

BEMIDJI AREA SCHOOLS  
BEMIDJI, MINNESOTA

DATE : MAY 16, 2022

TO : BOARD OF EDUCATION

FROM : TIM LUTZ, SUPERINTENDENT  
JORDAN HICKMAN, DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES

SUBJECT : RESOLUTION RELATING TO COVID RETENTION & VACCINATION  
STIPENDS FOR BUS TECHNICIAN/DIESEL MECHANICS,  
CONFIDENTIAL ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT, ADMINISTRATORS,  
NONLICNESED/NONGROUP, SUPPORT SERVICES, AND CASUAL  
HOURLY EMPLOYEES

**COMMENTS:**

The COVID-19 pandemic has posed and continues to pose unique challenges for schools and school employees. District employees have, for the last two calendar years, worked under difficult conditions and continue to face challenges due to the ongoing pandemic. During the pandemic, all employees have been called upon to go above and beyond to ensure the success of District operations. Recognizing the courage and sacrifices made by employees during this global pandemic is important.

The COVID-19 pandemic has also had a major impact on workforce availability. Retaining employees and reducing turnover is imperative for the District's ability to continue offering an effective learning environment for students.

Funding provided through the American Recovery Plan (ARP) Elementary & Secondary School Emergency Relief fund (ESSER III) allows the use of this funding for several types of expenditures, including payments of stipends to retain current staff and mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The District's ARP steering committee has discussed the use of a portion of the ARP/ESSER III funding to pay retention and vaccination stipends to staff.

\_\_\_\_\_ introduced the following resolution and moved is adoption:

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING PAYMENT OF COVID RETENTION &  
VACCINATION STIPENDS**

WHEREAS, retaining employees, reducing turnover, and helping employees focus on work-related matters while at work is imperative; and,

WHEREAS, all District employees have gone above and beyond this school year and have contributed to the success of the District's operations and the delivery of instruction; and,

WHEREAS, promoting the safety of students and staff during the COVID-19 pandemic is critical; and,

WHEREAS, the District received revenue from the American Rescue Plan of which an allowable use of that revenue includes retention stipends; and,

WHEREAS, the District has approved Memorandums of Understanding with several bargaining groups authorizing the payment of equivalent stipends as outlined herein; and,

WHEREAS, the District intends to provide equitable implementation of the COVID retention and vaccination stipends for all employee;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that all eligible District employees designated as full time (employed for 7 hours or more per day or 35 hours or more per week) shall be entitled to a one-time retention stipend in the amount of eight hundred dollars (\$800.00) for work completed in the 2021-2022 school year.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all eligible District Employees designated as part-time (employed for less than 7 hours per day or 35 hours per week) shall be entitled to a one-time retention stipend in an amount equal to their pro-rated hours of work times eight hundred dollars (\$800.00) for work completed in the 2021-2022 school year. Pro-ration will be determined by total number of hours worked during the indicated time period divided by 1,211 hours for school term employees and total number of hours worked during the indicated time period divided by 2080 for twelve month employees.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that to promote the safety of students and staff during the COVID-19 pandemic, all eligible District employees designated as either full-time or part-time shall be entitled to an additional one-time retention stipend of four hundred dollars (\$400.00) upon submission of proof that they have been fully vaccinated (including booster) against COVID-19. Participation is voluntary and based upon the employees' personal preferences.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that eligible employees must have worked and been paid since May 1, 2021, and must be employed as of May 31, 2022.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that eligible employees must be currently employed by the District on May 31, 2022, to be eligible for the vaccination stipend.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that proof of vaccination status must be received in the Human Resources Office by June 3, 2022, in order to receive the additional four-hundred dollar (\$400.00) retention stipend payable in June 2022; OR by December 15, 2022, in order to receive the additional four-hundred dollar (\$400.00) retention stipend payable in January 2023. An employee is eligible to receive the vaccination stipend only once.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the retention stipend will be a one-time payment to be provided during the 2021-2022 school year payable in June 2022.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that retention stipends are paid to incentivize eligible employees to remain employed with the District through the 2021-2022 employment year given the challenges and impact of COVID-19 on personnel.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in exchange for the receipt of the stipend payment, an employee agrees to remain employed through the end of the 2021-2022 employment year.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, absent extenuating circumstances, as determined and approved by Human Resources, an employee who separates or leaves their employment with the District prior to the end of the 2021-2022 employment year may be required to reimburse the stipend to the District from any remaining pay owed to the employee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that exemptions for the vaccine portion of the stipend will not be accepted. The exception to this limitation would be for those individuals who had a severe

reaction to the first shot of a two shot series, which did not allow them to receive both shots and a booster or have been advised by a medical doctor that they should not have the COVID vaccine due to a diagnosed medical condition. Documentation will be required from a medical professional and must be provided to Human Resources.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that an “eligible District employee” as identified herein shall mean an employee covered under the Terms and Conditions of Employment for Bus Technicians/Diesel Mechanics, Confidential Administrative Support, Administrators, Nonlicensed/Nongroup, Support Services, and Casual/Hourly employees.**

The motion for the adoption of the foregoing resolution was duly seconded by \_\_\_\_\_  
and upon vote being taken, the following voted in favor: \_\_\_\_\_  
and the following voted against: \_\_\_\_\_.

**WHEREUPON**, said resolution was declared passed and adopted.