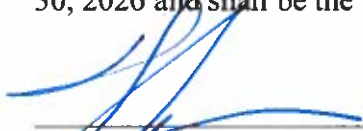


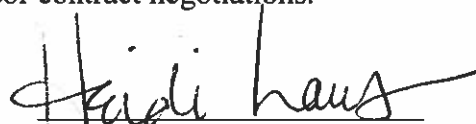
Memorandum of Agreement

The Thomaston Board of Education (hereinafter the “Board”) and the Thomaston Education Association (hereinafter the “Association”) agree to the following:

1. The Board and the Association are parties to a collective bargaining agreement dated July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2026.
2. The collective bargaining agreement between the Board and the Association does not address the issue of reimbursement to bargaining unit members for course work.
3. In order to assist bargaining unit members with advancement in their education for the benefit of the bargaining unit member and the Thomaston School District, effective during the 2023-2024 school year, upon approval of this Agreement by the Board and the Association, the following tuition reimbursement plan will be implemented.
4. The Board agrees to budget twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000.00) in each contract year to assist bargaining unit members with the cost of tuition for course work.
5. If the conditions set forth below are met, a bargaining unit member will be eligible for reimbursement in the amount of up to one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00) per course to a maximum of two thousand dollars (\$2,000.00) per contract year. However, if the aggregate number of requests for reimbursement exceed the annual budget of twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000.00), the amount distributed shall be divided equally among all eligible bargaining unit members who have requested reimbursement.
6. Reimbursement for courses taken in a specific contract year shall be paid to the bargaining unit member at the end of the contract year.
7. The following conditions shall apply:
 - a. The course must be a part of a course of study for a graduate degree submitted to and approved, in writing, by the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee prior to the bargaining unit member taking the course in order for credit(s) received for the course to be considered toward degree status. An 092 certificate that is not a part of a graduate degree program (a 6th year program) shall not be considered a “degree.”
 - b. The course must be taken at an accredited college or university. For purposes of degree status, accredited college or university shall be defined as a college or university that has been accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (“CAEP”).
 - c. The course must be for either: (i) a certification requirement, as determined by the Superintendent; or (ii) to enhance the skills of the bargaining unit member as a schoolteacher.

- d. The bargaining unit member must attain a grade of B or better or, if the course is pass/fail, a passing grade.
 - e. The anticipated completion date of the graduate degree must be within two (2) years of the taking of the course.
 - f. A request for reimbursement must be submitted within thirty (30) calendar days from the date the teacher receives his/her grade for the course. Proper paperwork from the college or university must be submitted within such time frame. A failure to timely submit a request for reimbursement within thirty (30) calendar days from the date the teacher receives his/her grade for the course shall be considered a waiver of the request for reimbursement unless extenuating circumstances precluded the bargaining unit member from submitting the request for reimbursement within the thirty (30) day timeframe set forth herein. In order for the extenuating circumstance exception to be considered by the Board, the bargaining unit member must advise the Superintendent, in writing, of the extenuating circumstances within the thirty (30) calendar day timeframe.
8. The Superintendent or his/her designee shall have sole discretion as to whether a course and/or credits may be used toward a change in degree status under Article 30 of the collective bargaining agreement.
 9. Additionally, as a condition of tuition reimbursement, the bargaining unit member must agree to remain employed by the Board for two (2) years or repay the Board the amount of reimbursement paid by the Board.
 10. In the event that the bargaining unit member leaves the Board's employment within two (2) years of receiving tuition reimbursement, the bargaining unit member shall reimburse the Board for the tuition paid by the Board. Accordingly, at the time the bargaining unit member is provided with the tuition reimbursement, he/she shall be required to execute a Tuition Reimbursement Form wherein he/she agrees to the terms set forth above. Repayment can be waived by the Board, in its discretion, under certain circumstances.
 11. The parties agree that this Memorandum of Agreement shall be affixed to and made a part of the collective bargaining agreement between the parties dated July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2026 and shall be the basis for successor contract negotiations.


 Francine Coss, Superintendent
 For the Board


 Heidi Laus, President
 For the Association

10/24/2023
 Date

10/24/23
 Date