

**KNOX COUNTY R-I
2026-2027
DISTRICT CAREER
LADDER PLAN**

Table of Contents

Important Dates	3
Policies and Procedures	
I. Career Ladder Description.....	4
II. Career Ladder Payment.....	5
III. Career Ladder Stage Qualifications.....	6
IV. Career Ladder Responsibilities.....	8
V. Career Ladder Committee.....	9
VI. Evaluation of Career Ladder Plan.....	10
VII. Appeals.....	11
VIII. Hour Requirements.....	12
Hour Verification Procedures	13
Elaboration of Responsibilities	15

Important Dates

April 2, 2026	Participants may begin logging hours for the 2025-2026 school year, depending on the ending date from the previous school year.
September 4, 2026	Initial plan due date. Plans will not be accepted after this due date.
September 9, 2026	Career ladder plan approval meeting. Plans will be returned to teachers if revisions are needed.
September 16, 2026	Revisions due date.
October 12, 2026	First Quarter Meeting with Sponsor
January 4, 2027	Second Quarter Meeting with Sponsor
January 8, 2027	Career ladder amendments due.
January 13, 2027	Career ladder amendment approval meeting/ stage verification
March 10, 2026	Third Quarter Meeting with Sponsor
April 1, 2027	All hours due to the committee.
April 7, 2027	Final approval meeting

Revised April 2026

I.

The Knox County R-1 School District is committed to providing a successful educational experience for all students. Educational excellence is dependent largely on the skill, talent and dedication of educators. The purpose of the Career Ladder Program is to enhance the educational experience of students by recognizing and rewarding productive, effective educators. The Knox County R-1 School District has developed a School Improvement Plan, a Curriculum Development Plan, a Professional Development Plan and participates in the Missouri School Improvement Program in order to facilitate and improve the educational experience for all students. All Career Ladder responsibilities will be academic in nature and shall directly and obviously relate to the improvement of programs and services for students as outlined in the Knox County R-1 School Improvement Plan, Curriculum Development Plan, Professional Development Plan, the Missouri School Improvement Program or other instructional improvement plan in the Knox County R-1 School District. The teacher's Career Development Plan (CDP) will associate each Career Ladder responsibility or volunteer effort with either a designated plan or other instructional improvement.

II.

The Knox County R-1 School District shall assign qualified, participating teachers to the appropriate stage and award teachers supplemental pay in an amount to be specified annually and not to exceed \$1,500 for Stage I, \$3,000 for Stage II or \$5,000 for Stage III. This supplemental pay shall be in addition to the salary normally accorded the teacher by the district's salary schedule.

III.

Eligible educators in Stage I of the Knox County R-1 School District shall:

- a. Completed two (2) years teaching experience in Missouri public schools.
- b. Completed the required beginning teacher assistance program and participated in two (2) years of mentoring (section 168.400.4 RSMo and applies to teachers only),
- c. Performed at an acceptable level or above on all criteria on the most recent final evaluation instrument of the performance-based teacher evaluation process. The local evaluation process must be fully aligned to the Essential Principles of Effective Evaluation (5 CSR 20-400.375).
- d. Be serving on not less than a regular length full time contract.
- e. Appropriate certification in the subject area for each teacher.
- f. Developed a Career Development Plan (CDP) that contains responsibilities or volunteer efforts that the educator will assume in order to receive his/her Career Ladder supplemental pay. The educator will complete one or more responsibilities or volunteer efforts by April 1, 2027. The district shall ensure that a minimum of fifty (50) clock hours are completed for Stage I. This requirement should coincide with the standard* and be commensurate and adjustable to the compensation offered for Stage I. The educator shall relate each responsibility to an identified plan or other instructional improvement.

