# ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES FOR TUITION REIMBURSEMENT

**Purpose:**
As part of its ongoing commitment to continuous improvement and professional learning, the Lexington School Committee will allocate a set dollar amount as stated in the collective bargaining agreement per fiscal year to subsidize a tuition reimbursement fund. The purpose of this fund is to provide educators with opportunities to take district-approved graduate-level courses in their current and/or projected assignments that will lead to improved student learning outcomes and improve an educator's professional practice. All requests for tuition reimbursement under this article must meet the criteria stated in the Administrative Procedure for Graduate Level Course and Degree Approval (attached). The Tuition Reimbursement Fund will be available throughout the fiscal year in an equal amount in each term (total amount divided by summer, fall, and spring).

**Courses:**
In order for a course to qualify for tuition reimbursement, the course must be a graduate-level course in the area of a teacher's current assignment or projected teaching assignment, and the educator must clearly articulate in writing how the successful completion of the course will lead to improved student learning outcomes as defined in the DESE Model Rubrics – Standards I (Curriculum, Planning and Assessment) and/or Standard II (Teaching all Students), and/or is linked to an educator's professional practice and/or student learning goal(s). This is submitted to your building principal/supervisor by using the "Graduate Level Course/Degree Tuition Reimbursement Approval Form" found on the HR page of the District website. Once approved by your Principal/Supervisor, the Director of Human Resources will determine whether a course qualifies for tuition reimbursement. Any employee denied approval or reimbursement under these administrative procedures may appeal to the Director of Human Resources whose decision will be final and binding.

All individual courses, whether taken for reimbursement or not, must be pre-approved in writing by the district and must meet the criteria stated in "Criteria for Graduate-Level Course Approval".

**Application Process:**
Applications for tuition reimbursement will be processed three times annually and must be received in the Human Resources Office by the following deadline dates:

| | |
|---|---|
| June 30 | (Summer Term Courses) |
| September 30 | (Fall Term Courses) |
| January 31 | (Spring Term Courses) |

Please be aware that deadline dates are strictly enforced. If the deadline date falls on a non-work day, the deadline will extend to the following work day.

An educator is eligible to receive tuition reimbursement for only one course per term (fees are not reimbursable). Courses offered at no cost through the LPS Professional Learning catalog where external credit is available for purchase through a college, university or other credit granting institution will not be eligible for tuition reimbursement. No course taken externally will be reimbursed if the same course is offered, in the same term, through the LPS Professional Learning catalog.

**Reimbursement:**
Tuition reimbursement dollar amounts for individual courses will be determined after all approved tuition reimbursement requests have been reviewed and considered each term. In the event the Tuition Reimbursement Fund for a given term is insufficient to satisfy all requests, reimbursement will be prorated evenly on a percentage basis among tuition reimbursement recipients. For courses costing $1000 or more, the educator may, depending upon the number of requests and the availability of funds, be reimbursed up to a maximum of $1000 per course. For courses costing less than $1000 the educator may, depending upon the number of requests and the availability of funds, be reimbursed up to the actual dollar amount of the cost of the course.

The Human Resources Office will publish on school announcements the reimbursement rate educators will receive based on the total dollar amount of all tuition reimbursement requests within thirty (30) days after tuition reimbursement requests have been approved.

**To receive reimbursement for any approved course, the course must be completed within the term for which it was approved.**

Within a given school year, unused funds at the end of any term will be added to the fund for the next term. Any unused funds after the spring term will not roll-over into the following fiscal year.

Required documentation (proof of payment, transcripts) for all approved tuition reimbursement requests within a fiscal year (summer, fall, and spring terms) must be received in the Human Resources Office by no later than July 31st, of that year (the next fiscal year), for payment.

Reimbursement is paid via your biweekly paycheck through the business office - payroll department.

**Documentation:**
An educator will receive his/her reimbursement check within 30 days after he/she submits the following information:

1. A transcript/proof of grade with a grade of "B" or better, or a passing grade should an alpha/numeric grade not be available (courses for reimbursement must be taken for an alpha/numeric grade should one be offered), and;
2. An official document showing that the educator paid the amount specified for the course.

Reimbursement for courses taken during the summer term shall be conditional upon the teacher returning to the employ of the Lexington Public Schools for the school year that begins in the following September.

Upon written request of the LEA President, the Director of Human Resources, or his/her designee, will provide a list of all educators and the courses for which they applied for tuition reimbursement per term, the number of courses approved and the total amount of money expended within each term, and the total amount of money remaining in the Tuition Reimbursement Account.

