

256.45 Ambassador to education.

The department of education shall establish and administer the position of ambassador to education. It shall be the function of the ambassador to education to act as an education liaison to primary and secondary schools in this state. The ambassador to education position shall be filled by the educator selected as teacher of the year by the governor, but only if that person agrees to fill the ambassador to education position.

The ambassador to education's duties shall be established by the director of the department and shall be tailored to the relative skills and educational background of the person designated as ambassador. Duties of the ambassador may include, but are not limited to, providing seminars and workshops in the subject matter area in which the ambassador possesses expertise, accompanying the director of the department of education in the exercise of the director's duties in the state, and speaking at public gatherings in the state.

The ambassador to education shall receive, in lieu of compensation from the district in which the ambassador is regularly employed, a salary equal to the amount of salary the person would have received from the district in the person's regular position during the school year for which the person serves as ambassador, or thirty thousand dollars, whichever amount is greater. The ambassador shall also be compensated for actual expenses incurred as a result of the performance of duties under this section.

The department shall grant funds in an amount equal to the salary and benefits the person selected as ambassador to education would have received from the district, or thirty thousand dollars, whichever amount is greater, to the school district that employs the person selected as the ambassador. The department shall also reimburse the school district for actual expenses incurred as a result of the performance of duties under this section. The school district shall grant the person a one-year sabbatical in order to allow the person to be the ambassador to education, and during the sabbatical, shall pay the salary and benefits of the ambassador with funds granted by the department. The person selected as the ambassador to education shall be entitled to return to the person's same or a comparable position without loss of accrued benefits or seniority.

90 Acts, ch 1272, §43; 98 Acts, ch 1216, § 6