Eligible educators in Stage II of the Knox County R-1 School District shall:

- a. Completed three (3) years teaching experience in Missouri public schools.
- b. Completed the required beginning teacher assistance program and participated in two (2) years of mentoring (section 168.400.4 RSMo and applies to teachers only).
- c. Performed at an acceptable level or above on all criteria on the most recent final Evaluation instrument of the performance-based teacher evaluation process. The local evaluation process must be fully aligned to the Essential Principles of Effective Evaluation (5 CSR 20-400.375).
- d. Be serving on not less than a regular length full-time contract.
- e. Appropriate certification in the subject area for each teacher.
- f. Developed a Career Ladder Development Plan (CDP) that contains responsibilities or volunteer efforts that the educator will assume in order to receive his/her Career Ladder supplemental pay. The educator will complete one or more responsibilities or volunteer efforts by April 1, 2027. The district shall ensure that a minimum of seventy-five (75) clock hours are completed for Stage II. This requirement should coincide with the standard and be commensurate and adjustable to the compensation offered for Stage II. The educator shall relate each responsibility to an identified plan or other instructional improvement.

Eligible educators in Stage III of the Knox County R-1 School District shall:

- a. Completed five (5) years teaching experience in Missouri public schools.
- b. Completed the required beginning teacher assistance program and participated in two (2) years of mentoring (section 168.400.4 RSMo and applies to teachers only),
- c. Performed at an acceptable level or above on all criteria on the most recent final evaluation instrument of the performance-based teacher evaluation process. The local evaluation process must be fully aligned to the Essential Principles of Effective Evaluation (5 CSR 20-400.375).
- d. Be serving on not less than a regular-length full-time contract.
- e. Appropriate certification in the subject area for each teacher.
- f. Developed a Career Ladder Development Plan (CDP) that contains responsibilities or volunteer efforts that the educator will assume in order to receive his/her Career Ladder supplemental pay. The educator will complete one or more responsibilities or volunteer efforts by April 1, 2027. The district shall ensure that a minimum of one hundred (100) clock hours are completed for Stage III. This requirement should coincide with the standard* and be commensurate and adjustable to the compensation offered for Stage III. The educator shall relate each responsibility to an identified plan or other instructional improvement.

IV.

Eligible teachers participating in the Career Ladder Grant Program of the Knox County R-1 School District shall complete a minimum of clock hours in one or more responsibilities or volunteer efforts. Knox County R-1 School District teachers will complete:

- a. At least fifty (50) clock hours for those teachers in Stage I
- b. At least seventy-five (75) clock hours for those teachers in Stage II
- c. At least one hundred (100) clock hours for those teachers in Stage III

Knox County R-1 School district teachers participating in the Career Ladder Grant Program shall complete a minimum of the required hours on responsibilities or voluntary efforts in one of the following areas:

- a. Serving in teacher externships as provided in section 168.025, RSMo;
- b. Serving as a coach, supervisor, or organizer of any extracurricular activities for which the teacher does not already receive additional compensation;
- c. Serving as a mentor or cooperating teacher for new teachers for which the teacher does not already receive additional compensation;
- d. Serving as a mentor for students, whether in a formal or informal capacity;
- e. Providing high quality tutoring or additional learning opportunities to students;
- f. Assisting students with postsecondary education preparation including, but not limited to, teaching an ACT or SAT preparation course or assisting students with completing college or career school admission or financial assistance applications;
- g. Receiving additional teacher training, coursework (recommended: 1 credit hour of coursework = 15 Career Ladder hours), or certification outside of that offered by the school district (i.e. National Board Certification).
- h. Other (the responsibility or voluntary effort should directly and obviously relate to improved programs and services for students as outlined in the District School Improvement Plan, Curriculum Development Plan, Professional Development Plan, Missouri School Improvement Program or instructional improvement and is an additional responsibility or voluntary effort extending beyond or in addition to contractual expectations).

If a participating educator is unable to complete the required 100 hours at Stage III, a school district may elect to pay them at Stage II or Stage I based on the hours they complete. If a participating educator is unable to complete the required 75 hours at Stage II, a school district may elect to pay them at Stage I based on the hours they complete.

