

## **BARBOUR COUNTY SCHOOLS**

### **USE OF FEDERAL FUNDS FOR TUITION ASSISTANCE AND EMPLOYMENT OF HIGHLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS**

#### **1. PURPOSE:**

Barbour County Schools supports the No Child Left Behind mandate for highly qualified teachers and understands the positive impact of having a highly qualified teacher for every student. In an effort to ensure the children of Barbour County are taught by highly qualified teachers, Barbour County Schools utilizes federal funds, when appropriate to recruit, retrain and retain fully certified and highly qualified teachers. The No Child Left Behind Legislation permits local education agencies to assist teachers to become Highly Qualified.

#### **2. DEFINITIONS:**

##### **2.1 Highly Qualified (HQ) Teacher** means that the teacher:

2.1.1 Has obtained full State certification, as outlined in West Virginia Code §18A-3-2a, as a teacher or passed the State teacher licensing examination and holds a license to teach in the State, and does not have certification or licensure requirements waived on an emergency, temporary, or provisional basis;

2.1.2 Holds a minimum of a bachelor's degree, and

2.1.3 Has demonstrated subject-matter competency in each of the academic subjects in which the teacher teaches, in a manner determined by the State and in compliance with Section 9101(23) of ESEA.

#### **3. Non-Discriminatory Clause.**

3.1 These benefits will be offered on a non-discriminatory basis that will not favor highly-compensated educators. This plan serves as notice of the availability and terms of this program to all eligible educators.

#### **4. Tax Implications for Employees.**

4.1 The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) sets a maximum dollar amount of tuition reimbursement received from the District which can be excluded from an educator's income each tax year. The District will not include these benefits in the wages, tips, and other compensation box on the educator's Form W-2. This also means the educator does not have to include these benefits on the annual tax return. No tax-free education expenses paid for by the District can be used as a basis for any other deduction or credit, including the lifetime learning credit and the American opportunity credit.

- 4.2 Employees may not choose to receive cash or other benefits that are includable in gross income instead of educational assistance.
- 4.3 Annual amounts paid in excess of the maximum dollar amount set by the IRS (\$5,250.00) are generally taxable. However, if the excess of benefits paid qualifies as a working condition fringe benefit, the District does not have to include them in the educator's wages. A working condition fringe benefit is a benefit which, had the educator paid for it, the educator could deduct as a business expense.

**5. USE OF FEDERAL FUNDING FOR RECRUITMENT, RETRAINING AND RETENTION OF HIGHLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS:**

- 5.1 Barbour County Schools, based upon the availability of federal funds, may assist in the payment of college/university tuition for instructional personnel, regular employees who currently possess a professional teaching certificate, who qualify to receive such benefits under federal guidelines. Substitute teachers and instructional aides are not eligible for tuition reimbursement.
- 5.2 Reimbursement will be provided on a first come first serve basis for those individuals who have followed Barbour County Schools procedures in situations where funding is not sufficient to meet the tuition reimbursement requests.

**5.3 Use of Title I Funds:**

- 5.3.1 Teachers working within a Title I school-wide program are eligible for tuition reimbursement through Title I funds.
- 5.3.2 In order to receive tuition reimbursement through Title I, eligible teachers must be seeking reimbursement for coursework leading to highly qualified status in the core content areas of reading and/or math. Teachers must already possess elementary certification (K-6, K-8, etc...).
- 5.3.3 Dependent upon available funding, reimbursement will be granted to an individual for a total of twelve (12) semester hours per fiscal year, provided the individual continues to be employed by Barbour County in a school that receives Title I funding.
- 5.3.4 To be eligible for tuition reimbursement using Title I funds, an individual must have the following:
  - 5.3.4.1 An approved "Education Plan Application". This form shall be completed prior to enrolling in an approved program.
  - 5.3.4.2 The "Out of Funds" letter received from the West Virginia Department of Education for tuition reimbursement.
  - 5.3.4.3 A transcript of applicable course(s) with a minimum grade point average of 3.00 for the applicable course(s).
  - 5.3.4.4 A receipt reflecting a zero balance for tuition and fees. (Reimbursements will not exceed the amounts charged by State operated colleges and universities).

