

Amendment to Policy Guidelines for the PAF Tuition Assistance

Approved by PAF Committee. Approved by Executive Motion, Feb. 24, 2009

Background:

On occasion teachers may have the opportunity to complete their degree work within a time frame during which they had already used up the funds available to them that year through the Tuition Assistance portion of the fund. For example, a teacher takes a fall session class (\$500), a winter session class (\$500) and then needs only 1 or 2 more classes to complete the degree. Under current guidelines that teacher would have to wait until the next school year (i.e. the next fall session at the earliest) to apply for further funding.

In some instances, the necessary class(es) might be offered in only the upcoming spring or summer session, meaning the teacher would have to pay the full tuition for the class on his or her own. Or, the teacher may wish to complete the course of studies before starting back to teaching in the next school year, thus alleviating the additional burden of taking classes while teaching. (The additional needed class(es) might be in the winter session also – the same rationale would apply.)

Proposal:

Teachers who find themselves in that situation, may apply for additional funding up to a maximum of \$1000 (\$500 X 2 - the amount they would have been entitled to in the next school year). Funding could be approved on the following conditions:

1. The additional class(es) would have to complete the degree program in which the teacher was enrolled.
2. The teacher would have to return to the employ of the RCS in the upcoming year, and be employed in a position that would still have normally entitled him or her to funds through the Teachers portion of the PAF fund. (A teacher “promoted” to a position with an additional allowance, would not be eligible).
3. There would have to be sufficient money still in the fund (both paid out and applied for) for the current school year.
4. If more teachers applied for and were approved under the new proposal than there was money available to cover the full \$500 (x2) entitlements, then the money would be divided equally among the applicants. **NOTE:** Funds are not being “borrowed” from next year’s fund in this process. The teacher is simply being approved to make a claim on his or her next year’s entitlement through unused funds in the current school year.

Process:

Teachers in the described situation would apply, noting in their request that the application was for the additional funding based on these conditions. If approved, the teacher would be reimbursed according

to the conditions only after the fall convocation to ensure that all of the conditions were in fact met. (i.e. the teacher would be working in RCS, in a similar position, have completed the degree program etc.)

The teacher would then NOT be entitled to any further Tuition Assistance during the new school year. After that one year, the teacher would become eligible for further funding in the next school year should he or she wish to pursue other courses of study.

NOTE: *The practice has always been not to allow teachers to “borrow” funds from next year’s PAF. This practice is NOT being changed or violated as a result of this proposed amendment to the guidelines. Under the strict conditions described, the applicant would be applying for funds from the current PAF, and, in the process relinquishing his or her claim to any additional funding (Tuition Assistance portion of the fund only) during the upcoming year. No “dangerous precedents” are being set. In fact this proposal might very well result in the fund being used completely in any given year, an objective we have all agreed is desirable. Last year (2007-08) there was over \$9,000 unused in the Tuition Assistance portion of the PAF.*

Furthermore, teachers applying for the additional funding would have to understand that if available funds were used up after tentative approval had been given to them, they would not be reimbursed for the classes. This of course would leave them in no worse a situation than they would have faced under the current guidelines.