

SOUTHAMPTON COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**EMPLOYEE EDUCATIONAL
INCENTIVE PLAN**

FOR

**Assistance with Growth and
Development of Employees**

**TUITION ASSISTANCE, PROFESSIONAL ASSESSMENT, SIGN-ON BONUS, &
REFERRAL BONUS**

June 2021

SOUTHAMPTON COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL DIVISION

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VISION

The vision of Southampton County Public Schools is that all students will be successful, productive, lifelong learners in an ever-changing world.

MISSION

The mission of Southampton County Public Schools through the combined efforts of staff, students, families, and the community is to ensure a quality education in a safe environment that will prepare students to be successful learners and productive citizens in an ever-changing society.

DIVISION GOALS

GOAL 1: *Expand Learning Opportunities and Increase Student Achievement*

GOAL 2: *Expand Our Safe and Healthy School Culture and Climate*

GOAL 3: *Expand Professional Training and Improved Employee Retention*

GOAL 4: *Expand Community and Parental Partnerships*

GOAL 5: *Expand Capital Improvement Efforts and Acquire More Fiscal Resources*

GOAL 6: *Expand Opportunities to Make them Equitable for All Students*

PURPOSE OF PLAN

The purpose of the Employee Educational Incentive Plan (the “Plan”) is to offer incentives and benefits to encourage self-development in the employees’ field; sign-on bonuses for recruitment of employees, and reimbursements for retention of employees. This incentive is intended to encourage professional growth and to increase effectiveness in the employees’ current position.

The Plan includes assistance with the cost of tuition and other expenses related to the pursuit of initial licensure, as well as expense reimbursement for Certification and professional enhancement, including the examinations required as part of those programs.

EMPLOYEE ELIGIBILITY

Regular full-time and regular part-time employees are eligible to participate in the Plan.

For eligibility purposes:

1. Regular full-time means the employee works a normal work schedule of at least 37.5 hours per week.
2. Regular part-time means a non-supervisory employee scheduled to work on a part-time basis (minimum of 20 hours but less than 35 hours per week), and not on a time, special job completion, or on-call basis.
3. An employee must have been in his or her position for at least one year.
4. An employee receiving reimbursement for expenses pursuant to the Plan must agree to work for Southampton County Public Schools for the school year immediately following the year in which the expense was incurred. An employee receiving a sign-on bonus must agree to work for Southampton County Public Schools for two full school years.

COMPONENTS

- I. Tuition Assistance
- II. Professional Certification Assessment Reimbursement
- III. Employee Referral Bonus
- IV. Sign-On Bonus (difficult to staff positions)
- V. General Information

I. TUITION ASSISTANCE

Tuition Assistance provides partial reimbursement of tuition and other expenses related to a coursework taken in the pursuit of an initial licensure, to renew licensure, to obtain certification, or to enhance skills that will assist an employee in becoming more competent and proficient in their current position. SCPS will reimburse up to a maximum of **\$2,000 per employee**, per year based on available funds.

Eligible Fees for Tuition

The following expenses may be eligible for reimbursement:

1. **Tuition:** The fees charged by an institution for an eligible course.
Eligible courses include the following:
 - a. Formal college-credit courses offered by an accredited college or university.
 - b. Online courses offered by an accredited college or university.
 - c. Adult education non-credit and/or non-degree courses offered by an accredited institution, including colleges or universities.

Note: An employee is eligible for reimbursement of a course under this plan only if he or she is an active employee of Southampton County Public Schools at the time the course commences and at the time of reimbursement.

2. **Required Textbooks:** May include books in printed or electronic format (including shipping charges if purchased online by the student), newspaper subscriptions, or magazine subscriptions, provided the materials are required for the enrolled course(s).

II. PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION ASSESSMENT REIMBURSEMENT

Any assessment required to obtain licensure or certification needed to perform the job may be reimbursable up to two (2) attempts. Administration certification will be reimbursable up to \$500. Teacher certification will be reimbursable up to \$250. Specialized certifications will be reimbursable up to \$1,000. The certification or license

must relate to the employee's current job function or career unless pre-approved by the Superintendent. If in doubt, an employee should seek approval prior to taking an assessment.

