



**Tuition
Assistance
Benefit**



THE TAB PROGRAM Frequently Asked Questions

Thank you for your interest in the TAB Program. This document contains information regarding the TAB Program guidelines and procedures. Further information is available by contacting the Central Office.

- What are the application and reimbursement procedures?
 - Who is eligible for this program?
 - Which college or university programs are acceptable?
 - How will the participants be selected for this program?
 - How will the reimbursement requirement be fulfilled?
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**What are the
application and
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procedures?**

How does an interested employee apply for this program?

First, the employee should review the eligibility information in the next section of this document. Application packets are available upon request by contacting the Central Office at 333-3681.

How far in advance must applicants submit their TAB applications before the start of their graduate classes, and what supporting documentation is required?

Applications must be submitted to the Superintendent in the Central Office at least 30 days prior to the start of classes. Applications must include a letter of recommendation from an immediate supervisor or building principal, a copy of the letter of acceptance from the college or university, and a listing of the courses for which reimbursement will be requested through the TAB Program.

What will be the amount of reimbursement?

The level of reimbursement will be 100% for the tuition costs for the first two advanced degree courses. Each subsequent advanced degree course will be reimbursed 50% if funds are available. TAB participants will be reimbursed upon successful completion of the course.

Will there be a minimum or maximum number of courses that may be reimbursed per year?

There will be no minimum, but the TAB participant must remain in good standing with the college or university and complete the program for the Master's degree within four years.

Who is eligible for this program?

Will newly hired personnel be eligible for this program?

Participants in the TAB Program must be on continuing contract.

Will teachers who are on probationary contract be allowed to participate in the TAB Program?

Teachers must be on continuing contract with the Richmond County Public Schools.

May an individual who already holds an advanced degree access this program to earn additional endorsements and/or professional licenses/certifications?

No, the purpose of the TAB Program is to help employees earn Master's degrees. As such, it is not open to those pursuing additional endorsements, licenses, or certifications.

Will this program be limited to those who have not begun their advanced degree program already?

No, employees who meet the eligibility requirements for the TAB Program and have already begun their university programs for their advanced degrees are eligible to participate in this program. Courses that have been completed or are already in progress are not reimburseable through this program.

Will there be a minimum grade requirement for TAB Program participants?

Yes, TAB participants must earn a grade of C or better and meet the college/university standards for their course work to remain in the TAB Program.

Will there be a limitation on the number of participants per family or household?

No, there is no limit on the number of TAB participants from the same family or household.

Which college or university programs are acceptable?

Will participants be limited to specific, pre-approved colleges/universities and programs?

TAB participants must enroll in a regionally accredited college/university. Any such advanced degree program that furthers the mission of the school division will be accepted.

What will be the policy if a participant wants to change colleges/universities or programs before completing his or her degree requirements?

The TAB participant must adhere to the original completion date established in the program agreement, and the college/university must be willing to accept transfer hours for the courses that have been reimbursed by the school division. In addition, the new program must relate to the employee's job or reasonable promotion objective. If these criteria cannot be met, the TAB participant may be responsible for reimbursing the school division for the amount of tuition reimbursement that has been paid to the participant to date.

Will participants be allowed to choose on-line programs?

TAB participants may choose an on-line program if it is offered through a regionally accredited college/university.

How will participants be selected for this program?

Will there be an application process?

Yes. Applicants will be expected to complete an application, which will be included in the information packet sent upon request. Applications will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis once all criteria have been met. Acceptance criteria include submitting all required documentation, meeting eligibility requirements as described in the section titled, "Who is Eligible for this Program?", and having satisfactory job performance evaluations.

Will there be priority given to candidates enrolling in certain programs as needs are identified?

At this time there are not priorities being established.

Will a record of poor job performance, unsatisfactory performance evaluations, or a Plan of Action be factors for access to this program?

Yes, applicants with any of these employment issues will not be eligible for this program until they have received three satisfactory summative evaluations.

What will be the “reconsideration” policy for anyone who has been denied access to the program?

Any applicant who has been denied access to this program may appeal the denial in writing to the Assistant Superintendent.

How will the reimbursement requirement be fulfilled?

How long does a TAB participant have to complete the teaching requirements?

TAB participants are expected to remain employees of Richmond County Public Schools for two complete school years after earning their advanced degree.

What will the policy be for a participant who leaves the school division prior to fulfilling the teaching requirements?

If a TAB participant is unable or unwilling to remain for the entire two-year period, the school board may, at its discretion, require repayment of the tuition assistance costs.

In the event the superintendent or School Board discontinues the program, what will be the obligation of the participant to complete the program or reimbursement?

The TAB participant will not be responsible for completing the program or returning the school division’s investment under these circumstances.