V.

The Knox County R-1 School District teachers selected six teachers, two administrators, and one Knox County R-1 School Board Member to serve on a working group that developed the Knox County R-1 School District's DCLP. This working group gathered feedback on the draft of the DCLP and made appropriate revisions before it was presented to the local school board for approval.

Committee

Amy Miller	Elementary School
Amy Handzus	Elementary School
Nathan Pippert	Elementary School
Sarah Setzer	Elementary School
Mandi Delaney	Middle School and High School
Becky Barnhill	Middle School and High School
Anna Van Delft	Elementary, Middle, and High School
Nathan Miller	Middle School and High School
	Knox County Board Member

The committee will meet at the call of the committee chair. All committee members will serve as a sponsor for multiple participants and will be responsible for checking hours periodically and communicating progress to the participants and the committee. Members of the committee will receive a 5% reduction in required hours based on the stage they have chosen to work toward.

VI.

The Knox County R-1 School District has created a committee. This committee consists of educators, administrators and patrons. This committee will annually assess the success of the DCLP. They will report to the board each year at the regular May board meeting regarding the benefits for school and students, and teacher interest and participation. In addition, the Knox County R-1 School District will report data on their Career Ladder Grant Program to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education upon request. Information reported to the department upon request may include but not be limited to

- a. Total number of teachers participating at each stage
- b. Final total state contribution
- c. Final total local contribution
- d. Total hours of teacher participation in these categories
 - Participating in teacher externships as provided in section 168.025, RSMo;
 - Serving as a coach, supervisor, or organizer of any extracurricular activities for which the teacher does not already receive additional compensation;
 - Serving as a mentor or cooperating teacher for new teachers for which the teacher does not already receive additional compensation;
 - Serving as a mentor for students, whether in a formal or informal capacity;
 - Providing high quality tutoring or additional learning opportunities to students;
 - Assisting students with postsecondary education preparation including, but not limited to, teaching an ACT or SAT preparation course or assisting students with completing college or career school admission or financial assistance applications; and
 - Receiving additional teacher training or certification outside of that offered by the school district (i.e. National Board Certification)
 - Other (with description of how this responsibility or voluntary effort directly and obviously relates to the improvement of programs and services for students as outlined in the District School Improvement Plan, Curriculum Development Plan, Professional Development Plan, Missouri School Improvement Program or instructional improvement)
- e. Overall annual retention rates of participating teachers

VII.

Any Knox County R-1 School District educator who is denied participation in the Career Ladder Program due to a determination from the performance-based evaluation process or a determination that they have not met the requirements for participation will have the option to appeal that determination. The appeal procedure shall include:

- a. An opportunity to have the decision reviewed by the superintendent of schools of the Knox County R-1 School District; and
- b. An opportunity to have the decision rendered by the superintendent reviewed by the local board of education for the Knox County R-1 School District.

Appeal procedures shall be implemented in a timely fashion. All decisions made with respect to a teacher's application to and placement on any stage of the Career Ladder shall be based on the qualifications for that stage as stated in this Knox County R-1 School District Career Ladder Plan.

VIII.

An educator entering the Knox County R-1 School District may apply to participate on any Career Ladder stage for which he/she is qualified based on total years of experience in a Missouri public school.

The Career Ladder Grant Program Standard is:

STAGE	DOLLARS	HOURS	MINIMUM NUMBER OF RESPONSIBILITIES
Stage 1	\$1,500	50	1
Stage 2	\$3,000	75	1
Stage 3	\$5,000	100	1
REQUIRED HOURS BREAKDOWN	STUDENT CONTACT HOURS	NON-CONTACT HOURS	
Stage 1	35 hours	15 hours	See attached list of recommended options for meeting these requirements.
Stage 2	53 hours	22 hours	
Stage 3	70 hours	30 hours	

Hour Verification Procedures

All Career Ladder responsibilities must **directly and obviously** relate to the improvement of programs and services for students. Activities should be related to the academic progress of students.

