

**DIVISION OF HIGHER EDUCATION RULES GOVERNING
THE ARKANSAS TEACHER ACADEMY SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM
Effective Date: October 31, 2024**

1.00 DEFINITIONS

1.01 “Academy attendee” means an individual who is enrolled in an Arkansas Teacher Academy at an eligible postsecondary institution who is a:

1.01.1 Current teacher;

1.01.2 Teacher who has graduated from an Arkansas Teacher Academy at an eligible postsecondary institution; or

1.01.3 Current student.

1.02 “Eligible postsecondary institution” means a public or private two-year or four-year institution of higher education that:

1.02.1 Offers a postbaccalaureate program that leads to teacher certification; and

1.02.2 Has entered into an agreement with the Division of Higher Education for purposes of the Arkansas Teacher Academy Scholarship Program.

1.03 “Tuition and fees” mean any one (1) of the following that is charged by an eligible postsecondary institution, associated with a program of study a part of the Arkansas Teacher Academy Scholarship Program, that leads to teacher certification:

1.03.1 Tuition;

1.03.2 Mandatory fees; and

1.03.3 Program fees.

2.00 IMPLEMENTATION OF PROGRAM & PURPOSE

2.01 An eligible postsecondary institution shall implement an Arkansas Teacher Academy to incentivize potential and enrolled academy attendees to:

2.01.1 Enter the teaching profession; and

2.01.2 Commit to teaching in:

2.01.2.1 Arkansas public schools; or

2.01.2.2 Critical shortage areas in Arkansas based on subject areas or geographical areas.

2.02 The Division of Higher Education, in consultation with public and private postsecondary institutions, shall develop and implement a centralized administrative process for each Arkansas Teacher Academy, which shall include, without limitation, the following:

2.02.1 A marketing and promotion plan to recruit academy attendees for an Arkansas Teacher Academy;

2.02.2 Data collection and reporting;

2.02.3 Tracking of postgraduation service requirements;

2.02.4 Coordination of induction services;

2.02.5 Distribution of moneys in the Arkansas Teacher Academy Scholarship Program Fund between eligible postsecondary institutions;

2.02.6 Collection of reimbursements from individuals who fail to meet the service requirements under these rules;

2.02.7 A process for assessing an academy attendee's ability to repay financial assistance received if the academy attendee who receives financial assistance is physically or mentally unable to fulfill the requirements of an Arkansas Teacher Academy program; and

2.02.8 A process for deferring service or repayment required by this subchapter based on factors adopted by the division.

3.00 ELIGIBLE POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTION DUTIES

3.01 An Arkansas Teacher Academy may include, without limitation, a new or existing teacher preparation program that utilizes proven, research-based models of best practices that are already being implemented in similar program pathways.

3.02 An eligible postsecondary institution may:

3.02.1 Develop a portfolio of teacher preparation programs to offer as part of its Arkansas Teacher Academy; and

3.02.2 Give priority to students in grades eleven (11) and twelve (12).

3.03 An eligible postsecondary institution shall not:

- 3.03.1 Exclude students in grades nine (9) and ten (10) from its Arkansas Teacher Academy; and
- 3.04 Use scholarship funds that exceed the cost of tuition and fees at the eligible postsecondary institution to support its Arkansas Teacher Academy costs.
 - 3.04.1 However, if the scholarship awarded does not fully cover the tuition and fees after all other financial gifts, aid, and grants are received, the academy attendee shall not be charged the remaining difference.
- 3.05 An eligible postsecondary institution shall develop formal partnerships with Arkansas public schools to build commitments for teacher employment upon an academy attendee's completion of an Arkansas Teacher Academy program.
- 3.06 The targeted deployment of academy attendees who are currently teachers who have completed an Arkansas Teacher Academy program shall be based on the:
 - 3.06.1 Needs of each public school system;
 - 3.06.2 Community that is being served; and
 - 3.06.3 Individual skills of each current teacher who has completed an Arkansas Teacher Academy program.
- 3.07 A program offered as part of an eligible postsecondary institution's Arkansas Teacher Academy shall include accelerated program models for the following, without limitation:
 - 3.07.1 Subject areas and geographical areas identified by the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education as experiencing a critical shortage of teachers;
 - 3.07.2 An individual seeking postbaccalaureate coursework that results in a professional certification; and
 - 3.07.3 A student in a non-education program who seeks to complete one (1) or more teacher preparation courses leading to a teaching certification following graduation.

