

CERTIFIED TEACHING STAFF VOLUNTARY EARLY RETIREMENT

1. DURATION OF PLAN

This plan of early retirement benefits will be in effect for the 2018-2019 contract year and the 2019-2020 contract year. It is the intention of the Board that the plan will not be offered for the 2020-2021 contract year.

2. STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

The School District will not discriminate against any employee on the basis of age, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, color, creed, religion, national origin, or disability through the application or administration of this plan.

3. ELIGIBILITY

A regular full-time or part-time certified employee may be eligible for early retirement once the employee meets the following qualifications:

- a. The employee has reached at least the age of 55 by June 30, 2019, if the employee is applying for early retirement benefits during the 2018-2019 contract year, or the employee has reached at least the age of 55 by June 30, 2020, if the employee is applying for early retirement benefits during the 2019-2020 contract year,
- b. The employee has continuously worked a minimum of the most previous fifteen years of service at the School District and is actively employed on a full-time or part-time basis as a certified teacher during the last school year prior to early retirement,
- c. The employee notifies the Board of his/her intention to seek early retirement benefits by submitting to the Board Secretary a Resignation and Request for Early Retirement not later than 4:00 P.M. on January 31 of the contract year during which retirement is to take effect,

Employees who intend to seek early retirement benefits during the 2019-2020 school year must first notify the Board Secretary in writing of their intention to do so not later than 4:00 P.M. on **January 31, 2019**. Employees who intend to seek early retirement benefits during the 2019-2020 school year must then submit to the Board Secretary a Resignation and Request for Early Retirement not later than 4:00 P.M. on January 31, 2020.

- d. The employee retires effective not later than the end of the contract year during which the employee has applied to early retirement benefits.
- e. The employee is not eligible for, applying for, or receiving benefits under a leave of absence or other District plan,
- f. The employee has not received a notice as of January 31 concerning termination of the employee's contract, unless the notice is based upon reasons which are related to staff reduction, and
- g. The employee has not previously received early retirement benefits from the School District.

4. DEFINITION OF TERMS

- a. Years of service – Years of service must be consecutive and most recent and will accrue on a pro-rata basis (full-time equivalency) for all part-time employees.
- b. “Continuously Worked” – Continuous employment must be without any voluntary interruption of service. Interruptions due to reductions in force or due to approved leaves of absence will not constitute a voluntary interruption in service, unless the interruption or leave exceeds twenty-four (24) consecutive months in length. However, the period of time during which an employee is absent due to a reduction in force or due to an approved leave will not be counted for purposes of determining the minimum years of service required to establish eligibility.
- c. Regular certified employee – A regular full-time or part-time certified employee is an employee who works as a teacher or other member of the teachers’ bargaining unit a minimum of four hours per work day for 180 work days or more each school year.
- d. “Actively employed” – means the employee has been at work and performing assigned duties for at least 80 percent of the work days over the previous 12 months.

5. APPLICATION

- a. Under ordinary circumstances, applications must be received by the Superintendent not later than January 31 of the year in which retirement is to take effect. However, the advance notice requirement may be waived at the discretion of the Board. Any decision by the Board to waive the advance notice requirement shall not establish any precedent with regard to future applications which fail to meet the advance notice requirement.
- b. The date of retirement for eligible employees will ordinarily be the end of the individual’s contract year. However, another date may be requested and approved by the Board.
- c. Application materials must include the following forms:
 1. Request for Retirement and Resignation
 2. Release of Claims Form
 3. Agreement Not to Reapply for Employment. (However, this agreement does not prohibit the School District from offering employment to the employee in the future.)
- d. An employee’s application for early retirement benefits is not, in itself, a resignation nor does it require the Board to accept the application. However, acceptance by the Board of an employee’s application for early retirement will be considered a voluntary resignation and termination of the employee’s contract of employment. If the Board does not accept the employee’s application, the employee’s contract will continue in effect.

6. BOARD’S RIGHT TO LIMIT OR DENY BENEFITS AND GRANT WAIVERS

- a. The Board reserves the right to determine whether any early retirement benefits will be paid in a given year, and, if so, to determine how many employees will be granted benefits. The Board expressly reserves the right to reject any application for early retirement.
- b. If the Board decides that only a limited number of employees will be granted early retirement benefits in a given year, the Board will then determine the maximum number of employees who may receive benefit. Recipients will be selected on a seniority basis. If there is a tie between or among employees using the seniority rule, the tie will be broken by a random process.
- c. The Board reserves the right to waive any requirement or condition of this policy at its discretion and at any time. Any decision by the Board to waive a requirement or condition which is a part of this policy shall not establish any precedent with regard to any other request for a waiver.

7. EARLY RETIREMENT BENEFIT STIPEND

- a. Early retirement benefits are offered as an inducement to, and consequence of retirement and are not to be construed as a continuation of salary.
- b. For employees who apply for and are granted early retirement benefits during the first contract year when they are at least the age of 55 by June 30 of that year, the value of the early retirement benefits shall be based on two percent (2.00%) of the employee's annual salary (not to include extended days or supplemental pay) in effect at the date of the request for early retirement. The number of monthly payments will be based on years of service as follow:
 1. 36 monthly payments with 10-19 years of service
 2. 48 monthly payments with 20-24 years of service
 3. 60 monthly payments with 25+ years of service
- c. For employees who apply for and are granted early retirement benefits during the second contract year when they are at least the age of 55 by June 30 of that year, the value of the early retirement benefits shall be based on one percent (1.00%) of the employee's annual salary (not to include extended days or supplemental pay) in effect at the date of the request for early retirement. The number of monthly payments will be based on years of service as follow:
 1. 36 monthly payments with 10-19 years of service
 2. 48 monthly payments with 20-24 years of service
 3. 60 monthly payments with 25+ years of service
- d. Examples for (b) and (c):

Employee is 55 years of age or older by June 30, 2019 and applies for early retirement benefits during the 2018-2019 contract year – employee receives benefits under subsection (b). This is the first year of eligibility for these employees under this plan.

Employee is 55 years of age or older by June 30, 2019 and applies for early retirement benefits during the 2019-2020 contract year – employee receives benefits under subsection (c). This is the second year of eligibility for these employees under this plan.

Employee is 55 years of age by June 30, 2020 but is not older than 55 as of June 30, 2020 and applies for early retirement benefits during the 2019-2020 contract year – employee receives benefits under subsection (b). This is the first year of eligibility for these employees under this plan.

- e. Payments are subject to applicable taxes such as withholding for federal and state income taxes, social security, etc. Employees will not be paid interest on any funds held by the School District.
- f. Employees are advised to seek independent advice with regard to tax of financial consequences associated with any action taken by them under this Early Retirement package.

8. INSURANCE BENEFIT AND CONTINUATION OF INSURANCE

Employees retiring under the early retirement program are eligible to continue participation in the school district's group insurance plan until the employee is eligible for Medicare. The District will contribute up to \$650 per month towards group insurance premium for single coverage and any remaining balance must be paid by the employee. Employees must meet the requirements of the insurer and must pay the monthly premium amount in full to the board secretary prior to the due date for the school district's premium payment to the insurer.

Early retirement benefits under this section will cease the calendar month after the employee's death.

If an employee elects to continue to participate in the school district's group insurance plan and if the cost of such participation is less than the \$650 monthly stipend provided by the Board, the Board has approved the use of the balance of the stipend: (a) for dependent health insurance in the group health insurance plan, (b) for dental insurance in the school district's group dental insurance plan, or (c) for vision insurance in the school district's group vision insurance plan.