NOTE: The educator should be an ACTIVE participant in the planning and execution of approved activities. Attendance alone is not adequate.

The responsibilities listed must be non-compensated activities that are not a part of a participant's regular contract. Acceptable responsibilities involve extended day activities and/or summer activities.

Tutoring activities are **NOT** allowed during the following times:

- Snow days
- Inclement weather early release days
- During the contract day

You may begin documenting and logging hours for your Career Ladder plan on April 1, 2026.

The following are **examples** of activities that are not acceptable responsibilities or voluntary efforts to be included in a teacher's Career Ladder Development Plan. **THIS LIST IS NOT ALL INCLUSIVE.**

- Painting classrooms
- School beautification projects
- Community activities that do not include students.
- Community activities that include students but are not directly and obviously related to instruction
- Taking tickets and attending school functions
- Attending Board of Education meetings (unless attending to make a report for an approved committee)
- Any activity that is part of the educator's regular contracted day
- Any activity for which the educator receives compensation regardless of the source of that compensation
- College classes in administration (exception: class required for another program; ex. curriculum development)
- Any Church affiliated activity
- Any activity related to scouting or other non-academic activities
- Tutoring cannot include open gym, study hall, detention, and/or any activity for which a teacher receives a stipend
- IEP meetings

- Writing lesson plans or instructional units that are part of a teacher’s regular responsibility to implement the district’s curriculum and to design appropriate learning experiences for the students in his/her classroom or team.

For an activity to be counted, it must last at least 30 minutes. Activities exceeding the 30-minute threshold should be rounded to the nearest half hour.

Amount of Time	Hour Value to be Counted
0-29 minutes	0
30-44 minutes	0.5
45-60 minutes	1

Club or activity leaders who have members providing additional help are responsible for verifying their hours for the committee. A verification form will be provided for this purpose. Leaders must complete and submit this form to the building administrators by the last day of each month.

Career Ladder program participants are required to meet quarterly with their assigned sponsor from the Career Ladder Committee to review and verify documented hours for that quarter. Hours not recorded and verified by the scheduled meeting date must be submitted through the amendment process for consideration.

RESPONSIBILITIES

#1 Student Tutoring (STUDENT CONTACT)

The students will receive assistance in areas where improvement is needed to master the skills of their grade level. This may also include any enrichment or enhancement activities that directly relate to a core curricular area or curricular area the teacher teaches.

Examples:

- A PE teacher/coach working with students to improve fitness testing scores
- An elementary teacher working with a struggling reader
- A high school teacher helping a group of students study for an upcoming test

Notes:

- Tutoring hours must be logged outside of the contract day 7:50-3:20
- When logging tutoring hours, document initials of students worked with. If working with a group, simply state a large group.
- Be specific when documenting. Example: Worked with JG on the quadratic equation.

#2 School/Professional Committees (NON CONTACT)

Examples:

- Serving on committee/organizations that meet outside of the contract day
- Committees could include career ladder, technology, curriculum, salary, courtesy, CTA, etc.

Notes:

- Must include the name of the committee on the documentation.

#3 Writing/Revising Curriculum (NON CONTACT)

Examples:

- Work to further develop and enhance the curriculum for the classes taught.
- Aligning the curriculum to the Missouri Learning Standards and/or Course Level Expectations.

Notes:

- Must include unit/activity/standard that was revised (be specific) on the documentation log.

#4 Mentor/Cooperating Teacher (NON CONTACT)

Examples:

- Work with another teacher outside of the contract day that you are NOT a paid mentor for (does not have to be a new teacher)

Notes:

- List teacher initials and focus on documentation log.

#5 Assisting w/ Postsecondary Education Preparation (STUDENT CONTACT)

Examples:

- Helping students with ACT/SAT preparation.
- Assisting students with completing college, vocational, career school, or military admission.
- Assisting with financial assistance applications.