5.3.5 Teachers working in schools that do not receive Title I funds are not eligible for tuition reimbursement through Title I.

**5.4 Use of Title II Funds:**

5.4.1 Title II funds may be utilized to target the county's need for highly qualified teachers.

5.4.2 Title II funds may be used to reimburse teachers for coursework leading to highly qualified status in a core subject area. Core subject areas include civics and government, economics, english, foreign language, history, mathematics, reading/language arts, sciences, special education certification, dance, music, theatre, visual art, advanced certificates (i.e. National Board for Professional Teaching Standards).

5.4.3 Financial assistance for tuition may be provided only for those areas that are identified in section 3.3.2. Dependent upon available funding, reimbursement will be granted to the individual for a total of twelve (12) semester hours per fiscal year, provided the individual continues to be employed by Barbour County Schools in the area of critical need.

5.4.4 To be eligible for tuition reimbursement using Title II funds, an individual must have the following:

5.4.4.1 A completed application for tuition reimbursement. This form shall be completed prior to enrolling in an approved program.

5.4.4.2 The "Out of Funds" letter received from the West Virginia Department of Education for tuition reimbursement.

5.4.4.3 A Certified transcript of applicable course(s) with a minimum grade point average of 3.00 for the applicable course(s).

5.4.4.4 A receipt reflecting a zero balance for tuition and fees. (Reimbursements will not exceed the amounts charged by State operated colleges and universities).

**6. Authority:**

West Virginia Code §18A-3-31; WVDE Policy 5202; PL 107-110, No Child Left Behind Act.

**Adopted: 08/11/11**

**Revised: 02/24/14**

**Procedures for Increasing the Percentage of  
Highly Qualified Teachers (WVDE 5202)**

**I. Data Analysis:**

1. Highly Qualified Teacher data (WVDE Office of Professional Preparation's Highly Credentialed Report) will be evaluated regarding the status of all teachers in the county in meeting the definition of "Highly Qualified" as defined by state and federal mandates. Strengths and weaknesses will be identified.
2. Principals will collaborate with the WVEIS Coordinator to ensure the accuracy of their school's master schedule in reporting personnel data, accuracy of course codes, and other pertinent data.
3. Highly Qualified Teacher data will be reviewed annually by all administrators prior to the first day of instruction. This data will again be reviewed after January 1<sup>st</sup> and throughout the year as necessary.
4. Identify problem areas by:
  - Involving staff members from regular education, Title I, Title II, special education, principals and central office staff in data analysis.
  - Reviewing data at the county and school levels.
  - Reviewing data in core content areas and programmatic levels.
  - Reviewing data for future retirements and the related subject areas.
  - Reviewing data for potential transfers and/or deleted positions.
  - Reviewing teaching assignments for special education teachers.
  - Reviewing teaching assignments at the Pre-Kindergarten, K - 5, 6 - 8 and 9 - 12 programmatic levels.
  - Reviewing the teaching assignments of teachers of English Language Learners.
  - Identifying gaps in data and collect any additional relevant information.
  - Examine recruiting, retraining and retaining options to increase highly qualified teachers in core academic classes and identify appropriate solutions.
5. The assistant superintendent will annually graph the highly qualified teacher data for the county. This data will be presented to all administrators prior to the beginning of school.
6. During personnel season, a team consisting of the superintendent, curriculum director, Title 1 director, personnel director, Special Ed. Director, CFO, and WVEIS coordinator will evaluate all personnel data which will include: retirements, highly qualified status, teacher assignments, available funding, and the needs of each school.
7. This team will then make personnel recommendations to the superintendent that are designed to meet the needs of the students in the system and improve the percentage of highly qualified teachers in the system.

