

Human Resources Department



TO: All DFT Members Pursuing an ASD Endorsement
CC: Executive Cabinet

FROM: Nada Alamaddine, Human Resources Director
Courtney Pletzke, Human Resources Director

SUBJECT: Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) ENDORSEMENT / PARTIAL TUITION REIMBURSEMENT

This tuition reimbursement program will provide an incentive for teachers seeking further graduate level course credits that will allow them to teach in ASD Center Programs while working towards the completion of their ASD endorsement. The tuition reimbursement program will reimburse a portion of educational costs incurred for obtaining their ASD endorsement. An effort to award money to eight teachers across the district will be a priority. Funds will be distributed among those who apply and are accepted by the deadlines listed below. When ASD positions are determined, any remaining tuition budget may be applied to POHI endorsements for Center-Programs

Required Documentation:

In order to receive reimbursement for a portion of tuition paid for the Fall 2026 through Winter 2027 academic period, you must complete the **Tuition Reimbursement Form** (attached) and submit the following required documentation to Mrs. Sarah Cornett, Human Resources Office Manager, at the Administrative Service Center.

1. A statement from your accredited university indicating you have a current **plan of work** leading to an ASD endorsement upon completion of the program.
2. An **official statement** from your accredited university indicating the amount paid for tuition per credit hour per semester (registration costs and any additional fees will not be factored in when determining reimbursement amount).
3. Your **official transcript** that lists the required ASD credit hours for which you wish to be reimbursed with a minimum final course grade of B minus or S for satisfactory. Your official transcripts must reflect final grades for related classes completed Fall semester 2026 through Winter semester 2027.

In order to be eligible for reimbursement consideration, all required documents must be received in the Human Resources office by 4:00 PM on January 15, 2027.

TUITION REIMBURSEMENT SPECIAL EDUCATION ASD ENDORSEMENT

Applications are due by **December 22, 2026** for fall classes (September - December), **January 15, 2027** for winter classes (January - April) and **May 31, 2027** for spring/summer classes.

Eligibility and Requirements

1. Participants must be a current part-time or full-time employee as a Dearborn Public Schools Teacher.
2. Participants must have no less than “effective” evaluations over a two year period and a recommendation from their current principal/supervisor.
3. Participants must submit a Graduate Level Special Education Endorsement Course Work Plan indicating the necessary courses and supervision requirements to complete the endorsement, including estimated dates and completion costs.
4. Participants must agree to continue employment with Dearborn Public Schools in an ASD center-program while completing the requirements and for **three consecutive school years in an ASD position** following completion of the endorsement. Tuition reimbursement recipients who fail to teach in an ASD position with Dearborn Schools for **five consecutive years** are required to reimburse the District immediately. Employee agrees that if reimbursement is required, the District may at its discretion make payroll deductions in accordance with Michigan law, If District demand for ASD positions decreases, and as a result the Participant cannot meet this three year requirement, an Executive Director will override the required reimbursement to the District by the unit member.
5. Participants must make continuous progress, which means earning a minimum of six credit hours between August 31st of the current year and September 1st of the following year, on the required coursework toward their ASD Special Education endorsement. The endorsement must be completed within three years. These requirements are established by the Michigan Department of Education - “Policy, Criteria, and Procedures for Special Education Teacher Approval Temporary and Continuing.” Failure to make continuous progress or obtain the endorsement within the expected timeframes may result in the reimbursement requirement applicable to a failure to continue employment for three consecutive years in an ASD position following completion of an endorsement, as described above.

Program Guidelines

1. A maximum of eight teachers within the Dearborn Federation of Teachers bargaining unit will be approved each year for the ASD Tuition Reimbursement Program on a first come, first serve basis for eligible employees; serving first those in a program and enrolled from the previous year. Fully-completed and accurate applications must be submitted to Sarah Cornett in the Human Resources office at ASC. The date and time of the email will be used to identify the first eight participants. If eight DFT unit members do not apply for the program, the District may offer this tuition reimbursement program to new teaching applicants who agree to pursue an ASD endorsement.
2. Reimbursement will be for tuition for graduate level courses necessary for completion of the ASD teaching endorsement. Courses must begin in the upcoming semester of the application year. Books, materials, and exam fees are not covered by the tuition reimbursement program.
3. Employees who are accepted into the program will be eligible for reimbursement for up to three years from the start of courses. Any participant who does not complete the requirements of the endorsement program in three years must reapply and will be considered only if no other eligible employees apply and are accepted into a similar reimbursement program.
4. Employees may request reimbursement of up to \$700 per credit hour for up to nine credit hours per year (start of course signifies the start of “year”) for up to three years. Funds do not carry over from one year to the next.
5. Participants will be reimbursed for classes passed with a grade of B minus, S for satisfactory or higher. A copy of the tuition bill and an official grade report or transcript indicating successful completion of coursework or exam must be received within 30 days of completion of course or exam.
6. Reimbursement cannot exceed the amount actually paid by the employee. Reimbursement will be paid one time annually in June. Participants are required to submit required documentation by May 31st.
7. If you do not meet the eligibility requirements for ASD tuition reimbursement, you will not receive tuition reimbursement.

Example A:

Teacher A was hired and/or was a current DFT member that moved from a general classroom to an ASD classroom as an ASD teacher and paid \$6,300 in tuition reimbursement during the 2026-27 school year:

Teacher A was paid \$3,600 for tuition reimbursement during the 2027-28 school year.

Teacher A resigned at the end of the 2027-28 school year.

Teacher A was required to repay the District \$9,900 because he/she did not teach in an ASD classroom for five consecutive years as required by this agreement.

Year 1:	2026-27
Year 2:	2027-28
Year 3:	2028-29
Year 4:	2029-30
Year 5:	2030-31

TUITION REIMBURSEMENT FORM

All DFT Unit Members Pursuing an ASD Endorsement

Teacher's Name: _____ Today's Date: _____
School _____ Hire Date: _____
Employee Number: _____ Home Phone: _____

Course(s) completed:

An official statement from an accredited university indicating the amount paid per credit hour must accompany this form.

Semester	Course Number	Course Name	# of Credits	Name of University

Total number of credits successfully completed: _____ Total Cost of Credits: _____

Number of credits required in plan of work for endorsement: _____

Number of credits completed toward endorsement: _____

Employee Signature: _____

**All required paperwork must be attached to this form in order to be eligible for reimbursement.*

I _____ have read and understand the program guidelines and commitment I am making by accepting the partial tuition reimbursement.

Employee Signature: _____ Date: _____

TO BE COMPLETED BY HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE

_____ has been approved for _____.

(Teacher Name)

(Reimbursement Amount)

SE Director Signature: _____ Approval Date: _____

Executive Director of Staff & Student Services Signature: _____ Date: _____