Notes:

- Document student initials and focus on documentation log

#6 Studying/Professional Development (NON CONTACT)

Prior approval from building administrator is required Email building principal for approval. Then forward approval to career ladder sponsor or CC the sponsor in the original email

Examples:

- Studying professional development videos, literature, or streaming opportunities.
- Record the title of all in the documentation log.
- Book studies-must pertain to teacher/student improvement. Must list pages read on log.
- Podcasts
- Webinars

Notes:

- All PD requires proof of attendance and/or certificate

**#7 Provide Counseling Opportunities (Counselors only)
(STUDENT CONTACT)**

Notes:

- Must be outside of the contract day.
- List focus and student initials on documentation log.

**#8 Researching New Curriculum Options for District
(NON CONTACT)**

Examples:

- Researching, developing, and implementing activities to supplement current instructional programs (This does NOT include working on lesson plans).

Notes:

- Be specific about where and what was researched or developed and what unit it will be added to on the documentation log.

**#9 Additional Training or Certification
(NON CONTACT)**

Examples:

- Receiving additional teacher training or certification outside of that offered by the school district.
- Apple teacher training
- Apple Learning Coach
- LTRS training (as long as you are not receiving a stipend)

Notes:

- 1 college credit = 8 Career Ladder hours
- College classes must be related to the area of certification
 - List title of the course, institution, and credit hours received
- Graduate courses in administration do not count for Career Ladder.
- Email copy of certificate to your committee sponsor

#10 Departmental/Grade Level Meetings (NON CONTACT)

Examples:

- Attending departmental/grade-level meetings held beyond the contract day to develop strategies for at-risk students.
- Tier 2 meetings
- Team planning meetings

Notes:

- This does NOT include IEP/504 meetings

#11 Educational Travel Opportunities (STUDENT CONTACT/NON-CONTACT DEPENDENT UPON COMMITTEE APPROVAL)

Prior approval from the building administrator is required. Email building principal for approval-forward approval to career ladder sponsor or CC the sponsor in the original email

Examples:

- Organizing and implementing educational travel opportunities for students beyond the contract day.
- Contacting places to visit
- Creating/collecting permission slips

Notes:

- Non-sponsors or non-stipended sponsors may count travel time during their contracted school year (up to 4 hours per day)
- Coaches and sponsors may count travel time outside their contracted school year (up to 6 hours per day).

**#12 Student Contact
(STUDENT CONTACT)**

Prior approval from the building administrator is required

Examples:

- Working with students during a special activity/program which promotes student and/or parent involvement.
- Open House, Activity Nights, Meet the Teacher/Orientation Nights. Programs, Dances, etc.

Notes:

- List the title of the activity and student initials on the documentation log (if large group, simply list large group) be sure to use the words assisted, organized, implemented (not supervised)
- There is a combined maximum number of hours allowed for working quiz bowl matches, the PTO basketball tournament, and track meets. See table below for allowed hours for each stage.

Maximum Hours	
Stage 1	8
Stage 2	12
Stage 3	16

**#13 Supervision
(NON CONTACT)**

Examples:

- Serve as a supervisor of extracurricular activities for which you do NOT already receive compensation.

Notes:

- Prior approval from the building administrator is required to log hours in this category.

#14 Professional Development (NON CONTACT)

Examples:

- Attend professional development opportunities beyond the contract day and be willing to present to colleagues upon return if needed.
- Presenting at a conference could be counted, along with the preparation time for the conference

Notes:

- Professional development opportunities can be paid by the district as long as the teacher is not receiving additional compensation.
- Presenting to colleagues can be formal or informal and small or large group.
- Record the workshop title in the documentation log.

#15 Planning for Clubs (NON CONTACT)

Examples:

- A teacher responsible for the planning of a student club/activity is allowed to count the hours necessary to plan and prepare for the activity.

Notes:

- Maximum hours for this category = 8 hours