III. REFERRAL BONUS

A referral bonus will be granted to any Southampton County Public Schools employee who refers a qualified applicant to the division if the applicant is ultimately hired to work for the division. The bonus will be issued after the employee is hired by Southampton County Public Schools. The amount of \$500 will be issued upon hire, and another \$500 will be issued when the newly hired employee remains employed by Southampton County Public Schools for a period of 18 months.

IV. SIGN-ON BONUS

As an incentive to join Southampton County Public Schools, the division will offer a sign-on bonus for difficult to staff areas. The specific areas noted are Chemistry, Physics, Trigonometry, Precalculus, Calculus, Geometry, Nursing, Robotics, Building Trades, Electricity, VA/US History, World History I and II, and Welding. An individual certified in one of these areas will be offered a **\$3,000 sign-on bonus**. An individual that does not have full certification, but is eligible for certification will be offered a **\$1,500 sign on bonus**. An employee receiving a sign-on bonus must agree to remain employed with Southampton County Public Schools for a period of at least two (2) full school years.

2020-2021 Ten Critical Shortage Teaching Endorsement Areas in Virginia

1. Special Education
2. Elementary Education PreK-6
3. Middle Education Grades 6-8
4. Mathematics Grades 6-12 (including Algebra 1)
5. Career and Technical Education
6. Science (Secondary)

7. Foreign Language PreK-12
8. English (Secondary)
9. Library Media PreK-12
10. History and Social Science (Secondary)

GENERAL INFORMATION

Paraprofessionals

Currently employed paraprofessionals who major in education are eligible for partial tuition reimbursement. In instances where we have established relationships with the college or university, we may make direct payment on behalf of the paraprofessionals.

Requesting Reimbursement

Employees who seek reimbursement must make a formal request for educational assistance by completing applicable paperwork provided by the Human Resources Department. This must be completed **before** starting any coursework for which he or she wants to be reimbursed.

To qualify for reimbursement, an employee must receive a grade of “C” or better, or “Pass” if taking a “Pass/Fail” course. No benefit will be payable unless these requirements are met.

Once a course has been satisfactorily completed, an employee may request reimbursement for eligible fees and expenses related to the course. A copy of the grade report, transcript, or proof of certification must be submitted and a receipt of course payment.

Eligible fees and expenses, as described above, will be reimbursed at an amount up to the individual annual maximum. An employee may be reimbursed for eligible fees and expenses for up to **four classes (two each semester) not to exceed \$2,000 total per calendar year.** No employee will receive more than **\$2,000 of reimbursed expenses pursuant to the Plan in any one year.**

Reimbursement requests must be submitted **no later than 30 days after the date the course was completed**. A reimbursement request that is submitted more than 30 days following course completion is not eligible for reimbursement.

Requirement to Repay

A repayment provision requires an employee to repay amounts received for Tuition Assistance in the event the employee voluntarily separates employment from Southampton County Public Schools prior to completion of the school year immediately following the year in which the expense was incurred .

By signing the Repayment Agreement, an employee agrees to repay Tuition Assistance benefits received in the event the employee voluntarily terminates employment with Southampton County Public Schools or if terminated by the division.

**Exceptions to this entire plan can be made by the superintendent.*

***Reimbursement depends on availability of funds.*

Southampton County Public Schools

TUITION REIMBURSEMENT REQUEST FORM

Date of Request _____

Employee Name _____

Date of Hire _____ Department _____

Name of School Attending _____

Name of Degree Program _____

Name of Course(s)

If course(s) is (are) not part of a degree program, please explain how job-related:

Semester: Fall Spring Academic Year: _____ to _____

Amount of Tuition* (tuition only, no fees) \$ _____

***Copies of final grades and documentation of cost of tuition paid must be provided before reimbursement will be made.**

To be completed by Human Resources

Employee Classification: Faculty Staff Administrative

Eligible? Yes No Payment Authorized: \$ _____

Approval Signature/Date _____