

(P) P.2.3. Reimbursement for Tuition Costs

The Pendleton County Board of Education has two main sources of funding for tuition reimbursements: (1) funds from the State Department of Education and (2) funds approved through Federal Grants (Title I and Title II, Part A and Special Education).

State Funded Reimbursement for Tuition Costs:

Teachers may petition the State Department of Education for reimbursement of tuition, registration and other required fees for coursework completed toward both certification renewal and additional endorsement in a shortage area. Reimbursements will be granted to applicants to the extent of funds appropriated by the legislature for these purposes.

Payment may be made to any teacher who holds either a valid West Virginia Certificate or a First Class Permit for full-time employment; and is seeking an additional endorsement in a shortage area or certification renewal, and has a continuing contract with the Board.

If funds appropriated for the purposes specified above are insufficient for the reimbursement of all eligible courses within the limits provided in the code, the West Virginia Department of Education shall make the disbursements for courses for additional endorsement in a shortage area and certification renewal in a shortage area first.

The payment shall be made for reimbursement for the tuition, registration and other required fees for any course completed at any college or university within the state or college or university outside the state if prior approval is granted by the State Department. Reimbursement for an educator who attends an out-of-state institution of higher education may not exceed the amount of the highest corresponding fee charged in a state institution of higher education.

Reimbursement for courses completed toward certification renewal is limited to 15 semester hours of courses for any teacher. Reimbursement for courses completed toward additional endorsement in a shortage area is limited to 15 semester hours of courses for any teacher. **PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS PERTAINS TO STATE REIMBURSEMENT ONLY.**

A Central Office administrator shall be designated to provide advice and assistance to professional personnel with regard to certification.

The Director of Personnel shall provide informational packets and explain the tuition reimbursement procedure to any candidate that meets the highly qualified status with regard to certification. (SBP 2320, 5202 and §18A-3-3a)

Federal Funding for Recruiting, Training and Retention of Highly Qualified Educators:

Pendleton County Schools, based upon the availability of federal funds, may assist in the payment of college tuition for instructional personnel who qualify to receive benefits under federal guidelines. Reimbursement will only be issued to employees for courses in which they receive a passing grade (Letter or Pass/Fail) in the class. Pendleton County may enter into agreements with institutions of higher learning to offer courses, at a reduced tuition.

In order to be eligible to receive tuition assistance, the course(s) shall:

- ❖ Meet Title I or Title II requirements for instructors; or
- ❖ Assist the individual in becoming “highly qualified”

Needs Assessment:

Annual needs assessments will be conducted to determine the areas of critical needs in core classes, schools which have the greatest need for Highly Qualified Teachers, and schools which are most affected

by poverty and high teacher turnover. Following the needs assessment, priorities will be established for disbursement of federal funds for tuition reimbursements.

Use of Title I Funds:

- ❖ Teachers working within a Title I school-wide program are eligible for tuition reimbursement through Title I funds.
- ❖ In order to receive tuition reimbursement through Title I, eligible teachers must be seeking reimbursement for coursework leading to highly qualified status in a core subject area as identified by the State Board of Education. Title I funds **may not** be used for reimbursements provided to teachers in schools not eligible for Title I funding.
- ❖ Reimbursement will be granted to the individual employed who does not have highly qualified status.
- ❖ Payment made for any single fee for attendance at an out-of-state institution may not exceed the amount of the highest corresponding fee charged at a state institution of higher education.

Use of Title II Funds, Part A:

Title II funds may be utilized to target the county's need for highly qualified teachers. The following guidelines must be followed in utilizing Title II, Part A funds to reimburse tuition costs:

- ❖ Tuition reimbursements are available only to educators for completed coursework leading to highly qualified status in the core subject areas as identified by the Federal Programs guidelines, special education certification, or identified critical needs areas.
- ❖ The priorities for tuition reimbursement shall be in the following order:
 - the county's critical needs subject areas (to be listed annually);
 - schools which have a low percentage of classes taught by Highly Qualified Teachers;
 - schools with high poverty; and
 - school with high teacher turnover.
- ❖ **Payment made for any single fee for attendance at an out-of-state institution may not exceed the amount of the highest corresponding fee charged at a state institution of higher education.**

Special Education Funds:

In the event Special Education funds are available to assist with tuition costs, they shall be included in the pool of funds established by the Board.

