

## **PERSONNEL SERVICES**

**Regulation 4410.1**

### **Professional Activities, Training and Professional Growth**

#### **Tuition Reimbursement**

The Board of Education, desiring to improve the quality of the educational program, hereby establishes a Tuition Reimbursement Program for its certified teaching staff. The program is available to all teaching and administrative staff members of the Central R-III School District.

By establishing this program, the Board of Education intends to achieve the following goals:

1. An improvement in the quality of education for Central R-III School District students.
2. An encouragement for staff members to pursue advanced degrees.
3. An improvement of the intellectual and professional skills of the teaching and administrative staff.
4. An incentive for implementation of individual goals for improvement that will be established through the evaluation process.

#### **Tuition Reimbursement Program, guidelines:**

Employee must earn a grade of 'A' or 'B' in graduate level programs from accredited colleges and universities.

Employee must be a full-time certified staff member.

Must complete a request for reimbursement form, attach current official transcript and submit to the Superintendent by September 30.

Courses not completed within one year of the September 30 that tuition reimbursement is requested will not be considered.

Employee must remain employed by the Central R-III School District for one academic year or more.

Eligibility commences during the first year of employment under the contract. It does not apply to credit received prior to employment. Employment is defined as actually and actively providing teaching services for the district, not merely signing or being under a contract.

Funding from other sources (grants, fellowships, etc.) will replace the District Tuition Reimbursement Program.

Courses taken must be at the graduate level.

Reimbursement will be paid at a rate of \$90 per credit hour up to nine hours per academic year. Hours earned beyond nine hours will not be 'rolled over' for the following year. In the event the hourly rate is less than \$90, courses will be reimbursed at the institutions hourly academic rate.

Reimbursement will be paid once per year following the October Board meeting.

Coursework must be at an accredited college or university.

No more than three hours of correspondence coursework will be reimbursed.

Courses taken through the SEMO partnership program are not eligible for reimbursement.

Individuals submitting request for reimbursement for more than six hours must be enrolled in a Master's level program. To establish validity for entrance into a graduate degree program, the employee must submit a letter of acceptance into the program or verification from a major advisor or department head.

The employee must complete the degree coursework within six years from taking the initial class. If the degree is not completed within this time period, the employee will reimburse the district all dollars which he or she received for coursework beyond six hours.

ALL graduate degrees and/or graduate courses eligible for tuition reimbursement must be in the area of study in which the employee is currently employed, meet a staff need for the District as approved by the Superintendent, or apply to a Master's in teaching. Master's degrees may be sought in Educational Administration for any full-time certificated staff member currently working in a teaching position, but this is still subject to the approval of the Superintendent for reimbursement consideration, pending District circumstances.

Individuals who wish to seek a degree in a field which does not meet the criteria above (i.e., administrator, librarian, counselor) will need to submit this request in writing to their building principal prior to enrolling in the program. The request will be brought before an administrative review team and final approval (if granted) will be from the Board of Education. If the administrative team denies the request, the employee may appeal to the Board of Education.

Once a Master's degree is earned, employees may request reimbursement for up to 16 additional graduate hours in the area of study currently employed, or other educational

area to meet the staffing needs of the District that has been approved by the Superintendent prior to beginning the coursework. A formal letter of request must be submitted by the employee and approved by the Superintendent for the “other educational area to meet staffing needs of the District” prior to beginning the coursework to be eligible for reimbursement.

Hours earned beyond 24 hours past the Master’s degree, will not be eligible for reimbursement and will not qualify for incremental movement on the salary schedule. Hours not in the area of study currently employed, or hours not previously approved by the Superintendent will not qualify for reimbursement, but will qualify for incremental movement on the salary schedule as long as they are in an accredited and education field of study.

### **Certification Coursework**

Coursework taken to meet certification guidelines is not eligible for reimbursement or incremental movement on the salary schedule. The only exception is when the Superintendent requests in writing, that an individual enroll in undergraduate coursework. Graduate coursework taken for certification will not be reimbursed unless the courses are part of a degree program or meet the minimum standards listed above.