

**Professional Staff Continuing Education
(Teacher Scholarship Program)**

Purpose

The primary purpose of the teacher scholarship program is to provide an incentive for classroom teachers to expand their teaching competencies, abilities, and ingenuity. This incentive will be offered annually by the Board through tuition reimbursement for work on an advanced or graduate degree at an accredited college or university pre-approved by the Superintendent and/or his/her designee.

Eligibility

In order to be eligible for tuition reimbursement, the teacher shall be employed by the District, shall have completed at least his/her first year of teaching in the District, and shall be recommended for continued employment with the District. The teacher must have a Bachelor's degree and shall hold a current Colorado Initial License, Professional License, Master Certificate, or Letter of Authorization issued in the manner prescribed by law.

Criteria

A teacher must be enrolled in one of the following program majors/areas of concentration:

- General Education
- Special Education
- Reading Specialist
- Linguistically and Culturally Diverse (ESL)
- School Counseling
- Administration/Curriculum
- Subject area in area of certification

Payment for Tuition Reimbursement and Educational Advancement Salary Placement for Professional Improvement

1. Unless otherwise provided by this procedure, a teacher may receive payment for tuition reimbursement and educational advancement salary placement for college courses completed subject to the following criteria:
 - a. Prior to enrollment in the course(s) and/or program, the teacher shall obtain the Superintendent's and/or his/her designee's approval of the course(s) and/or program. Approval must be in writing on the approved form (see File: GCIE-E).
 - b. A timeline must be submitted to the Superintendent and/or his/her designee illustrating a reasonable plan of course(s) and/or program completion and completion date(s), which is subject to the approval of the Superintendent and/or his/her designee. The teacher must adhere to their submitted teacher scholarship

- program plan and timeline; any variance and/or noncompliance will require the teacher to re-apply to the teacher scholarship program.
- c. The teacher scholarship program application form and timeline must be submitted by:
 - i. March 1 for the summer semester
 - ii. July 1 for the fall semester
 - iii. November 1 for the spring semester
 - d. The course(s) shall involve a minimum of fifteen hours of instructor-contact hours for each semester hour of credit, unless the course is an internship or practicum.
 - e. The course(s) and/or program shall meet one or more of the following conditions:
 - i. College course(s) and/or program set forth in the Criteria.
 - ii. College course(s) and/or program in an approved advanced, or graduate, degree program related to the teacher's assignment or for professional advancement in a field that is of District interest as determined by the Superintendent and/or his/her designee.
 - iii. College course(s) and/or program unique to the teacher's assignment that has been requested by the Board or the Superintendent.
2. Payment for tuition reimbursement and educational advancement salary placement for college course(s), if approved, shall be 100% of the tuition rate.
- a. Any teacher that voluntarily resigns from employment with the District prior to completing the approved course(s) or program shall be responsible for reimbursing the District 100% of total tuition paid by the District.
 - b. Any teacher that voluntarily resigns from employment with the District within five (5) years after completing the approved course(s) or program shall be responsible for reimbursing the District for a prorated portion of the amount of total tuition paid pursuant to the following schedule:
 - i. Resignation less than 1 year – 100%
 - ii. Resignation less than 2 years – 80%
 - iii. Resignation less than 3 years – 60%

- iv. Resignation less than 4 years – 40%
 - v. Resignation less than 5 years – 20%
 - vi. Resignation 5 years or more – 0%
- c. When a teacher is required to reimburse the District pursuant to this policy as a result of a resignation, the teacher shall have the amount owed to the District withdrawn from the teacher's final paycheck. If the amount owed to the District exceeds the amount withdrawn, the teacher shall be responsible for reimbursing the District for the remaining amount within sixty (60) days following their effective date of resignation. For amounts not paid pursuant to these terms, the teacher shall be responsible for the District's costs of collection, including attorney's fees, and interest at the rate of 8% per year, compounded annually.
- d. If an educational advancement salary placement was granted because of the coursework, the teacher would not be required to reimburse the District for said educational advancement salary placement.
3. Payment of tuition for completed college course(s) meeting the requirements of this procedure will be made in accordance with the regular payment cycle dates of the District. To receive payment, a teacher must submit an itemized bill(s) from the accredited college(s) or university(ies), an unofficial transcript(s), and a degree plan/program sheet and/or plan of study to the Superintendent and/or his/her designee.
4. To receive an educational advancement salary placement for completed college course(s) meeting the requirements of this procedure, a teacher must submit a request to the District for consideration of educational advancement salary placement no later than April 1 and must submit an official transcript(s) no later than September 1 of the school year for which the educational advancement salary placement is requested (see File: GCBA-R).

Criteria

Scholarship awards will be made on the basis of District needs as established by the Superintendent and/or his/her designee and administration.

Suspension or Elimination of Program

This procedure is subject to the District's budget adoption process as set forth in state law and to annual consideration. If the Board declares a fiscal emergency during a budget year as allowed by state law, it may reduce the salaries for all employees on a proportional basis

File: GCIE

and/or this program may be suspended or eliminated by action of the Board, which does not affect coursework in progress.

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