North Whidbey Fire and Rescue **Policy 403**

Effective Date January 1st, 2017

Title: Education Assistance Policy

ISSUED BY: Michael Brown, Fire Chief

RESCINDS: Original Policy

PREVIOUSLY KNOWN AS: 16-03

SCOPE: This program applies to all members and employees of North Whidbey Fire and Rescue who, on their own initiative, are seeking additional education or training outside the scope of North Whidbey Fire and Rescue sponsored education or training.

PURPOSE: This program is to financially assist members and employees in pursuit of professional deployment or training. This program strives to promote educational advancement for the success of each individual and as a benefit to the organization.

CONTENT

1. **Enrollment**
   - **1.1.** Prior to enrolling in a class or course of study under this program, the member/employee must submit a written request to the Fire Chief or Designee for authorization on the District's official class request form.
     - **1.1.1.** Coursework will be granted based on job relatedness or job relevance. It is up to the member/employee to provide a detailed description of how the course or course of study would improve the member/employee's knowledge or skills as it relates to their present position or to prepare him or her for a higher position or related field. If the member/employee is pursuing a degree, either undergraduate or graduate, the entire course of study should be submitted for reimbursement in advance. Courses within the degree program which are determined to be job related will be eligible for reimbursement.
   - **1.2.** Since educational development and training under this policy are voluntary, the member/employee, in accordance with attendance rules and policies, must initiate time away.
   - **1.3.** District Administration will maintain records of educational programs completed by each employee under this program.

2. Reimbursement

2.1. To qualify for reimbursement, the member or employee must have completed the specified course of study while continuing to be a member in good standing with the District, earning a grade of "C" or better or "pass" in a "pass/fail" class.

2.2. The district will reimburse the costs of tuition for course enrollment fees and books for members and employees registered at an accredited college/university or an IFSAC or other recognized course.

2.3. Effective January 1, 2017, the total maximum reimbursement amount may not exceed $600 per fiscal year, per employee. Commencing January 1, 2018, the tuition reimbursement amount will be increased at the same rate as the salary wage percentage for the upcoming year.

2.4. There is no provision for reimbursement for mileage, lodging, parking fees or compensation for time spent in class.

2.5. The member/employee must obtain and submit to District Administration all receipts for expenses being claimed, including a copy of the official grade report.

2.6. An official District "Request for Reimbursement" form must be used for reimbursement. The Fire Chief retains the ultimate discretion in approving requests for specific items sought as reimbursement.