



**THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
of FREDERICK COUNTY**

For Good. Forever. For Frederick County.

**2020-2021
Maryland Retired School Personnel Association
Scholarship FAQ's**

Application Period: January 1, 2020 through 11:59 p.m. on January 31, 2020

The Community Foundation of Frederick County, located in Frederick, Maryland, administers the scholarship selection process for the Maryland Retired School Personnel Association (MRSPA). The Maryland Retired School Personnel Association is offering three (3) \$2,000 scholarships through the *MRSPA Fund* for the 2020-2021 academic year.

Scholarship History: The Maryland Retired School Personnel Association Fund was established through a financial gift by Irl and Ella Beall. This gift and subsequent donations by MRSPA members have enabled MRSPA to offer scholarships to those working in education in the public schools of Maryland and who are enrolled in programs leading to teacher certification or to meet the requirements to become a school counselor, speech and language pathologist, a physical or occupational therapist, a school social worker, a media specialist, a supervisor or administrator or a school psychologist. Teachers who have a current certification and are enrolled in a program pursuing certification in another education-related area are also eligible to apply for this scholarship. Applicants must hold a minimum of a high school diploma or a GED certificate and must intend to work in a Maryland public school during and following completion of the program of study.

The shortage of certified teachers and other school personnel in the public-school systems of Maryland is of concern to all. One of the goals of MRSPA is to encourage and assist those currently employed by our school systems to become certified teachers and specialists. MRSPA, therefore, offers eligible individuals to apply for scholarship assistance through the *MRSPA Fund*.

This document answers applicant's most frequently asked questions. Please review before beginning the online application, as this will save time, increase accuracy, and help ensure a positive experience.

Who Can Apply: This application may be used by those who are **CURRENTLY EMPLOYED** by a public-school system in Maryland.

Eligible applicants include:

- uncertified teachers
- teacher assistants
- teacher aides
- substitute teachers
- certified teachers enrolled in programs to become school counselors, speech and language pathologists, physical or occupational therapists, school social workers, media specialists, administrators, supervisors or school psychologists
- other Maryland public school system employees

Teachers who are currently certified **ARE** eligible for this scholarship **IF** they are working toward certification in one of the specialties above or are pursuing certification in a different teaching area (content or grade level).

Please Note: You **must already be enrolled** in an accredited program leading to certification in teaching or in a specialty area at the time of application. You will be required to name the school district where you are employed, your position/title, your supervisor's name and your supervisor's telephone number to gain access to the application.

How do I apply for the MRSPA scholarship?

To apply for a scholarship, you must set up an online account and secure a copy (official or unofficial) of your college transcript.

How do I create an online account and log-in?

- **New Users:**
 - Go to www.FrederickCountyGives.org and click on the right-hand tab that says "Apply for Scholarships."
 - On the scholarship page, look for the MRSPA section and click the "Click here to apply" button.
 - On the next screen, click "create account" and follow the instructions.
 - Click the "start application" button.
- **Returning Users:**
 - Go to www.FrederickCountyGives.org and click on the right-hand tab that says "Apply for Scholarships."
 - On the scholarship page, look for the MRSPA section and click the "Click here to apply" button.
 - If you have applied for any scholarships through the Community Foundation previously, that account still exists and you should log in using that account information.

- ***If you have an account, but forgot your username and/or password, use the “Forgot your username” or “Forgot your password” retrieval system found on the login page.***
- ***Secure a copy of an official or unofficial transcript. The name of the educational institution must be clearly visible, and a minimum 2.5 GPA at the time of application is required.***

What is the deadline for submitting a scholarship application?

Your application must be submitted by **January 31, 2020 at 11:59 p.m. EST.**

Submit your application prior to January 31 if possible. Last day submission volume is heavy, and this could prevent your application from being accepted by the online software. The Community Foundation and MRSPA are not responsible for applications that are unable to be submitted on the final day due to high volume.

Do I need to obtain letters of reference?

No.

Can I submit a paper application or paper transcript?

No. Only applications submitted online through the website will be considered.

Why do you ask for my email address?

- *The Community Foundation’s communications are exclusively by email, including notifications of scholarships awarded, necessary documentation, and invitations to scholarship events.*

How do I submit my required transcript?

You must upload your most recent transcript in a PDF format. An official or unofficial transcript is acceptable.

- *The transcript must clearly show your cumulative GPA.*
- *The transcript must clearly show the name of the educational institution.*
- *The transcript must be a PDF document (.pdf extension). Other formats are not acceptable (ex: WORD, TIF, XLS).*
- *The transcript must be readable and clear.*
- *If your educational institution uses a transcript service, you must secure the transcript from them. DO NOT provide a link to the transcript service; the Community Foundation will not retrieve this information for you. If you have questions about how to request your transcript from the service, contact your educational institution for assistance.*
- *You may only upload one document, so make sure all pages of your transcript are included in the PDF.*
- *If your transcript does not meet all of these requirements, your application will not be considered and your application will be disqualified.*

How do I attach my transcript?

Transcripts are attached in the same manner as you would add an email attachment to an email. While in the transcript field, click on the "Choose File" button. Browse to search for the document and then upload the file by clicking the "Upload File" button. Please do not attach web links as a document.

What if I uploaded a document in error?

Follow the same procedure for choosing your file and uploading a file. When you upload a second document, it will "bump" the first document out of the field.

Can I make changes to my application?

Prior to submitting the application, you may make edits/changes/updates to it as often as you like. However, once you submit your application, you will not be able to modify any of your responses.

How will I know my completed application was received?

- *After clicking on the "submit" button at the end of your application, you will see a "Congratulations!" message with a green check mark that says "Your online application has been submitted!"*
- *You will also receive an email confirmation.*

Can I submit feedback or receive technical assistance with the online application?

Yes. Within the application screen, you will see a "Contact Us" tab. Click here, and you will be directed to the helpdesk of the Community Foundation's software vendor, Next Gen Web Solutions, where you can submit your question or feedback. You may expect a response within 24 hours.

If my application is successfully submitted, does this mean I will receive a scholarship?

All applications go to a scholarship review committee; meeting the eligibility and application requirements alone does not guarantee you will receive a scholarship. You will be notified in March 2020, if you are selected to receive a scholarship.

If I am notified that I have been selected to receive a scholarship, then what happens?

- *You must complete a scholarship agreement.*
- *Scholarship checks are made payable to the educational institution designated by the recipient on the scholarship agreement.*
- *Scholarship checks will not be paid to the scholar.*
- *If the scholarship is not fully utilized by the end of the 2020 - 2021 academic year, the unused portion will be forfeited by the scholar and the funds returned to The Maryland Retired School Personnel Association Fund.*

How do I know that the information I am submitting electronically on my application and in my supplemental attachment is secure and confidential?

The Community Foundation understands the trust you have placed in us and is committed to the security and privacy of your personally identifiable information. When you access, complete, and submit the online application, your information is protected by the highest security and authentication techniques. All transactions between your computer and their servers are encrypted. Our system complies with federally recognized safeguard standards including intrusion monitoring, Secure Socket Layer, firewall monitoring, security audits, and system inspections.

The Community Foundation does not share any information collected from and/or about you. If you have further questions regarding the security methods used by Next Gen Web Solutions, please contact us for more information.

The Community Foundation's Scholarship Committee subscribes to the policy that it is the sole responsibility of the student to complete this application. Should the Scholarship Committee discover that the application, or portions of the application, was not completed by the applicant, the application will be disqualified.

The MRSPA scholarship application is managed by:
The Community Foundation of Frederick County
312 East Church Street
Frederick, MD 21701
301.695.7660
www.FrederickCountyGives.org