18.0 **Philosophy on Classified Growth Incentive Program:**
The classified staff represents an integral part of the District’s ability to serve our community; hence, facilitating the commitment to continued growth, professionally and personally, of each individual unit member ultimately enhances the District’s institutional mission to effectively promote higher education.

Opportunities shall be any activity that partially or primarily prepares a unit member for improved performance in present or future roles in higher education constituting achievement of the institutional development mission.

The program applies to all permanent members of the bargaining unit. The central feature of this program will be to provide work related opportunities to upgrade individual unit member skills through a variety of credit and non-credit coursework, projects, workshops, or other related activities and/or complete college level certificates or degrees.

18.1 **Eligibility**
All permanent unit members who have served a minimum of one year with a satisfactory performance appraisal shall be eligible to participate in the Growth Incentive Program.

18.1.1 A unit member who has earned growth incentive points and transfers or promotes into a new position in the District, and remains within a unit that has a comparable growth incentive program, before completing the nine (9) points required for an increment shall be allowed to carry over all points earned into the new position.

18.1.2 Professional growth increments can be earned during each two (2) years of service. Nine (9) points are necessary for each award.

18.1.3 A maximum of five (5) growth increment steps may be earned.

18.2 **Points**

18.2.1 A professional growth increment will be awarded after a unit member has completed nine (9) points of approved study.

18.2.2 Two (2) years must elapse from the date an increment is granted before a unit member is eligible for the next increment, during which time the unit member must complete an additional nine (9) points.

18.2.3 If unit member acquires units in excess of the nine (9) points, two (2) may be carried over to the next two year award period.

18.2.4 Growth incentive points may be earned by completing any of the following:

18.2.4.1 Coursework at any Accredited Community College, College or University.

18.2.4.2 Coursework in Adult education/vocational training, or community development.

18.2.4.3 Professional workshops, conferences or classes.

18.2.4.4 Other courses approved by the Associate Vice Chancellor, or Staff Development Coordinator at each campus.

18.3 **Credit**
A three-unit semester college course = 3 growth incentive points
A two-unit semester college course = 2 growth incentive points
A one-unit semester college course = 1 growth incentive point
A three-unit quarter college course = 2 growth incentive points
A two-unit quarter college course = 1.33 growth incentive points
A one-unit quarter college course = .66 growth incentive points

18.3.1 Only those courses completed with a grade "C" or higher are eligible for growth incentive points.

18.3.2 Points shall be awarded for job-related non-credit college courses, adult educational/vocational training and professional workshops/seminars/classes as follows: each four (4) hours of in-class time will entitle unit members to one-quarter (.25) point. Hours from two (2) or more classes/seminars/workshops may be combined to accumulate points.

18.3.3 Only those classes taken in excess of the minimum required to maintain a unit member’s position may be credited toward growth incentive points.

18.4 Procedure

18.4.1 Unit members wishing to obtain Growth Incentive credit must comply with the following procedure:

18.4.1.1 Complete Growth Incentive application form at least ten (10) days prior to the beginning of the course. The form shall be completed and signed by the applicant and submitted to the Human Resources Department. Serious consideration will be given to each request and no request will be unreasonably denied. If the request is denied, the unit member may appeal by providing additional justification for consideration. The application will be approved/disapproved within fifteen (15) days or prior to the first day of class. The unit member will be informed in writing of the decision.

18.4.2 Requests received after the application deadline will be evaluated on the same criteria as in 18.4.1.1 and must include a written justification for late submittal.

18.4.3 Growth Incentive credit will not be granted until official course documents are received by Human Resources Department.

18.4.4 It is the unit member’s responsibility to see that transcripts are submitted within thirty (30) calendar days of receipt.

18.4.5 Credit will not be given for courses taken while the unit member is on release time, or for courses for which the District pays unit members expenses. This does not exclude 10/11 month unit members who take courses during the summer.

18.5 Awards

A professional growth increment award based on completion and approval of the above requirements will be $40 per month. Effective January 1, 2015, any future awards will be paid at the new rate of $40.00.

18.5.1 Awards will be included in the first January 31 or the first July 31 paycheck (whichever occurs first) following completion of the required course work and
submission of proof of completion to the Associate Vice Chancellor of Human Resources. The amount will be included in each subsequent paycheck of the unit member during employment with the District.

18.5.2 Educational Awards

Effective October 1, 2014, a permanent unit member, upon receipt of any of the following while employed by the District, shall receive the specified cash award:

A permanent unit member who completes a GED/High School diploma will receive a one-time cash award of $100.00.

A permanent unit member who completes an AA or AS degree will receive a one-time cash award of $250.00.

A permanent unit member who completes a Baccalaureate degree will receive a one-time cash award of $500.00.

A permanent unit member who completes a Master’s degree will receive a one-time cash award of $1,000.00.

A permanent unit member who completes a Doctoral degree will receive a one-time cash award of $1,500.00.