



# PREPARE FOR POSSIBILITY

Dance, Vocal and Instrumental Music, Traditional and Digital Visual Art, Creative Writing, and Acting are a part of every student's schedule – ART EVERY DAY. Our extensive arts program is integrated into our solid academic curriculum. The Arts Academy in the Woods is chartered by the Macomb Intermediate School District's Board of Education

## Tuition Support Practices and Procedures

### 1. PURPOSE

- a. The Arts Academy in the Woods (the Academy) recognizes that the skills and knowledge of its employees are critical to the success of the organization. The Academy encourages employees to continue their education in subjects and fields related to their current and future Academy job responsibilities. The Academy may offer tuition support or reimbursement to encourage employees to improve job-related skills and meet professional development requirements to achieve certification in high need areas. The Academy may offer tuition support or reimbursement as an incentive to recruit minority staff members to earn or add appropriate certification and to acquire the requisite teaching skills necessary to be an effective teacher in today's classrooms. The Academy may offer tuition support or reimbursement to encourage current staff members to earn or add appropriate certification in identified shortage areas.

### 2. POLICY

#### Eligibility

- a. All full-time employees who are regularly scheduled to work 35 or more hours per week are eligible for participation in the program.
- b. Employees must be employed full time with the Academy from the date the course starts to the date the class ends. Employees must also be employed for six consecutive months after the class ends and at the time the request is processed.\*
- c. Attendance at courses does not constitute hours worked for regular pay or overtime purposes.
- d. Employees on a performance improvement plan at the time of tuition processing are not eligible. Classes ending within a year of being removed from a performance improvement plan are eligible.
- e. All eligible employees must receive a performance score of Developing or better to be eligible. All performance scores will be taken from the most current end of year evaluation cycle.



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- f. Successful applicants will sign a non-interest bearing promissory note in favor of the Academy for the amount of the support/reimbursement granted, said note to be cancelled and of no effect at the conclusion of one (1) year service (following the completion of the course of study) for each six (6) hours of credit with the district's financial aid. Failure on the part of the district to offer grantee a contract for periods sufficient to cause the note to be cancelled shall cause the remaining balance of the note to be cancelled. The balance of the note shall become due and payable if the grantee voluntarily fails to render service of sufficient length to cause cancellation of the note as described above.

## Course Requirements

- a. The Academy will support employees for courses taken at an accredited college or university or alternative route programs approved by the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) and the Michigan Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) that count toward initial teaching certification or additional teaching certification(s) as specified in law (MCL: 380.1531i). In Michigan, teacher preparation is guided by law, state administrative rules, and teacher preparation program standards. Michigan law and rules require that all individuals complete an approved preparation program (e.g., math, elementary, English) to obtain initial certification or add endorsements to a certificate.
- b. The Academy's administration has the sole discretion to determine whether a course or degree relates to an employee's current job duties and can deny participation based on this determination. The Academy will not support school employees who are earning a degree in a non-teaching field such as a nursing or law degree.
- c. The Academy's administration reserves the right to ask for more information on courses the employee has enrolled in (e.g. course description).

## Reimbursement Amount

- a. The Academy will cover the cost of a percentage of the tuition cost for up to a maximum amount in each fiscal year if a grade of "B" or better is obtained in the course. If the accredited college or university does not grade the course on an "A" through "F" basis, it is within the Academy's discretion to determine if the grade received is equivalent to a "B" or better.



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- b. The Academy's fiscal year runs from July 1 – June 30. The start date of the course determines which fiscal year into which the course falls into.
- c. The Academy will reimburse 100% of the tuition cost, up to \$6,000 per fiscal year for courses leading to certification in areas identified as high need. Any other courses are reimbursed at 50% of the tuition cost, up to \$3,000 per fiscal year.
- d. The Academy holds the right to subtract any grant or scholarship awards received by the employee from the amount reimbursed to him/her.
- e. The Academy does not reimburse transcript fees, test preparation fees, admission testing fees, placement fees, course waiver or challenge fees, book costs, travel costs (i.e. transportation, housing, meal, etc.) parking fees, tutoring fees, deferred tuition fees, late fees, student activity fees, student union fees, petition fees, recreation fees, health coverage costs, dissertation or thesis typing, development or foundation fees, institution fees, alumni fees and any other non-tuition related fees.

