

## **KANAWHA COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY**

### **Series G64: Critical Need Signing Bonus Policy**

**Policy Purpose:** The Kanawha County Board of Education (“The Board”) recognizes that there is a critical need for certified teachers in nearly every subject area. However, the Board also recognizes that in order to comply with both state and federal law pertaining to students with special needs, finding certified special education teachers is most critical for the 2023-24 school year.

This policy’s goal is to recruit and attract teachers in this critical need area, in accordance with West Virginia Code §18A-2-2b, through a one-time signing bonus to prospective special education teachers who will graduate or have graduated from a college or university during the current school year and will begin employment in the next ensuing school year, subject to the terms and conditions of this policy.

This signing bonus is restricted to certain requirements under West Virginia Code §18A-2-2b that are outlined in this policy. Nothing in this policy is intended to authorize signing bonuses for teachers and prospective teachers of special education who do not meet the terms and conditions herein or for teachers and prospective teachers in any other subject areas. While it is understood that recruitment is difficult in all areas of professional and service personnel, the statute only allows for the payment of bonuses to “prospective teachers” to the county “who will or have graduated during the current school year and will begin employment in the next ensuing school year.” The county’s highest current critical need, as determined based on vacancies and classroom ratio mandates, is in the area of special education. Additionally, the following policy must be followed in order to qualify for this bonus.

#### **A. Policy.**

The Kanawha County Board of Education (“KCBOE”) will pay perspective special education teachers (“PSET”) certified in special education a \$2,000.00 bonus for the 2023-24 school year under the following conditions and pursuant to West Virginia Code §18A-2-2b.

1. The one-time signing bonus authorized under this policy will be paid from local funds after the contract is signed by a certified PSET. If necessary to facilitate employment of a PSET who has not yet obtained certification, a PSET may sign a contract under the conditions that certification will be obtained prior to the beginning of the employment term. For PSET applicants with certification at time of signing, the one-time signing bonus will be provided at the time the contract is signed. If certification has not been obtained at the time of signing the contract, the bonus will be provided in the first paycheck of the employment term if certification has been achieved. The bonus will not be available to a PSET who is not certified at the beginning of the employment term.

2. The signing bonus requires the PSET to work three consecutive school years in the position taken or in another fulltime special education teacher position unless the board votes to transfer the PSET to a different position or votes to non-renew or terminate the PSET’s

employment for lack of need. If the PSET does not say for the full three years, the bonus will be required to be paid back in full.

3. At the time of signing, the PSET will be placed on a reserve list and placed, once vacancies with no internal certified and otherwise qualified applicant has applied. The PSET shall be made aware at the time of signing that they can be placed at any location where a need exists, which may not at the time of signing be known.

4. The Kanawha County Board of Education ("KCBOE") must post a notice of the Special Education positions that are vacant or do not have a certified teacher in the position. The notice must be posted on the KCBOE website for at least ten (10) days. If there is a qualified applicant currently employed by the county and who is a certified special education teacher, for any special education position posted pursuant to this policy, that person shall be selected for the position. If the position has been posted at least once and the position has no qualified teacher certified in special education apply, a PSET on the reserve list may be offered the position.

5. The position that the PSETs qualifies for, in accordance with this policy, may be obtained only upon recommendation by the Superintendent and approval by the county board following consideration of the qualifications of the PSET by evaluating the applicable provisions of WV code §18A-4-7a. This evaluation will determine that the PSET is the most qualified person for the job that they applied for. If not selected for a particular job, the PSET will remain in the pool until selected. Because the amount of PSETs allowed in the pool is based on established need, every PSET will eventually be selected for a position.

**B. Effective Date and Discontinuation of Bonus.** The Board authorizes this policy, effective upon passage and only for the 2022-2023 personnel determinations for the 2023-24 school year. This policy will be reviewed before December of every school year concerning approval for the next school year. Further this policy shall be immediately repealed if by some other decision, enforceable grievance, court decision, or other administrative decision, requires this bonus to apply to anyone else than prospective special education teachers, as outlined in this policy.

Reference: W. Va. Code §18A-2-2b

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