4.00 SCHOLARSHIP AMOUNTS & ACADEMY ATTENDEE REQUIREMENTS

- 4.01 Each academy attendee enrolled in an Arkansas Teacher Academy program at an eligible postsecondary institution shall be awarded an annual scholarship up to the actual cost of the:
 - 4.01.1 Eligible postsecondary institution's tuition and fees, for a maximum of:

- 4.01.1.1 Two (2) academic years or four (4) academic semesters for academy attendees that are graduate student;
- 4.01.1.2 Four (4) academic years or eight (8) academic semesters for academy attendees that are undergraduate students; and
- 4.01.1.3 Two (2) academic years or four (4) academic semesters for academy attendees at a community college;
 - 4.01.1.3.1 Academy attendees enrolled at a community college shall receive continued eligibility for two (2) additional academic years or four (4) additional academic semesters at an undergraduate institution; and
- 4.01.2 Obtainment of a teaching license issued by the State Board of Education, including, without limitation, the actual cost of one (1) exam required by the board.
- 4.02 A scholarship shall be distributed to academy attendees only after all other financial gifts, aid, and grants have been received by an academy attendee.
 - 4.02.1 The total scholarship amount awarded to each academy attendee shall not exceed the total cost of tuition and fees at any public institution of higher education.
- 4.03 Each academy attendee enrolled in an Arkansas Teacher Academy shall:
 - 4.03.1 Agree to teach at least one (1) full school year in Arkansas at a public school, or school that serves primarily public school students with disabilities, for each academic year the academy attendee successfully completes and receives a scholarship for all or part of his or her tuition and fees.
 - 4.03.1.1 For an academy attendee who teaches and receives the scholarship concurrently, the academy attendee's commitment period to teach in an Arkansas public school shall begin after graduation from an Arkansas Teacher Academy;
 - 4.03.2 Reimburse the Division for the:
 - 4.03.2.1 Total amount of scholarship funds received for tuition and fees for an academic year academy attendee does not successfully complete the academic year in good academic standing; and

4.03.2.2 Proportional to the amount of the scholarship funds received by academy attendee, that corresponds to the number of school years academy attendee agreed to teach, but did not teach; and

4.03.3 Not include time enrolled in a summer term when calculating his or her commitment period required for teaching in an Arkansas public school.

4.04 Academy attendees must apply for the Arkansas Teacher Academy scholarship during the open application period via the Division's Scholarship Application Management System (SAMS) portal.

5.00 SCHOLARSHIP DISTRIBUTION DUTIES & REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

5.01 On or before March 1, 2024, and each year thereafter, the Division shall report to the Joint Budget Committee, or if the General Assembly is not in session, the Legislative Council and the Governor's office, the following information:

5.01.1 The total number of academy attendees enrolled in each eligible postsecondary institution's Teacher Academy in the current academic year; and

5.01.2 The total number of Teacher Academy graduates receiving induction services in the current academic year.

5.02 On or before September 1, 2024, and each year thereafter, the Division shall report to the Governor, President Pro Tempore of the Senate, and Speaker of the House of Representatives, with a copy submitted to the Secretary of State, the following information:

5.02.1 The total number of academy attendees enrolled in each institution's Teacher Academy by year of college enrollment;

5.02.2 The percentage of academy attendees who complete each year of an institution's Teacher Academy that plans to continue to the subsequent year, delineated by each teacher preparation program offered by each institution as part of the Teacher Academy;

5.02.3 The number of academy attendees who are currently teachers and who complete a program of study through an institution's Teacher Academy;

5.02.4 The number of academy attendees that are currently teaching in an Arkansas public school in as part of an agreement for receiving a scholarship pursuant to this rule;

5.02.5 The total number of Teacher Academy graduates receiving induction services;

- 5.02.6 The number of academy attendees who have defaulted on their obligations defined in this rule, and who are in repayment agreements;
- 5.02.7 The number of academy attendees who have deferred repayment agreements;
- 5.02.8 The number of academy attendees who have completed repayment agreements;
- 5.02.9 The methodology for distributing any moneys appropriated for Teacher Academy scholarships and the amounts distributed to each institution; and
- 5.02.10 The amount of any unused moneys in the fund from the previous fiscal year.