## Support and Reimbursement Procedure

- a. Once a course has been completed, a Tuition Reimbursement Form, an itemized billing statement from the college or university, a copy of the grade report from the college or university, and documentation from the college or university of the class start and end dates must be sent to the Academy's administration. The Academy reserves the right to deny tuition reimbursement if proper paperwork is not turned in within twelve (12) months after the course has ended. Employees should keep a copy of all paperwork for their records.
- b. In instances involving teacher shortage areas, the administration and a staff member may agree to tuition support in advance of completing coursework. In these cases, a Tuition Support Form, an itemized billing statement from the college or university, a copy of the grade report from the college or university, and documentation from the college or university of the class start and end dates must be sent to the Academy's administration. The Academy reserves the right to request a refund of the tuition support if the coursework is not completed or proper paperwork is not turned in within twelve (12) months after the course has ended. Employees should keep a copy of all paperwork for their records.



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- c. If documentation is missing or inaccurate, an administration representative will contact the employee to obtain the necessary information. If the necessary information cannot be provided, if the course exceeds the maximum reimbursement amount, or the reimbursement request is not in compliance with this policy, a representative will inform the employee that the reimbursement is not approved.
- d. Upon review and approval of proper documentation and in accordance with this policy, the administration will validate the tuition request and process it. The administration will process the request six months after the class end date. The reimbursement will be paid as soon as administratively possible once six months from the class end date have passed. Employees are still encouraged to turn in the tuition reimbursement paperwork as soon as classes end.
- e. Tuition reimbursement amounts paid in excess of allowable amounts according to federal law in a single calendar year must be included as income and are subject to withholding taxes. Any amounts will be included on your W-2.

## 3. APPLICABILITY

- a. This policy applies to all employees of the Academy.

## 4. RESPONSIBILITY

- a. The administration is responsible for implementing and managing the Tuition Reimbursement Program and Policy.
- b. The administration is responsible for verifying and entering tuition reimbursement data for payment.
- c. The Academy payroll department is responsible for processing the tuition reimbursement payments which are included in the employees' paychecks.
- d. Principals and managers are responsible for understanding the requirements, procedures and limits of the program.
- e. Participating employees are responsible for understanding the requirements, procedures and limits of the program.

## 5. EXHIBITS

- a. Tuition Reimbursement Form
- b. Tuition Support For



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## TUITION REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM FOR TEACHERS

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_  
State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_  
Certified Area (s): \_\_\_\_\_

Subject Presently Teaching: \_\_\_\_\_

I HAVE RECEIVED TUITION SUPPORT WITHIN THE LAST 12 MONTHS (circle one) YES NO

Course Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Semester Course is Offered: \_\_\_\_\_

(Example: EDFN 7331) (Example: Fall 2007)

Course Title: \_\_\_\_\_

College Where Course is Offered: \_\_\_\_\_

Tuition Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

(Tuition amount prior to fees- This amount should also exclude any additional funds (discounts, grants, etc.)

\*Date of Registration: \_\_\_\_\_ \*Course Beginning Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I have read and understand the eligibility requirements for this tuition support program. I also understand that this application must be submitted and approved prior to the first class meeting.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

EACH BLANK MUST BE FILLED IN BEFORE AN APPLICATION CAN BE PROCESSED.



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## TUITION SUPPORT PROGRAM FOR TEACHERS IN HARD TO FILL POSITIONS

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_  
State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_  
Certified Area (s): \_\_\_\_\_

Subject Presently Teaching: \_\_\_\_\_

I HAVE RECEIVED TUITION SUPPORT WITHIN THE LAST 12 MONTHS (circle one) YES NO

Course Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Semester Course is Offered: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Example: EDFN 7331) (Example: Fall 2007)

Course Title: \_\_\_\_\_

College Where Course is Offered: \_\_\_\_\_ Tuition Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

(Tuition amount prior to fees- This amount should also exclude any additional funds (discounts, grants, etc.)

\*Date of Registration: \_\_\_\_\_ \*Course Beginning Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I have read and understand the eligibility requirements for this tuition support program. I also understand that this application must be submitted and approved prior to the first class meeting.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

EACH BLANK MUST BE FILLED IN BEFORE AN APPLICATION CAN BE PROCESSED.