

**Needham Public Schools**  
**Fiscal Year 2022 Unit A Tuition Reimbursement Pre-Approval and Application**

**Directions:**

Under the auspices of Article 31, Section 9 of the Unit A contract, Unit A members qualify for tuition reimbursement. Use this form for reimbursement of both graduate tuition and workshops/conferences. Unit A members have two options for reimbursement:

- With pre-approval (**Option I**), you can be reimbursed at a higher rate; or,
- Without pre-approval, you will be reimbursed at a lower rate (**Option II**).

The 2019 - 2022 Unit A contract identifies a pool of **\$100,000** for total reimbursement per fiscal year, with one reimbursement in the summer. You can be reimbursed for up to a total of three courses per fiscal year unless a balance remains in the tuition reimbursement account. You must work within the fiscal year (July 1 - June 30) in order to qualify for reimbursement. Incomplete applications will not be processed after the fiscal year closes. **Fill out the application completely; incomplete and illegible applications will be returned.** Any screenshot attachments must be a clear image and all documents must include your name. If the number of reimbursement requests exceeds the pool of money available, an equitable percentage reimbursement will be provided.

For the pre-approval option, you will receive the signed/approved application back from HR. You will re-submit the **entire** application with appropriate documentation when the course/workshop is complete.

It is critically important for the employee to ensure that the proposed graduate courses are completed at accredited institutions and **graduate credit** is being earned. It is strongly recommended the employee investigate and confirm the institution is accredited by one of the nationally recognized accrediting agencies listed on the [U.S. Department of Education's website](#). Furthermore, the employee must contact the institution awarding the graduate credit to ensure that **graduate credit** is offered and not professional development units.

Employees must also recognize the approval of the Principal and Director of Human Resources is not an endorsement for a salary lane change but merely an approval for tuition reimbursement. All employees must meet the requirements set forth by the Professional Growth Committee as published in the [Professional Growth Handbook](#) for salary lane changes.

**Online Graduate Courses** will only be reimbursed when they meet the following criteria:

1. The online course has a specific start and end date with a minimum of 15-hours of work for 1 graduate credit
2. The online course is not designed as a self-paced "module" course with no specified beginning and ending date
3. The online course requires regular weekly interaction with the professor i.e., discussion boards that require the class members to log in and participate in discussions
4. The online course has regular weekly interactions with other students i.e., discussion boards that require the class members to log in and participate in discussions
5. The online assignments are regular, posted, and graded by the professor
6. The online course has graded mid-term and/or final examination or project
7. The online credit is offered through a regionally-accredited colleges and universities
8. The online course offers graduate credit. Quarters and points are examples of measurements that are not acceptable as graduate credit
9. Online courses that are offered to teachers via the District's management system will be labeled such that it states if the credit will be applicable for lane change. Courses that do not meet the above-required course criteria may still qualify for workshop, audit and/or conference reimbursement.

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

If you have any questions or unsure about any aspect of this process, please call Mary Santiago, Administrative Assistant, in Human Resources (781-455-0400 ext. 11230 or [mary\\_santiago@needham.k12.ma.us](mailto:mary_santiago@needham.k12.ma.us))

**YOU MUST SELECT ONE OF THE TWO OPTIONS PROVIDED BELOW:**

**Option I - Pre-Approval:**

As stated in Article 31, Section 9, Salaries and Professional Development of the Unit A contract:

“Upon the presentation of evidence of payment and the successful completion of approved courses, the first reimbursement of each teacher’s first approved graduate level course shall be fulfilled. Teachers shall be reimbursed up to **\$900** of the tuition and fees for the first approved audit course and professional workshop or conference.

No teacher shall be reimbursed for more than three (3) approved and/or non-approved graduate-level courses in any one fiscal year unless a balance remains in the tuition reimbursement account as articulated in section 9.