# Administrative Procedure
# for
# Graduate Level Course and Degree Approval and Lane Change Credit

**Only credits obtained after the conferral of a Master's degree will count towards lane change credit** except for credits obtained as part of the LPS Induction Program (i.e. Better Beginnings and Effective Teacher). To obtain course approval for a column change on the salary schedule, an educator is required to submit a completed 'Graduate Level Course/Degree Approval Form,' which demonstrates that the proposed graduate coursework is connected to one or more of the following criteria: his/her 'Professional Practice Goal(s),' 'Student Learning Goal(s),' DESE Standards I and/or II, and/or his/her Individual Development Plan (IPDP).' The coursework must be completed at the graduate level at an accredited college, university, or other accredited provider.

Individual graduate courses including, but not limited to, those offered through the Lexington Public Schools Professional Learning Catalog, and advanced degree programs require prior approval based on the standards below.

Standards for graduate level course and degree approval:

- courses in the area of a teacher's primary license under which he/she is currently employed that are necessary for licensure renewal, change in licensure grade-level, and/or change in licensure type such as from 'initial' to 'professional;'
- subject matter/methods courses used to improve an educator's teaching practice in the teacher's primary area of content specialization;
- courses required by the Lexington Public Schools;
- on-line and /or 'blended' courses that require: a) on-line interaction among class participants. Teachers are required to submit a copy of the on-line institution's internal standards for awarding of credits in order to receive course approval.
- other courses as deemed appropriate by the Superintendent of Schools

Coursework credits for lane changes will only be granted in accordance with the collective bargaining agreements and established protocols. ALL courses must have prior written approval. Courses that do not meet these requirements will not be "counted".

Use the established "Graduate Level Course/Degree and Tuition Reimbursement Approval" form and protocol (posted on the HR page) to document the approval in a timely fashion.

All documentation must be provided to Human Resources on a "formal" school/university document and contain your name, the institution name, date, grade, course name, number of credits. "Official" transcripts are not required.

You are ultimately responsible for tracking your eligibility for a lane change and notifying Human Resources of your intended movement across lanes. We will not notify

you of your eligibility if it occurs. We will only assist you with tracking the documentation.

If a course is missing from your summary, you will be asked to provide documentation of completion.

No more than 6 in-house credits will be applied to the 15 credits required for a lane change.

In-house courses are being entered as PDPs. You may combine related in-house courses (for example: technology) to get to 15 PDPs. After 15 related PDPs are earned, they can be converted to 1 in-house credit. You are responsible for notifying Human Resources when you have completed 15 related PDPs that you believe are eligible to be bundled.

In the event a course or degree program is not approved, the individual seeking approval will have the right to meet with the Director of Human Resources to review the decision.

Completed coursework is recorded in ASPEN, “my info”, ‘coursework”. See the information on Tracking your DESE Licenses and completed coursework in ASPEN.

# Graduate Level Course/Degree and Tuition Reimbursement Approval Form
## For UNIT A / UNIT C

*Submit completed form to the HR Office*

Date____ _____ ___

Name _____ School _____ Grade/Subject _____

☐ Graduate Institution/Other Provider Number of External Graduate Credit (Portable) _____

Name of Institution: _____ _____

☐ LPS - Professional Learning Number of LPS In-House Credit Only (Non-Portable) _____

Course Title _____ _____

Course # _____ Term: ☐ Summer ☐ Fall ☐ Spring Year _____

**Upon completion of course, a transcript must be sent to the HR Office for credit documentation.**

| **REQUIRED Documentation:** |
|---|
| Attach a copy of the course description and/or course syllabus |
| If the entire course is to be taken "on-line", attach a copy of the on-line institution's policy for awarding grades. |
| ☐ I am requesting $ _____ in tuition reimbursement.<br>Fees are not eligible for reimbursement.<br>Proof of payment is not required at this time.<br>***ATTACH DOCUMENTATION STATING COST OF TUITION***<br><br>TO RECEIVE REIMBURSEMENT: Upon completion of the course, submit to the HR Department a packet containing the following documentation, a) a copy of this signed approval form b) proof of payment, c) and a transcript/proof of grade. Incomplete packets will be returned. |
| **APPLICATION DEADLINES FOR TUITION REIMBURSEMENT:**<br>**Summer Courses – June 30th // Fall Courses – September 30th // Spring Courses – January 31st** |

Teacher Signature _____ Date _____ Principal Signature _____ Date _____

☐ **APPROVED FOR CREDIT** ☐ **APPROVED FOR TUITION REIMBURSEMENT-amount to be determined**

| **UNIT A:** | **UNIT C:** |
|---|---|
| ☐ **NOT APPROVED** for the following reason(s): | ☐ **NOT APPROVED** for the following reason(s): |
| ☐ Submitted after deadline of | ☐ Submitted after deadline of |
| ☐ 2nd Request within same term | ☐ Exceeds $500 limit per employee/per fiscal year |
| ☐ Other: | ☐ Other: |

Director of Human Resources _____ Date _____

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