

MASTER DEGREE INCENTIVE PROGRAM:**DMB-R2**

As an encouragement and incentive to teachers in Dumas ISD to continue their education and obtain advanced degrees, the Dumas ISD Board of Trustees established the Master's Degree Incentive Program on July 24, 2000. However, due to ongoing budgets constraints created by the cuts in State funding, this program is discontinued effective May 31, 2013. Employees who have applied for and been accepted into the program by May 31, 2013 will continue to receive the benefits herein described.

APPLICATION

Upon acceptance into an approved university's graduate program, a teacher may indicate their wish to participate in the DISD Master's Degree Incentive Program by submitting the following items to the superintendent's office in the year they wish to begin participation.

- ✓ Signed request for admission into Master's Degree Program
- ✓ Copy of degree plan from the university

PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

- ✓ Must be a current DISD teacher.
- ✓ Master's degree must be earned within 4 years of entering program, with a minimum of 9 hours earned each year. If extenuating circumstances beyond the teacher's control causes a delay in progress, they may request an extension in writing to the superintendent. If the teacher enters the program with less than 36 hours required for completion of their master's degree, the time of participation will be the number of hours left for completion divided by 9 hours per year.
- ✓ Degree must be applicable to school related employment.

PAYMENT INFORMATION

A lump sum payment, not included in the teacher's paycheck, will be made in September and is based upon the following requirements.

- ✓ The applicant must be a current DISD teacher for the upcoming school year. A teacher who leaves district employment for any reason after entering the program will not be eligible for payment.
- ✓ The teacher must have successfully completed a minimum of 9 semester hours from their degree plan during the previous period of September 1 through August 31. Completion of less than 9 hours during that period will result in no payment being made for that year. If 9 hours are successfully completed during the following school year, the hours that did not meet minimum requirements in the previous year will be included in the qualifying year's payment.
- ✓ A copy of the teacher's most recent transcript is due by September 1st in order to determine qualifying hours.

Payment amount will be based upon the following information.

- ✓ The number of hours successfully completed after acceptance into the program will be paid at \$55 each, as long as the minimum requirements are met.

- ✓ Each payment will be based upon the hours earned for the current year plus the number of qualifying hours accumulated from prior years, if any. Example is based on earning 9 hours per year.
 - Year #1 9 Hours @ \$55 = \$495.00
 - Year #2 18 Hours @ \$55 = \$990.00
 - Year #3 27 Hours @ \$55 = \$1485.00
 - Year #4 36 Hours @ \$55 = \$1980.00
- ✓ Hours earned prior to acceptance into the program will not be included in the lump sum payment.
- ✓ Classes not specified on the degree plan will be questioned and must be supported in writing from the university advisor in order to qualify for payment.

Upon completion of the master's degree,

- ✓ The teacher must continue to be a current employee for the upcoming school year in order to receive final lump sum payment or stipend.
- ✓ An official college transcript indicating receipt of the master's degree must be submitted to the superintendent's office prior to September 1.
- ✓ The teacher will be offered the option of a lump sum payment for total hours gained since acceptance into the program or may elect to receive a master's degree stipend as part of their annual salary, but they may not receive both options in the same year. Total payment will be capped at a maximum of 36 qualifying hours or \$4,950 in accumulated payments, whichever occurs first. If the lump sum payment is selected, a master's stipend will be added to the teacher's base salary the following school year. The annual stipend will be paid on a pro rata monthly basis as part of the regular payroll disbursement. A signed form indicating the teacher's choice must be filed in the Superintendent's office following their graduation and prior to September 1.