



Maryland Retired School Personnel Association Scholarship Application FAQs 2023-2024

Application Period: 12:01 a.m. on January 2, 2024, through 11:59 p.m. on January 19, 2024

The Maryland Retired School Personnel Association is again offering three (3) \$2,000 scholarships through the *MRSPA Foundation* for the 2023-2024 academic year.

Scholarship History: The *Maryland Retired School Personnel Association Foundation* was established through a financial gift by members Irl and Ella Beall in 1999. 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, encourages eligible individuals to apply for scholarship assistance through the *MRSPA Foundation*.

This document answers applicants most frequently asked questions. Please review **before** beginning the online application, as this will save time, increase accuracy, and help ensure a positive experience. **Application Period: 12:01 a.m. on January 2, 2024, through 11:59 p.m. on January 19, 2024.**

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/aides/paraprofessionals
- 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 and email address to fully complete the application.

How do I apply for the MRSPA scholarship?

To apply for a scholarship, go to the MRSPA website at www.mrspa.org and search for the *MRSPA Foundation* Scholarship application on the home page. The form is fillable online.

What is the deadline for submitting a scholarship application?

Your application must be submitted by **January 19, 2024, at 11:59 p.m. EST.**

Submit your application prior to January 19 if possible. Last day submission volume is heavy, and this could prevent your application from being accepted by the online software. MRSPA is 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?

No. Only applications submitted online through our website (www.mrspa.org) will be considered.

Why do you ask for my email address?

Communications to applicants are generally by email, including notifications of scholarships awarded, necessary documentation, and invitations to events.

Can I make changes to my application?

Prior to submitting the application, you may make changes to your application by using the back and next buttons, but you cannot save your application and come back to it later. If you stop and close the application your answers will be lost, and you will have to start again when you come back to it. 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 "Thanks!" message that says, "Thank you for completing the 2023–2024 MRSPA Scholarship Application."
- You will be able to print a copy of your application.

Can I receive technical assistance with the online application?

Yes. Within the application at the top of each page, you will see a "Contact Us" note. Click here, and you will be directed to the MRSPA staff for assistance. You may expect a response within 24 hours unless it is a weekend. Then, the response will be on the next business day.

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 by the end of March 2024, 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 agree to continue in your education program as described in your application or you agree to forfeit the award.
- 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 2024 calendar year, the unused portion will be forfeited by the scholar and the funds returned to *The Maryland Retired School Personnel Association Foundation*.

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

MRSPA 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 security and authentication techniques. All transactions between your computer and our server are encrypted through AWS and Google Cloud Security. Additionally, our website is a secure https website. Our system complies with recognized safeguard standards including firewall monitoring, security audits, and system inspections.

MRSPA does not share any information collected from and/or about you other than to decide on the scholarship winners through the MRSPA Scholarship Committee. Information is never shared with external vendors.

MRSPA'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:
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www.mrspa.org