



## Human Resources Office

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AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

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### Growing Exceptional Teachers More Program Guidelines

The Growing Exceptional Teachers More (GET More) Program is a program that provides tuition reimbursement assistance incentives and other work-related benefits to current Harford County Public Schools (HCPS) employees who are represented by Harford County Education Association - Educational Support Personnel (HCEA-ESP) or the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME). The purpose of providing these benefits is to support program participants as they complete a teacher certification program in a high needs area of teacher education, with the ultimate goal of receiving their teacher certification and returning to work as a public school teacher right here in Harford County Public Schools.

#### Identified Critical Shortage Areas:

Participants will need to obtain their teacher certification in one of the following teacher "critical shortage areas" identified by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and HCPS to include:

- English
- Mathematics
- Professional and Technical Education
- Science
- **\*\*Special Education\*\***
- Technology Education
- World Language
- Other - candidates interested in another area of certification should contact Human Resources before applying.

**\*\*Individuals who get certified in Special Education and are offered employment as a Special Education Teacher for HCPS will receive a step increase on the salary schedule and placed on step B at the time of hire\*\***

#### Program Guidelines & Priorities:

- An HCEA-ESP or AFSCME employee of at least one year experience who enrolls in a teacher certification program may be entitled to receive the equivalent of the negotiated tuition reimbursement rate for certificated instructional staff. (currently \$300per graduate credit hour).
- Advanced approval into the GET More program is required by the Human Resources Department. (selected teacher certification program must be from a regionally accredited institution)
- In order to be approved for the additional per credit hour reimbursement, the employee must complete all of the following requirements:
  1. Be approved in advance for a qualified teacher certification program from a regionally accredited educational institution in a critical need area by the Supervisor of Staff Management. Please provide proof of enrollment or acceptance into selected program with completed application.
  2. Submit required documentation for reimbursement (official transcripts, itemized receipts, and tuition reimbursement form).
  3. Pass the course with a grad "C" or better. If "Pass" or "Satisfactory" grade is given, provide verification from the college/university that the grade is comparable to "C" or better.
  4. Commit to completing student internship requirements in Harford County Public Schools.

- Individuals accepted into the program will also be eligible to apply for up to 12 consecutive weeks of paid leave to complete a formal University or College student internship within a Harford County Public Schools unless HCPS is unable to meet placement requirements. Individuals are eligible for this paid leave opportunity only once during their employment with HCPS. Individuals approved for this special paid leave status will also continue to receive service credit that will be applied to the Maryland State Retirement System.
- If offered a certificated teaching position within HCPS, the employee will commit to employment with HCPS for 3 years as a teacher in a critical needs area. Any individual who is offered employment and terminates employment on their own accord with HCPS prior to the conclusion of the 3-year commitment will be required to pay HCPS the difference paid in tuition reimbursement that was granted during participation in the program. HCPS has the right to deduct directly from the employee's salary the differential owed back to HCPS in their final compensation, if applicable.
- The GET MORE Program pre-approval process is separate from the normal AFSCME and HCEA-ESP Tuition Reimbursement approval process. Tuition Reimbursement pre-approval must be obtained from the HR-Benefits Office prior to the start of each course/beginning of each semester.

Questions regarding the GET More Program can be sent to [Maranda.Scott@hcps.org](mailto:Maranda.Scott@hcps.org)