

A BRIEF SUMMARY

The Teacher Shortage Employment Incentive Program (TSEIP) was designed to recruit and retain mathematics and science teachers in Oklahoma. Successful candidates will receive an incentive payment upon fulfillment of the following requirements: a). complete an approved professional teacher education program from an Oklahoma accredited teacher education unit; this preparation must include a student teaching requirement; b). hold a valid certificate to teach mathematics or science at the secondary level; and c). teach for five (5) consecutive years in Oklahoma's secondary public schools. Teachers with alternative or emergency certificates do not qualify for this program. The 2001 Legislature amended HB 1499 to ensure that all who meet the provisions of TSEIP are eligible to receive an incentive payment based on a set formula.

610:25-27-1. Purpose

(a) The Teacher Shortage Employment Incentive Program (TSEIP) was created by Senate Bill 1393 during the 2000 legislative session.

(b) The bill, as amended by Section 5, Chapter 201, O.S.L. 2001, expressed the legislative intent that beginning with the 2001-2002 school year, the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education (OSRHE) establish a teacher shortage employment incentive program providing for students enrolled in a major course of study in mathematics or science at the undergraduate level or graduate level who declare an intention to serve and who subsequently serve this state by teaching in a secondary level public school of this state for a minimum of five (5) years in the subject areas of mathematics or science. [70 O.S §698.3(A)].

(c) The implied purpose of this legislation is to provide an incentive for students who major in mathematics or science to serve as teachers of mathematics and science in Oklahoma public secondary schools for at least five (5) years.

[Source: Added at 18 Ok Reg 2773, eff 6-25-01; Amended at 18 Ok Reg 3559, eff 8-8-01 (emergency); Amended at 19 Ok Reg 248, eff 10-23-01 (emergency); Amended at 19 Ok Reg 1503, eff 5-28-02]

610:25-27-2. ELIGIBLE STUDENT LOANS

(a) Eligible student loans under the TSEIP are those educational loans that were obtained by the participant to defray the cost of obtaining a baccalaureate degree or graduate degree in a science or mathematics teacher education program. The specific loans include:

- (1) Stafford Student Loans/Guaranteed Student Loans
- (2) Perkins/National Direct Student Loans
- (3) Loans made to students made pursuant to the federal Supplemental Loans for Students program including CLAS
- (4) Consolidation Loan Program loans
- (5) Privately funded educational loans issued to students through institutions of higher education

(6) Graduate PLUS Loan

(b) Ineligible student loans include Parent loans for students (PLUS).

[Source: Added at 18 Ok Reg 2773, eff 6-25-01; Amended at 18 Ok Reg 3559, eff 8-8-01 (emergency); Amended at 19 Ok Reg 248, eff 10-23-01 (emergency); Amended at 19 Ok Reg 1503, eff 5-28-02; Amended at 24 Ok Reg 2722, eff 7-26-07]

610:25-27-3. APPLICATION PROCEDURE

(a) OSRHE is authorized to distribute TSEIP Participation Agreement forms to postsecondary institutions in the State System of Higher Education that are eligible to participate in state and federal financial aid programs and have an approved program of professional teacher preparation.

(b) TSEIP Participation Agreement forms may be obtained from TSEIP coordinator in each post-secondary institution or from the OSRHE. The student is responsible for the completeness of the application.

(c) A Participation Agreement must be signed by a student while enrolled in a mathematics or science major course of study at the undergraduate or graduate level.

(d) The completed Participation Agreement must be submitted to the TSEIP coordinator no later than the date of their graduation.

(e) Post-secondary institutions TSEIP coordinators will submit copies of the TSEIP Participation Agreements to the State Regents' office within 10 days of their submission.

(f) The State Regents will notify each applicant of the receipt of his/her application in the program, the educational loan obligation, and the disbursement benefits under the TSEIP.

(g) If an eligible student failed to enroll in TSEIP before graduation, he/she can file for late enrollment into the program within one year from date of graduation. The late enrollment process is as follows:

(1) A candidate must obtain a TSEIP Participation Late Agreement Form from the college of education (COE) which recommended licensure in undergraduate or graduate education degree in secondary mathematics or science. The participant must provide explanation for the late enrollment.

(2) The form must be signed by the TSEIP coordinator of the respective COE.

(3) All documents must be submitted to the OSRHE for consideration as soon as the candidate learns about TSEIP but no later than **one year** from his/her graduation date.

(4) Additional documentation may be requested by the OSRHE before determining the eligibility of the late enrollees.

[Source: Added at 18 Ok Reg 2773, eff 6-25-01; Amended at 22 Ok Reg 2630, eff 7-11-05; Amended at 25 Ok Reg 800, eff 3-11-08 (emergency); Amended at 26 Ok Reg 1327, eff 5-25-09]

610:25-27-4. COURSEWORK REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPANT ELIGIBILITY

In order to satisfy the coursework requirements of the program, the participant must:

- (1) Declare an intention to teach in Oklahoma and graduate from an Oklahoma teacher education program.
- (2) Maintain satisfactory progress in an academic program leading to an undergraduate or graduate degree with a major in a mathematics or science teacher education program.
- (3) Complete coursework and training necessary to obtain a teaching certificate, which requires a baccalaureate degree or graduate degree and completion of an approved program of professional teacher preparation. The teacher preparation program shall include a student teaching requirement and authorize service for the secondary level.
- (4) Participant must not have been certified to teach mathematics or science prior to signing the Participation Agreement.

