

## **Shortage of Professional Staff**

### **Hard to Fill Positions**

#### **Overview**

From time to time, NW BOCES and our member districts experience difficulty with filling some licensed special education and related service provider positions. This policy creates an opportunity for the Board to designate a special education or related service area as “Hard to Fill.” In keeping with the governance philosophy of the NW BOCES Board of Directors, the designation permissively empowers the executive director of the NW BOCES to apply various incentives to address the problem including: hiring bonus, assistance with moving expenses, paying for interviewees to travel to the area for an interview, service commitment stipend, and a program to help cover higher education costs associated with obtaining a new license. Because of the variability of individual school district compensation systems, this program will apply to positions only hired through NW BOCES.

An employee receiving any of the below mentioned incentives shall make a two year commitment to BOCES service. If the employee chooses to terminate employment after one year they will be required to reimburse the BOCES for 50% of the total incentives offered.

#### **Definition**

The designation of “Hard to Fill” requires Board Action and is reserved for only those fields where there is objective evidence of a lack of qualified professionals. Such evidence might include, national trend data identifying a shortage of personnel in a particular field or a long-standing vacancy in a highly specialized or low-incidence field (Vision, Hearing, Audiologist).

#### **Incentive Description**

All incentives will require a contractual agreement, approved by the Board, between the employee and NW BOCES.

#### **Travel Costs Associated with Interviews**

The designation of Hard to Fill in a field can result in the reimbursement for travel costs associated with bringing in candidates to interview as determined by the executive director with costs not to exceed \$1,000.

#### **Hiring Bonus**

The designation of Hard to Fill in a field can result in the allocation of a Hiring Bonus of an amount to be determined by the executive director and paid after two months of service with costs not to exceed \$3,000.

### **Assistance with Moving Expenses**

The designation of Hard to Fill in a field can result in the reimbursement from relocation expenses as determined by the executive director with costs not to exceed \$1,500.

### **Service Commitment Stipend**

The designation of Hard to Fill in a field can result in the application of a stipend to be paid out after an employee reaches a target level of service commitment. The amount and parameters are to be determined by the executive director.

### **Higher Education Expenses**

The designation of Hard to Fill in a field can result in financial assistance for an employee to obtain a new license required to serve in the identified fields. Part of this program would require a commitment of service after obtaining their license. The level of fiscal support and service commitment are to be determined by the executive director and will include the following parameters:

- Assistance with higher education expenses of up to 50% of the tuition and books, not to exceed \$20,000.
- The staff member will need to make a 5 year written commitment to the BOCES.

Adopted: November 2008

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May 12, 2016  
March 14, 2019