

**ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
DIVISION OF HIGHER EDUCATION
RULES GOVERNING THE ARKANSAS TEACHER ACADEMY
SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM**

Effective Date:

1.00 REGULATORY AUTHORITY AND PURPOSE

- 1.01 These rules shall be known as the Arkansas Department of Education Division of Higher Education Rules Governing the Arkansas Teacher Academy Scholarship Program.
- 1.02 These rules are enacted pursuant to the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board’s authority under Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-82-105 and per Act 237 of 2023.
- 1.03 The purpose of these rules is to establish the requirements and processes governing the Arkansas Teacher Academy Scholarship Program.

2.00 DEFINITIONS

- 2.01 “Academy attendee” means an individual who is enrolled in an Arkansas Teacher Academy at an eligible postsecondary institution who is a :
- 2.01.1 Current teacher;
- 2.01.2 Teacher who has graduated from an Arkansas Teacher Academy at an eligible postsecondary institution; or
- 2.01.3 Current student.
- 2.02 “Division” means Arkansas Department of Education Division of Higher Education.
- 2.03 “Eligible postsecondary institution means a public or private two-year or four-year institution of higher education that:
- 2.03.1 Offers a postbaccalaureate program that leads to teacher certification; and
- 2.03.2 Has entered into an agreement with the Division of Higher Education for purposes of the Arkansas Teacher Academy Scholarship Program.

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

2.03.1 Tuition;

2.03.2 Mandatory fees; and

2.03.3 Program fees.

3.00 IMPLEMENTATION OF PROGRAM AND PURPOSE

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

3.01.1 Enter the teaching profession; and

3.01.2 Commit to teaching in:

3.01.2.1 Arkansas public schools; or

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

3.01.3 As outlined in Section 5.03.1, teach at least one (1) full school year in a public school or in a school that serves primarily public school students with disabilities in the State of Arkansas for each academic year the academy attendee successfully completes and for which the academy attendee receives a scholarship for all or part of his or her tuition and fees.

3.02 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:

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

3.02.2 Data collection and reporting;

3.02.3 Tracking of postgraduation service requirements;

3.02.4 Coordination of induction services;

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

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

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

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

4.00 ELIGIBLE POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTION DUTIES

4.01 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.

4.02 An eligible postsecondary institution may:

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

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

4.03 An eligible postsecondary institution shall not:

4.03.1 Exclude students in grades nine (9) and ten (10) from its Arkansas Teacher Academy; and

4.03.2 Use scholarship funds that exceed the cost of tuition and fees at the eligible postsecondary institution to support its Arkansas Teacher Academy costs.

4.04 If a scholarship awarded to an academy attendee under these rules does not cover the eligible postsecondary institution's tuition and fees after an academy attendee receives all other financial gifts, financial aid, and grants, the eligible postsecondary institution shall not charge an academy attendee awarded a scholarship under this subchapter the remaining difference.

4.03 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.

4.04 The targeted deployment of academy attendees who are currently teachers who have completed an Arkansas Teacher Academy program shall be based on the:

4.04.1 Needs of each public school system;

4.04.2 Community that is being served; and

4.04.3 Individual skills of each current teacher who has completed an Arkansas Teacher Academy program.

4.05 A program offered as part of an eligible postsecondary institution's Arkansas Teacher Academy shall include accelerated program models for the following, without limitation:

4.05.1 Subject areas and geographical areas identified by the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education as experiencing a critical shortage of teachers;

4.05.2 An individual seeking postbaccalaureate coursework that results in a professional certification; and

4.05.3 A student in a non-education program who seeks to complete one (1) or more teacher preparation courses in order to prepare him or her to receive a teaching certification following his or her graduation.

