities. Participants who registered prior to 15 September 2005 may fulfill their teaching obligation under the operating rules in affect as of their date of registration.

DEFINITIONS:

Poverty level: Poverty level refers to students within a school district who come from families with incomes below the poverty level for that area. The Census Bureau determines the percentage of poverty level students for a school district. Poverty level percentages have been calculated based on the Census Bureau data and are available on the Troops to Teachers website. The Census Bureau website providing school district poverty data by state is at:

http://www.census.gov/housing/saipe/sd02/sd02_OH.dat

Free or Reduced Cost Lunch: Free or reduced cost lunch refers to the National School Lunch Program based on the level of family income. The percentage is based on data available from the U.S. Department of Education at their website:

<http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch/>

Students with Disabilities: Students with Disabilities are those who qualify for assistance under part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The Standard and Poor’s website <http://www.schoolmatters.com/> provides percentage of students with disabilities by school house, but data is not available for all states.

High percentage of Students with Disabilities: A “high percentage” is considered to be any percentage over 13.5%.