



# Employee Advancement System

TUITION REIMBURSEMENT  
Board of Education Meeting  
December 10, 2013



Marietta  
city schools

A Georgia Charter System



# Overview of Program

- Purpose: Provide opportunities for teachers to earn advanced degrees
- Goal: Increase teacher effectiveness in a manner that is aligned with district goals and research; attract and retain highly effective teachers

## FY15 Anticipated Costs

| # of Participants* | 7-Year Max Cost Per Employee | Average Yearly Cost of Program |
|--------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 20                 | \$32,000                     | \$91,428.57                    |

\*Total number of participants for FY15 was determined using the average number of advanced degree program "starts" in each of the last three years.





# Section 1: Transition Stipulations

- Individuals continue to be eligible for advanced degree education pay under 2013-2014 salary schedule IF
  - Began coursework on or before January 1, 2014 AND
  - Masters/Specialist completed on or before December 31, 2015; or
  - Doctorate is completed on or before December 31, 2017.





## Section 2: Timeline Requirements

- Program application and approval required PRIOR TO commencement of coursework
- Masters or Specialist Degree coursework must be completed within 3 years of program initiation in order to be eligible for tuition reimbursement.
- Doctorate degree coursework must be completed within 5 years of program initiation in order to be eligible for tuition reimbursement.
- Subsequent next level degree pursuit application option 1 year from date of fourth and final retention incentive payment.





## Section 3: Eligibility

- Program
  - Results in advanced degree from an accredited college or university, and results in a PSC certificate level upgrade.
  - One of a particular level of degree per employee – i.e., one Master's, one doctorate.
- Participant
  - Must be actively employed in a full-time, certified position.
  - Tenured with MCS.
  - Must have completed 2 consecutive years of MCS service, with minimum annual evaluation rating of proficient/satisfactory.
  - Must submit application for consideration during established window.\*

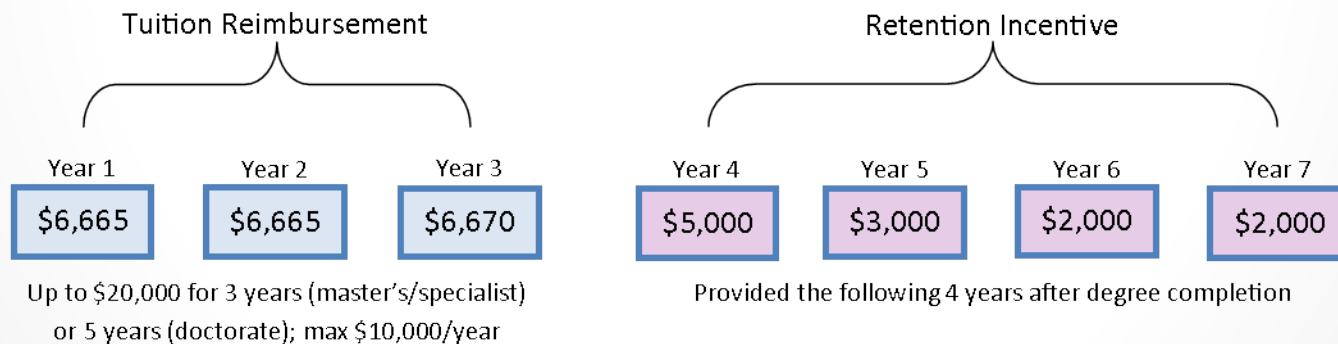
\*Applications will be prioritized across instructional areas and approved until school district funds budgeted annually for this program have been depleted.





## Section 4: Retention Incentive

- Payment #1 occurs following notification of certificate level change issued by the PSC (lump sum).
- Payment #2, #3 and #4 issued with the first pay period of each of the next three consecutive contract periods (lump sum).





## Section 5: Forgiveness Programs

- Teachers who may qualify for the Federal Teacher Loan Forgiveness program will be eligible for limited tuition reimbursement – i.e., the difference between \$20,000 and the amount of Teacher Loan Forgiveness they may qualify for.
- MCS will increase the retention incentive amount by 50% of the eligible tuition reimbursement amount (i.e., maximum \$20,000) which is unused due to loan forgiveness.

**Example:** If \$2,500 is used for tuition reimbursement and \$17,500 is forgiven, \$8,750 (50% of \$17,500, the unused tuition reimbursement amount) would be added to the standard retention incentive of \$12,000 increasing the retention incentive to \$20,750. The new total is paid to the employee as retention incentive per the scheduled outlined.





## Section 6: Procedures and Timing

- *PRIOR* approval for Tuition Reimbursement program participation on file with HR
- “Satisfactory” course completion required (i.e., “pass” or a “B” or better)
- Official transcript and tuition bill submitted to HR.







## Section 7: Timeline

- January 2014 – February 2014 – Tuition Reimbursement program application window for program start dates June 1, 2014 – July 31, 2015.
- March 2014 - Approved Tuition Reimbursement applicants notified.
- March 2014 – May 2014 – HR receives/reviews documentation confirming university/program acceptance and enrollment.





## Section 8: Program Amendment

- Superintendent and BOE will continuously seek and apply stakeholder feedback following implementation.
- Subsequent changes in state funding model or other economic factors could lead to recommendation of Tuition Reimbursement program changes.
- If Tuition Reimbursement program changes occur, transition stipulations will apply – honoring program parameters in place as of an individual's program acceptance date.



# Attract and Retain:

## Maintaining Market Competitiveness

- Competitive compensation placement; Accelerated compensation growth and alternative career pathways.
- As retention incentive ↓ opportunities and eligibility for Roles and Responsibilities ↑ and effectiveness pay ↑
- MCS continues to be favorable in terms of furlough days and class size comparisons.
- Interest expressed by state and other districts, changes anticipated.

# Initiating Tuition Reimbursement is the “Go” step.....

- Transition from Education Pay to Tuition Reimbursement will generate funds which may be reallocated in support of Roles and Responsibilities.
- Early transition will allow MCS to capture and reallocate state funding for education pay longer, providing some offset for additional Roles and Responsibilities.