5.00 SCHOLARSHIP AMOUNTS AND ACADEMY ATTENDEE REQUIREMENTS

5.01 An eligible postsecondary institution shall provide to each academy attendee who is enrolled in its Arkansas Teacher Academy an annual scholarship up to the actual cost of the:

5.01.1 Eligible postsecondary institution's tuition and fees for a maximum of:

5.01.1.1 Two (2) academic years or four (4) academic semesters for an academy attendee who is a graduate student enrolled in the Arkansas Teacher Academy at an eligible postsecondary institution;

5.01.1.2 Four (4) academic years or eight (8) academic semesters for an undergraduate student enrolled in the Arkansas Teacher Academy at the eligible postsecondary institution; and

5.01.1.3 Two (2) academic years or four (4) academic semesters for a community college student enrolled in the Arkansas Teacher Academy at the eligible postsecondary institution.

5.01.1.3.1 A student who qualifies under Section 5.01.1.3 of these rules shall receive continued eligibility for two (2) additional academic years or four (4) additional academic semesters at a postsecondary institution that is an undergraduate institution.

5.01.2 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 state board.

5.02 A scholarship distributed to an academy attendee under Section 5.01 of these rules shall be distributed only after all other financial gifts, financial aid, and grants have been received by an academy attendee enrolled in an Arkansas Teacher Academy at an eligible postsecondary institution.

5.03 Each academy attendee who is enrolled in an Arkansas Teacher Academy shall:

5.03.1 Agree to teach at least one (1) full school year in a public school or in a school that serves primarily public school students with disabilities in the

State of Arkansas for each academic year the academy attendee successfully completes and for which the academy attendee receives a scholarship for all or part of his or her tuition and fees.

5.03.1.1 For an academy attendee who teaches and receives the scholarship concurrently, the academy attendee's commitment period to teach in a public school in the State of Arkansas as required under Section 5.03.1 of these rules shall begin after the academy attendee's graduation from an Arkansas Teacher Academy.

5.03.2 Reimburse the Division for the:

5.03.2.1 Total amount of scholarship funds the academy attendee received for tuition and fees for an academic year in which the academy attendee does not successfully complete the academic year in good academic standing; and

5.03.2.2 Proportional amount of the scholarship the academy attendee received for tuition and fees that corresponds to the number of school years the academy attendee agreed to teach in a public school in the State of Arkansas but did not teach in a public school in the State of Arkansas as required under Section 5.03.1 of these rules.

5.03.3 In the calculation of the academy attendee's commitment period to teach in a public school in the State of Arkansas per Section 5.03.1 of these rules, not include time that the academy attendee is enrolled in a summer term.

5.04 Students must apply for the scholarship via the Division's Scholarship Application Management System (SAMS) portal during the open application period.

6.00 SCHOLARSHIP DISTRIBUTION DUTIES AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

6.01 The Division shall:

6.01.1 Administer the Arkansas Teacher Academy Scholarship Program Fund;
and

6.01.2 Establish criteria for distributing scholarships from the fund.

6.02 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:

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

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

6.03 On or before September 1, 2024, and each year thereafter, the Division shall report the following information 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:

6.03.1 The total number of academy attendees enrolled in each eligible postsecondary institution's Arkansas Teacher Academy by year of college enrollment;

6.03.2 The percentage of academy attendees who complete each year of an eligible postsecondary institution's Arkansas Teacher Academy and who plan to continue to the subsequent year, delineated by each teacher preparation program offered by each eligible postsecondary institution as part of the Arkansas Teacher Academy;

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

6.03.4 The number of academy attendees who are currently teaching in a public school in the State of Arkansas as part of an agreement for receiving a scholarship under this subchapter;

6.03.5 The total number of Arkansas Teacher Academy graduates receiving induction services;

6.03.6 The number of academy attendees who have defaulted on their obligations

under this subchapter and who are in repayment agreements;

6.03.7 The number of academy attendees who have deferred repayment agreements;

6.03.8 The number of academy attendees who have completed repayment agreements;

6.03.9 The methodology for distributing any moneys appropriated for the scholarships distributed under this subchapter to each eligible postsecondary institution and the amounts distributed to each eligible postsecondary institution; and

6.03.10 The amount of any unused moneys in the fund from the previous fiscal year.

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