## **II. Procedures to Ensure Accuracy in Highly Qualified Data Collection:**

1. WVEIS course codes, social security numbers, teacher certifications, and teacher assignments will be verified in WVEIS by each school's principal prior to the first day of instruction.
2. The master schedule will be completed in WVEIS prior to the first day of instruction. Conflicts between teacher assignments (certification) and course codes will be resolved through the principal collaborating with the WVEIS coordinator, curriculum coordinators, and/or the personnel director to maximize the number of teachers that are considered highly qualified and still ensure the data is accurate.
3. Principals will collaborate with the WVEIS coordinator, personnel director, and/or the curriculum coordinators to evaluate the data received from the WVDE Office of Professional Preparation in response to the Highly Credentialed Report. The principals will then ensure the accuracy of the data contained in the report.
4. The results of Highly Credentialed Report will then be the "official" highly qualified teacher data for Barbour County Schools.
5. The personnel director will communicate the qualification needs to all teachers who are not deemed highly qualified. The personnel director will ensure that, upon request, teachers are informed of what is required for them to achieve full certification. The personnel director will assist teachers to identify all necessary forms and directions and deadlines for submission of necessary forms and documentation to WVDE to ensure that they achieve full certification. It is the responsibility of the teacher to communicate with institutions of higher education to identify the coursework necessary to achieve highly qualified status and submit all necessary documentation.
6. Teachers that do not meet highly qualified status will be informed of WVDE Policy 5200. The teacher will then meet with the assistant superintendent to evaluate whether or not he/she is eligible for tuition reimbursement for the purpose of attaining the necessary certification for meeting the definition of a highly qualified teacher.
7. Once the above process is completed and the Office of Professional Preparation's Highly Credentialed Report is finalized, principals will then sign their Annual Attestation.

## **III. Recruitment**

1. After Jan. 1, and thereafter as needed, the team of central office administrators will evaluate the needs of the system and identify emergent issues whereby recruitment efforts for teachers to fulfill those needs will be identified.
2. Recruitment efforts will be conducted, as needed, to fill identified needs.
3. Recruitment efforts may include: the personnel director attending job fairs at area colleges and universities, advertising in local, regional and state newspapers, posting positions on the WVDE website, posting positions at all board facilities, and by word of mouth.

#### **IV. Retention**

1. Appropriate and pertinent student assessment data will be evaluated to determine the learning needs of the students. The professional staff development committee and the five year plan committee will then identify professional development to enhance the ability of teachers and administrators to meet the learning needs of students.
2. The knowledge and skills of teachers and administrators will be enhanced through their participation in high-quality, scientifically-based, professional development that is sustained over the course of the school year.
3. Professional development will be responsive to the learning needs of the students and teachers and may include such job embedded professional development as: professional learning communities, book studies, and coaching. Professional development may also include county, regional, state, or national events if they are integral to the county's overall professional development plan and can be sustained. Currently, all reading teachers will participate in the county's Five Year Reading Initiative K-12. Beginning in the school year 2009, all mathematics teachers will begin to participate in the county's Five Year Numeracy Initiative.
4. New teachers and administrators will be assigned a mentor teacher or a mentor principal.
5. New teachers will attend a new employee orientation session prior the beginning of school.
6. New teachers will be encouraged to attend the "New Teacher Cafes" as offered by WVDE and/or RESA.
7. New principals will be encouraged to attend the principal's academy.
8. Annually, the personnel director will provide notice via letter to teachers whose certificates will expire at the end of the school year. This notification will take place during the first nine weeks of school.
9. Teachers of core subject areas that meet all of the stipulations of WVDE Policy 5202 may receive tuition assistance for the purpose of becoming fully certified. Funds will be set aside from Title I and Title II for this purpose.
10. Dental and vision benefits will be offered to all teachers who desire to participate. These fringe benefits will be provided as long as funding is available.

#### **V. Employment Process for Teachers**

1. A vacancy is identified.
2. The personnel director reviews and revises the job description for the position to ensure it meets the requirements of the position.
3. The personnel director develops a job posting that is supported by the job description.
4. The superintendent and the personnel director approve the job posting prior to the position being posted.
5. Late applications will only be considered if no other candidates apply.
6. The personnel director evaluates the recruitment needs for the position that will be necessary to attract fully certified and highly qualified applicants for the position.

7. Recruitment efforts are undertaken as identified (see above).
8. Applicants submit necessary documents as identified in the job posting.
9. The personnel director reviews the applicant pool to determine if they have met the criteria of the job posting and then the candidates are rated by the nine factor test as per Senate Bill 359 and county procedures.
10. The most qualified applicant will be recommended to the superintendent for employment as per WV Code.

