

# SUWANNEE RIVER WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

## GOVERNING BOARD DIRECTIVE

Directive Number: GBD23-0001  
Date Approved: February 14, 2023  
Directive Title: Education Reimbursement Program  
Approvals:



  
Virginia Johns, Governing Board Chair

  
Charles Keith, Secretary/Treasurer

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### 1.0 Reference to Prior Policy

This directive supersedes GBD12-0001.

### 2.0 Purpose and Intent

The purpose of this Directive is to update guidelines and procedures for the postsecondary education and professional certification reimbursement program for District employees.

### 3.0 Definitions

- a) Postsecondary education - education level following high school. Includes universities and colleges, as well as trade and vocational schools that culminates with a diploma, certification, or academic degree.
- b) Education reimbursement - payment in dollars and cents to an employee for expenses incurred for coursework.
- c) Expenses - tuition, fees, lab fees, and books.
- d) Graduate studies – line of study where a student has received a bachelor's degree and is seeking a master or doctorate degree.
- e) Procedures Manual - set of detailed instructions for staff to follow in performing their tasks, executing their responsibilities, and conducting business for the District.
- f) Undergraduate – line of study where a student has not received bachelor's degree.

### 4.0 Elements of Policy

This directive establishes a program encouraging employees in authorized positions to enhance their knowledge, skills, and abilities by participating in postsecondary level education and professional certification courses while continuing to support the work of the District. The education courses or the resulting degree must be linked to the mission of the District and the employee's current job or future career with the District.

- a) Participation in the Education Reimbursement program must be approved by the Executive Director prior to any reimbursement.

- b) The detailed processes, including proper documentation, for staff to follow for implementation and participation in this program will be included in the District's Procedures Manual.
- c) Education courses shall be taken at an institution that is accredited by a nationally recognized association.
- d) To be eligible, an employee must have successfully completed the six-month introductory period of employment and must be employed in a regular Board-authorized position at the time of the enrollment and employed continuously through the end of the course.
- e) All education reimbursement activities will occur on an employee's own time. They must not interfere with the employee's normal work.
- f) Calendar year education reimbursement may not exceed the exclusion from income level as defined in the current §127 of the Internal Revenue Code.
- g) An employee has a lifetime benefit of \$35,000 under this program.
- h) An employee may only request reimbursement for funds paid out of pocket and/or that will not be reimbursed through other contributors such as scholarship or grant programs.
- i) An employee must achieve a grade of "C" or above in undergraduate studies to be eligible for reimbursement.
- j) An employee must achieve a grade of "B" or above in graduate studies to be eligible for reimbursement.
- k) Reimbursement in full will be made to employee upon submission of proper documentation as detailed in the District's Procedures Manual and proper approval.
- l) This program is contingent on available funding. The Governing Board of the Suwannee River Water Management District may suspend this program at any time.