Pendleton County Application Process for Tuition Reimbursement:

The Superintendent and the Board believe that any funds available to assist personnel with tuition costs should be shared fairly and equitably with those employees seeking such assistance. To that end, the Board's policy shall be that all available funds (state and federal) shall be pooled to be utilized by those applicants who meet the necessary state and federal criteria.

Requests for tuition reimbursement will be processed semi-annually and the deadlines for submission of Reimbursement Applications shall be determined jointly by the Director of Personnel/Student Services and all other Directors in charge of programs which contribute to the pool of funds available for disbursement **December 31 and June 30. The available funds shall be divided equally between the two reimbursement periods. Those funds shall be divided among the eligible applicants within a reimbursement period on an equal basis.** Any funds not disbursed during the first reimbursement period shall be carried forward to be shared equally by the applicants in the second reimbursement period.

The Director of Personnel and Directors of other programs contributing to the funding pool will

determine the eligibility of those who applied and meet the criteria for reimbursement, and on the basis of that assessment, applications for reimbursement will be approved. A caveat is that local school boards do not have a specific amount of state funding to distribute; therefore local approval of a request for state funds only means that an employee's application has been approved and s/he may complete the appropriate state form to be forwarded to the state.

Employees who believe they are eligible for such assistance should follow these steps:

1. Complete the attached form and submit it to the Personnel Office;
2. Submit all documentation required to complete the county application form;
3. Complete state application form (as appropriate) with all necessary documentation;
4. Special conditions for applicants for Title I and Title II funds:
 - ❖ The applicant has submitted an application to the state for tuition reimbursement and has been approved as having all of the documentation required for reimbursement through the state tuition reimbursement funding system, but no state funds remain for reimbursement and the applicant has received an "Out of Funds" letter from the WVDE Office of Professional Preparation. This letter may be taken to the county Title I, Title II or Special Education programs Director/s for possible reimbursement.
 - ❖ The applicant has submitted all required documentation to the state for coursework that had an official ending date during the month of June, but the application was not received by the annual June 15 fiscal year deadline. However, if the application was received before the end of the next fiscal year, then the applicant will receive a "Coursework Ending in June" letter from the WVDE Office of Professional Preparation. This letter may be taken to the county Title I, Title II or Special Education programs for possible reimbursement.

The amount of funding available from funded Title I, Title II or Special Education county programs for assistance for tuition shall be dependent upon the amount of available funding received by Pendleton County and may vary from year to year.

The Director of Personnel and Directors of other programs contributing to the funding pool shall be designated to provide advice and assistance to professional personnel with regard to certification. Individuals may follow this link to the State Board website for application forms.

<http://wvde.state.wv.us/certification/forms/Form36.pdf>

❖ Special Note: If funds are still available following the June 30 deadline for tuition reimbursement requests, the remaining funds may be expended-to assist those who met the application deadline and were partially reimbursed. Such payments shall be divided equally among the qualified applicants

(SBP 2320, 5202 and §18A-3-3a)

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****After second reading and passage of this policy, it will be retroactive to July 1, 2015.**

(P) P.2.3.1. Request for Tuition Reimbursement#

**PENDLETON COUNTY SCHOOLS
REQUEST FOR TUITION REIMBURSEMENT**

Name of Applicant _____

Date Submitted _____ School _____

Teaching Assignment _____

Home Address _____

Home Telephone _____ Cell Phone _____

Email Address _____

College/University _____

Course Number _____ Course Credit Hours _____

Course Title _____

Requesting State Funds Under §18A-3-3a _____

Requesting Federal (Title I or Title II) or County Funds _____

Reason for Taking Course:

_____ Seeking Highly Qualified Teacher Status

_____ Meeting Title I or Title II requirements for instructors

Degree/Certification Sought _____

Total Hours for Which Previously Reimbursed (State or Federal) _____

Cost for Class (Tuition/Fees) \$ _____ Anticipated Class Completion Date _____

Signature of Applicant _____

Please make sure the following documentation is attached to this form. (Check all that apply)

_____ Out-of-Funds Letter from W.Va. State Department of Education

_____ Transcript/Grade Report showing a passing grade in the class

_____ Receipt showing payment for tuition and fees and \$0 balance

Central Office Only

Request Approved _____ Request Denied _____ Amount \$ _____

Reason Denied _____

Supervisor Signature _____

Date Processed _____