

TEAGUE ISD

EDUCATIONAL AIDE TO TEACHER PLAN

In 1997, the Texas legislature established a program that encouraged educational aides to return to school to pursue teacher certification. Recently, HB 1130 was passed to ensure that reasonable efforts are made to inform and support instructional aides who want to become certified teachers. HB 1130 also broadened eligibility for exemption of tuition and fees for teacher certification courses. Any school employee who has worked as an educational aide for at least one year out of the past five and meets the financial criteria may apply.

Teague ISD realizes the importance of recruiting and training qualified individuals for teacher preparation programs. The importance of hiring qualified persons for the various educational aide positions throughout the district is also recognized. Therefore, Teague ISD encourages currently employed educational aides to take advantage of the Educational Aide Exemption Program. It is also the goal of the district to employ employee educational aides who desire to become certified teachers.

CURRENT ELIGIBLE EMPLOYEES

Oversight for the program

The program will be under the direction of the administrative office. The Assistant Superintendent will be the contact person for the district.

Level of Support

Teague ISD will provide the following support for employees who enroll in teacher certification courses:

- Release time to attend classes.
- Use of district facilities and equipment - for example, distance learning lab

Qualifying Criteria for Receiving District Assistance

- Make a reasonable effort to schedule classes outside the school day.
- Schedule classes so that only one early release day per week is needed.
- Maintain at least a "B" average in classes that require release time.
- Finish classes that require release time.

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Educational Aide Exemption Program

How Much Is It Worth?

The program exempts eligible students attending public colleges or universities in Texas from the payment of tuition and fees (other than class or laboratory fees) per year of eligibility. Spring term exemptions are conditional upon meeting program requirements in the fall. Summer awards are dependent upon the availability of funds. Individuals who receive awards in one year may apply for awards in subsequent years. The maximum award is tuition and fees (other than class or laboratory fees) or the student's financial need, whichever is less. **This exemption DOES cover remedial or developmental classes.**

Who Can Apply?

Individuals may apply who:

- have applied for financial aid through the college to be attended, including filing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid through the college to be attended or by qualifying on the basis of adjusted gross income (see Determining Need insert);
- are residents of Texas;
- have at least 1 school year of experience as an educational aide during the five years preceding the term or semester for which the student is awarded his or her initial exemption;
- be a school employee serving in any capacity*;
- will be enrolled in courses leading to teacher certification at the time they receive the exemption; and
- meet the academic progress requirements of the college's financial aid office.

How Do You Get An Application?

Contact the school district where the educational aide is employed, the financial aid office of the college the aide will attend, log onto our web-site, www.collegefortexans.com, select English, Forms and Applications and Educational Aide Exemption or the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board at (512) 427-6387 (Austin metro) or (800) 242-3062, ext. 6387.

What Is the Application Process?

- 1) Complete the admissions and financial aid process for your college, including the filing of a Free Application for Federal Student Aid.
- 2) The applicant completes Part I of the application reflecting the academic year he/she is applying and delivers the form to an official of his/her school or school district.
- 3) The school (district) official completes Part II of the form and sends it to the Director of Financial Aid of the college the aide will attend.
- 4) The Financial Aid Office completes Part III and forwards the form to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.
- 5) The Board selects recipients and announces the awards for the fall term.
- 5) November, the Board sends out rosters to school districts to verify the student's employment in the Spring term, due back to the Board by December 1.
- 7) The Board will announce spring awards as soon as verifications from school districts are received.
- 8) March 1, the Board will announce whether there will be summer awards by sending out a memorandum to school districts, financial aid offices and current applicants.

* Substitute Teachers who have at least 180 full days of employment as a substitute during the past 5 years and employees serving in any capacity who have met the 1 school year of educational aide experience within the past 5 years may now participate in the program.