After members’ first courses are reimbursed, any money that remains in the funds shall be applied for anyone seeking a second approved course in subsequent rounds of **\$500** until funds are exhausted.”

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

Maiden or Former Name (if different from above): \_\_\_\_\_

Course Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please attach a description from the university graduate catalog)

Institution: \_\_\_\_\_ Cost of activity: \_\_\_\_\_

Course start date: \_\_\_\_\_ Course completion date: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of graduate credits: \_\_\_\_\_

Is this an online course? **YES/NO** Does it meet the online guidelines listed on page 1? **YES/NO**

**Select one:**

This course aligns with the following goal in the school improvement plan:

This course aligns with the following district goal:

This course is part of my approved Individual Professional Development Plan (please attach)

This course is part of a degree program (please attach the university course of study for program)

This course is part of a licensure program that awards graduate credits (please attach the course of study and name of the credit-granting university)

Approval of Principal: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Approval of the Assistant Director for Human Resources: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**This pre-approved form shall remain on file in Human Resources.**

**The employee should submit a copy of this signed form by the deadlines indicated with Part III completed.**

**Option II – Non Pre-Approval:**

Article 31, Section 9, Salaries and Professional Development

“For non-approved courses, teachers shall be reimbursed \$200 of the tuition for the first graduate-level course successfully completed during the fiscal year. First audited courses are reimbursed \$100 per person and professional workshops up to a maximum of \$100 per person; all work must be completed during the fiscal year. Content of all coursework shall be within the parameters of the requirements for state certification. Each teacher’s request shall be fulfilled on an equal dollar basis subject to exhaustion of the fund.”

**ALL EMPLOYEES WILL COMPLETE THE SECTION BELOW**

**AT THE COMPLETION OF YOUR ACTIVITY:**

**III. Reimbursement Request:**

Graduate Course       Audit Course       Professional Workshop       Conference

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Course Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Course Completion Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Graduate Credits: \_\_\_\_\_ Full Cost: \_\_\_\_\_

Application due dates for reimbursements is **June 25, 2022** for graduate courses, audit courses and workshops

**IV. Documents required to accompany this reimbursement form:**

Documentation of course completion (check one):

- Unofficial transcript for graduate courses (you must then submit an official transcript when available); or,
- Certificate for audit, workshops or conferences.

Course description indicating start and end dates of course

Proof of payment

This Tuition Reimbursement Application form

**Note:** The reimbursement process for tuition/workshop is considerably longer than other types of reimbursement. Whereas reimbursements cannot exceed a certain amount of dollars in the pool, the Human Resources Office must wait until all requests are submitted and cataloged. As a batch, the requests are then sent to Town Hall for processing the reimbursement.

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Employee: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Assistant Director for Human Resources: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**For Human Resources use only:**

Pre-Approved:

Not Pre-Approved

Tuition reimbursement rate of up to \$900

Tuition reimbursement rate of up to \$200

Workshop rate of up to \$900

Workshop rate of up to \$100 per person

**Packet Checklist**

Ensure that your packet has all of the following items before sending it to Human Resources. Packets missing any of these items will be returned to you:

Pre-Approval:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Application form for current School Year (one form per course/workshop request).
- \_\_\_\_\_ Principal signature for pre-approval.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Attach course description (if this is an online course, the description should demonstrate that it satisfies all 9 criterion listed on page 1 of this form under “Online Graduate Courses.”)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Price of course, clearly documented by the institution (or number of credit and cost per credit).
- \_\_\_\_\_ All sections of the Pre-Approval page are complete.

Once Pre-Approved, the entire original packet will be returned to you. Once your course or workshop is completed, return the entire packet with the following to verify completion of the course:

Reimbursement

- \_\_\_\_\_ Attach proof of grades (unofficial or official transcript).
- \_\_\_\_\_ Attach proof of payment specific to the course (i.e. receipt, credit/debit card statement, canceled check, etc.).
- \_\_\_\_\_ All sections of the Reimbursement Request page are complete.