

**IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Special Home Buying Advantage for Teachers Becomes 100% Better

SACRAMENTO, January 2, 2004 – Knowing how difficult it can be to buy a first home on a teacher's salary – especially in California's highest cost counties – the California Housing Finance Agency (CalHFA) announced the doubling of the downpayment assistance amount, from \$7,500 to \$15,000 or 3% of the home sales price, whichever is greater, for the Extra Credit Teacher Program.

The Extra Credit Teacher Program is a special first-time home buying program designed specifically for eligible teachers, administrators, classified employees, and other staff members who serve in California's high priority schools (API Rank 1-5).

The boost to \$15,000 in downpayment help is available exactly where it is needed most – in areas where the cost of housing is out of reach for many first-time home buying teachers. The 18 counties defined by CalHFA as high cost include: Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Solano, Sonoma, Monterey, San Benito, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Ventura, Los Angeles, Orange, and San Diego.

"In California, our dedicated teachers face the double dilemma of buying a home on a teacher's salary, and in one of the country's most expensive housing markets," says Theresa Parker, Executive Director of CalHFA. "The Extra Credit Teacher Program increase to \$15,000 or 3% of the home purchase price gives teachers in high cost areas a powerful tool in their efforts to become first-time homebuyers. And it sends a simple message to every teacher who chooses to help children in our most challenging schools: we appreciate your work and want to reward you for your continued commitment."

Since its inception in July 2001, the Extra Credit Teacher Program has helped realize the dream of homeownership for over 550 California educators. Eligible teachers, administrators, classified employees, and other staff throughout the State's remaining 40 counties can continue to take advantage of the program's downpayment assistance of \$7,500 or 3% of the home purchase price, whichever is greater. Interest on the second loan is forgiven if the borrower remains employed at a high priority school for three years, and no payments are required on the second loan until the home is either sold or refinanced.

The Extra Credit Teacher Program downpayment assistance is paired with CalHFA's 30-year fixed below market interest rate first loan program and can also be combined with other CalHFA deferred downpayment assistance programs to substantially decrease the borrower's out of pocket expense.

CalHFA, the State's affordable housing bank, was chartered in 1975 to meet the housing needs of low and moderate income Californians and has helped more than 120,000 families purchase their first home. More information on the Extra Credit Teacher Program and the full complement of CalHFA homeownership programs are available at 1.800.789.2432 or www.calhfa.ca.gov.

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