

## **Lateral Movement and Tuition Reimbursement**

Graduate hours taken will be eligible for lateral movement or tuition reimbursement on the teacher salary schedule only if the university offers a degree program that qualifies a staff member to be approved by DESE for a teaching certificate. Exceptions may be made by the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources. Universities that do not offer classes necessary for teacher certification or require outside classes from other institutions will not be recognized for tuition reimbursement or lateral movement.

Courses taken or degree programs pursued must be pre-approved by the Human Resources and/or Teaching and Learning Department in order to qualify for tuition reimbursement or credit toward lateral movement. Degree programs or coursework that are not pre-approved will not be eligible for reimbursement or movement on the salary schedule. **You'll find the Pre-Approval form here: [Pre-Approval for Tuition Reimbursement](#)**

### **Tuition Reimbursement**

The District will annually determine the funds available for tuition reimbursement for college courses taken toward additional certification or graduate studies in education or related areas. The budgeted amount for tuition reimbursement will always be at least \$110,000. If the total reimbursable requests fall at or below the budgeted amount, all requests will be paid. The following guidelines will be used for distribution of tuition payments:

1. The District will provide reimbursement for up to 3.0 hours of graduate credit annually for a full-time employee who works more than twenty-five (25) hours per week.
2. When the annual budget allocation is not sufficient to fund all requests received with a fiscal year, the priorities for reimbursement will be:

First priority: Coursework taken toward:

- a. Certification in high need teaching areas where current teacher is not certified or only provisionally certified, or other high need areas as determined by the Superintendent;
- b. Addressing areas of deficiency identified as part of a teacher's performance-based evaluation or job-targets and/or growth plan as assigned by the principal.

Second priority: Graduate courses taken toward completion of a Master's Degree and/or to move a teacher from Initial Professional Certificate (IPC) to Career Continuous Professional Certificate (CCPC).

Third priority: Graduate courses taken beyond the first master's degree toward additional certification or other advanced degrees.

If items (a) and (b) under First priority have been fully funded, any remaining funds will be prorated to fund Second priority with remaining funds thereafter to fund Third priority per graduate hour to reimbursement full-time teachers at a rate not to exceed actual cost per hour or the rate charged by the University of Missouri-Columbia for up to 3.0 graduate hours.

For eligible courses completed between January 1 and December 31 of a calendar year, employees must submit the specified Tuition Reimbursement form for a request for reimbursement. The form may be found here: [Tuition Reimbursement Form](#). Transcripts and paid tuition receipts must accompany the application for reimbursement. Application must be received by January 31 in the calendar year following completion of the course(s) in order to be considered for reimbursement. Reimbursement shall be the actual catalog cost of an eligible course, not to exceed the maximum credit hour cost at the University of Missouri-Columbia. If all documentation is submitted by this deadline, payment/reimbursement for these classes taken between January and December of the previous year will be issued in February.

To be eligible for reimbursement, the employee must be a member of the District faculty prior to enrollment and at the time of reimbursement. When making application for reimbursement, eligible staff members will present (1) a transcript and grade report showing the grade earned, and (2) a receipt indicating the amount paid to the college or university. Pass/Fail courses will not be reimbursed. A minimum grade of B must be earned for reimbursement.