### **Procedures for Increasing the Percentage of Highly Qualified Instructional Aides and Paraprofessionals**

#### **I. Employment Process for Instructional Aides and Paraprofessionals**

1. A vacancy is identified.
2. The personnel director reviews and revises the job description for the position to ensure it meets the requirements of the position.
3. The personnel director develops a job posting that is supported by the job description.
4. The superintendent and the personnel director approve the job posting prior to the position being posted.
5. Late applications will only be considered if no other candidates apply.
6. The personnel director evaluates the recruitment needs for the position that will be necessary to attract highly qualified applicants for the position.
7. Applicants for Para Professional positions submit necessary documents as required by state policy:
  - Transcripts verifying the appropriate coursework has been completed and approved by WVDE.
  - High School Diploma/GED
  - Successful completion of West Virginia Aide Assessment
8. Applicants for Instructional Aide positions submit necessary documents as identified in the job posting:
  - High School Diploma/GED.
  - Successful completion of West Virginia Aide Assessment.
9. The personnel director reviews the applicant pool to determine if they have met the criteria of the job posting and then arranges interviews as necessary.
10. The most qualified applicant will be recommended to the superintendent for employment as per WV Code.

**NOTE: NO AIDE OR PARAPROFESSIONAL WILL BE CONSIDERED FOR  
EMPLOYMENT WHO IS NOT HIGHLY QUALIFIED!**

**APPLICATION PROCEDURES FOR REIMBURSEMENT OF  
TUITION THROUGH FEDERAL PROGRAMS**

1. In order to receive reimbursement for courses through Barbour County Schools the individual must follow, in order, the steps outlined below:

1.1 Complete a “Highly Qualified Teacher” plan indicating the area of critical need and the education plan indicating the courses required for Highly Qualified status and a timeline for completing the education program.

1.2 Apply for reimbursement through the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE). Tuition reimbursement forms can be obtained at the Central Office or downloaded at the WVDE website:

<http://wvde.state.wv.us/certification/forms/Form36.pdf>.

If an “Out of Funds” letter is received from the WVDE, follow the next step;

1.3 Present the “Out of Funds” letter to the Title I Director or the Title II Director. Request an application packet for tuition reimbursement from the Director responsible for the program providing the tuition reimbursement.

1.4 Complete and return the following to the Barbour County Schools’ Director responsible for the tuition reimbursement:

- a. Application form for tuition reimbursement.
- b. W9 form.
- c. Certified transcript of applicable course(s) with a minimum grade point average of 3.00 for the applicable course(s).
- d. Receipt of tuition paid that shows a zero (\$0.00) balance.
- e. Copy of the applicant’s “Out of Funds” letter from the WVDE.

2. Applications for tuition reimbursement will not be processed for the following reasons:

2.1 Incomplete applications will not be processed.

2.2 Applications will not be processed if received three (3) or more months past the date on the “Out of Funds” letter from the WVDE.



Barbour County Schools  
Education Plan Application  
Highly Qualified Teachers

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Employee ID #: \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First MI.

School: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade/Subject: \_\_\_\_\_

Teaching assignment for which you are not highly qualified:

\_\_\_\_\_

WVDE Permit: \_\_\_\_\_  
AREA

Out of Field \_\_\_\_\_  
AREA

Education Plan:

Date Enrolled: \_\_\_\_\_

Institution	Degree Sought	Year
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Certification(s) Required:

Content	Anticipated Date of Completion
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Praxis: Content Specialty Test(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
Anticipated Date of Completion

I have read and understand Barbour County Policy 6910. WVDE Policy 5202 and agree to abide by the policies/procedures and complete my education plan as outlined above.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Date Director, Title I or II Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Superintendent Date

**Barbour County Schools  
Highly Qualified Teacher Education Plan  
Progress Monitoring**

**Teacher:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Employee ID #:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First MI.

**School:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Grade/Subject:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Beginning Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Degree Required:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Certification(s) Required:** \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Courses Required</b>	<b>Date Completed</b>	<b>Funding Source</b>	<b>Date Reviewed</b>

<b>Praxis</b>			
<b>Test Code</b>	<b>Test Name</b>	<b>Passed/Failed</b>	<b>Date</b>

**Date Completed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Director:** \_\_\_\_\_