

J. LIMITED TUITION ASSISTANCE

The Board will appropriate the amount of twenty thousand (\$20,000) annually for the term of this contract for the purpose of assisting Berkshire teachers to earn graduate credit for courses and approved workshops and/or on-line courses in connection with their professional responsibilities with the District.

Tuition assistance will be limited as follows:

1. Course work must be approved on or about fourteen (14) days after the beginning of the class by the Superintendent and must be graduate level in a college or university approved for teacher training by the Ohio Department of Education. On-line courses and workshops will not be considered for approval if a Member is receiving any kind of financial aid or other consideration.
2. Course work must be in the area of a teacher's present certification/licensure unless such course work is in a certification/licensed area designated as one of need for the District and approved by the Superintendent. The decision of the Superintendent shall be final and not subject to challenge through the grievance procedure or otherwise.
3. Eligible applicants must have been a teacher in the Berkshire Local Schools for a period of three (3) years unless waived for specific educational reasons at the discretion of the Superintendent. The decision of the Superintendent shall be final and not subject to challenge through the grievance procedure or otherwise.
4. Members obtaining tuition assistance shall be obligated to remain with the District for a minimum of one (1) year following the completion of the course work. Any voluntary separation by the Member prior to this time will result in the obligation of the Member to repay the full amount of the tuition assistance within thirty (30) days of the separation from employment.
5. Interested applicants must submit a Tuition Assistance Request Form for approval on or about fourteen (14) days after the beginning of the class for which the employee is requesting reimbursement. The maximum reimbursement per request will be FIVE (5) quarter hours or THREE (3) semester hours. Once tuition assistance is approved, reimbursement will be processed by the Treasurer only upon receipt of a copy of the transcript indicating that the Member obtained a minimum grade of "B" in the course(s) and paid receipt showing actual costs incurred.
6. Reimbursement will be in conjunction with the contract year, September 1 through August 31. Therefore, the course must begin in the contract year in which the reimbursement is being requested. There will be no carryover of any unused portion of the appropriated amounts for tuition assistance.
7. The rate of reimbursement shall be the lesser of the actual tuition cost or one hundred fifty dollars (\$150) per quarter hour/two hundred dollars (\$200) per semester hour.
8. Tuition assistance will be granted on a first-come, first-served basis, as determined by the application date.