

BOARD CREDIT FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is Board Credit?

Board Credit is the system of professional development credit that the USD #116 Board of Education uses to recognize and encourage continual professional growth among certified teachers through advancement on the salary schedule. The policies and procedures for Board Credit are detailed in the Board of Education Policy 5:100 Staff Development Program (Revised June 17, 2014).

How do I earn Board Credit (BC)?

Basically, a teacher can earn Board Credit one of two ways. First, you can earn Board Credit for any staff development workshops that you attend that are offered through the district after school or weekends (not on contractual time). For any workshops that are offered by USD #116, you may automatically receive Board Credit by noting it on the sign-in sheets, unless you have asked for a stipend, and you do not have to apply. If you teach a district workshop, you can earn double Board Credit in lieu of a stipend, for planning and facilitating. Second, you can apply for Board Credit (in advance) for out-of-district workshops or conferences that you attend that are not on contractual time. To apply for Board Credit, you must submit a request for approval through Skyward before the conference or workshop. Either way, you must have proof of attendance or completion for the Board Credit to be conferred.

How is the amount of Board Credit determined for each workshop or event?

For every 8 approved clock hours of Board Credit (equal to professional development contact hours), you will earn 1 unit of Board Credit. Board Credit can only be earned in whole-hour increments. Partial hours will be rounded down to the nearest hour. While the Office of Staff Development keeps a database of Board Credit earnings, it is your responsibility to maintain documentation and records that verify contact time.

Is Board Credit Different from University Credit or PD Hours?

Yes. Board Credit ONLY applies to advancement on the salary schedule in Urbana School District. University Credit is earned through college or university coursework that is transferable to other districts. University Credit is documented via transcripts that you must turn in to the Director of Human Resources. Professional Development Hours are required for license renewal through the Illinois State Board of Education. You keep ISBE Proof of Completion forms forever and document them through the Educator Licensure Information System (ELIS) available through ISBE website when you renew your teaching license.

Can I get Board Credit and PD Hours?

Yes, the two are independent of each other.

Can I get a district-paid stipend and Board Credit for the same activity?

No, you have to choose between Board Credit and a stipend.

If the district pays for me to attend a conference? Can I still get Board Credit?

No. Registration costs, fees and other expenses are the staff participants' responsibility. If any USD116 account is used to pay for any part of the conference, even if it pays for just a small percentage of the cost, the conference cannot be used for Board Credit.

Can I get Board Credit for District or Building In-service days, or staff meetings?

No. You cannot earn Board Credit during contractually obligated hours.

Can I combine several events to build up to 1 unit of Board Credit?

Yes! When you attend a workshop or conference, you will be awarded "clock hours" of Board Credit. For every 8 clock hours that you earn, you will be awarded 1 unit of Board Credit, which may consist of whole hours from multiple workshops.

How do I know how much Board Credit I have?

The office of Human Resources and Professional Development maintains a database of Board Credit earnings of each teacher. After you have completed a Board Credit activity, you will receive a form of in-district Proof of Completion for that activity. If you would like to receive a copy of your Board Credit Report, or if there are ever any discrepancies, please contact the Professional Development staff at 217-384-3582.

How do I decide between Board Credit and a stipend?

This is a personal financial decision. Stipends are one-time cash incentives that are often paid from grant programs. Therefore, stipend amounts vary from year to year based on available grant funds, and are rarely offered. Often, Board Credit is the only compensation available. Board Credit accumulates toward movement on the salary schedule, which in the long run means a larger take home pay and a higher contribution to the Teacher Retirement System (TRS). You should also note on the salary schedule that after you reach BA+60, you must obtain a Master's degree before you can start accumulating Board Credit toward MA+15. Therefore, if you are at BA+60, without a Masters, you should choose a stipend when possible.

How and when do I move on the salary schedule?

After you have accumulated 15 units of Board Credit (equal to 120 clock hours) or a combination of Board Credit and University Credit beyond your degree, you need to submit a Request for Movement form to the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources and Professional Development. The movement will take place at the beginning of the next contractual year. You have until the first day of the contractual year to complete all coursework. You must submit your request and submit all paperwork by September 30 to receive movement.