[Source: Added at 18 Ok Reg 2773, eff 6-25-01; Amended at 19 Ok Reg 248, eff 10-23-01 (emergency); Amended at 19 Ok Reg 1503, eff 5-28-02; Amended at 23 Ok Reg 1114, eff 5-11-06; Amended at 24 Ok Reg 2722, eff 7-26-07]

610:25-27-5. EDUCATIONAL LOAN OBLIGATIONS FOR PARTICIPANT(S) WITH OUTSTANDING STUDENT LOAN DEBT

In order to satisfy the educational loan obligation of the program, the Participant with outstanding student loan debt must:

- (1) Not rely on any TSEIP benefit disbursement to replace any scheduled student loan payment that is due and owing to any student loan holder.
- (2) Provide written notification to OSRHE of change of status on student loans, including notice of delinquency/default and the sale, transfer or consolidation of student loans to another lender or servicer.
- (3) Be free of any obligation to repay any state or federal educational grant and not be delinquent or in default on any state or federally insured educational loan. If, at any time, it is determined that a participant owes a grant refund or is in default on a loan, and has not made satisfactory payment arrangements, Participant may be withdrawn from the TSEIP.

[Source: Added at 18 Ok Reg 2773, eff 6-25-01; Amended at 25 Ok Reg 800, eff 3-11-08 (emergency); Amended at 26 Ok Reg 1327, eff 5-25-09]

610:25-27-6. PARTICIPANT ELIGIBILITY FOR BENEFITS OF THE TSEIP

In order to qualify to receive disbursement benefits under the TSEIP, the Participant must have:

- (1) Obtained an initial teaching license and then a certificate and provided eligible full-time teaching service under a regular teaching contract at an Oklahoma public school:

- (A) at the secondary level,
- (B) for five (5) consecutive school years,
- (C) in the mathematics or science subject areas.

(2) Completed the five years of teaching, as required, with not less than seventy-five percent (75%) of the teaching assignment meeting the criteria set forth in paragraph (1) herein.

(3) Completed the first full year of eligible full-time teaching service, as described above, within twenty-five (25) months from the date of graduation from a four-year institution in Oklahoma.

(4) Notwithstanding the provisions of this subparagraph, Participants may apply to the employing school for a leave of absence when a serious illness, pregnancy or other natural cause prevents the Participant from continuing the coursework requirements or from providing consecutive full-time teaching service.

(A) Leaves of absence may not exceed more than one academic year and will not be included for the purpose of calculating the consecutive five (5) years of teaching service.

(B) Participants must present official school documentation to the OSRHE that a leave of absence was granted which meets the provisions of these rules. Official notification must be given within one year that the teacher has resumed the teaching duties or Participant may be withdrawn from the program.

(5) A Reduction in Force will not eliminate a Participant from fulfilling the consecutive five-year obligation if the following provisions are met:

(A) Participant must provide to the OSRHE official documentation of the Reduction in Force.

(B) Participant must resume teaching mathematics or science at the secondary level at an Oklahoma public school within eighteen (18) months after the Reduction in Force.

[Source: Added at 18 Ok Reg 2773, eff 6-25-01; Amended at 19 Ok Reg 248, eff 10-23-01 (emergency); Amended at 19 Ok Reg 1503, eff 5-28-02; Amended at 23 Ok Reg 1114, eff 5-11-06; Amended at 25 Ok Reg 800, eff 3-11-08 (emergency); Amended at 26 Ok Reg 1327, eff 5-25-09]

610:25-27-7. BENEFITS TO BE DISBURSED UNDER THE PROGRAM

(a) Under the provisions of the TSEIP, the OSRHE, are authorized to make the employment incentive payments to persons who actually render a minimum of five (5) years of service as teachers in the public schools of this state if not less than seventy-five percent (75%) of the teaching assignment meets the criteria [70 O.S. §698.3(B)], specified above.

(b) An Employment Compliance Form must be submitted to OSRHE upon completion of the 5th year of eligible teaching service. An authorized school official must complete the form.

(c) Depending on the June 30 student loan balance of any qualifying Participant, as of the year that all program requirements are satisfied, and contingent upon the availability of funds, OSRHE will issue

disbursements of program benefits directly to the qualifying participants for the repayment of eligible student loans.

(d) The total amount of employment incentive payments for any qualified person shall not exceed an amount equal to three times the average annual cost of undergraduate resident tuition and fees for full-time enrollment at institutions which offer teacher education programs within The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education, as defined by the State Regents. [70 O.S. § 698.3(B)]

(e) Eligible loans will be repaid by the Participant in the following priority:

- (1) First, all loans guaranteed by OSRHE, ranked first by rate of interest (highest to lowest) and secondly, by loan disbursement date (oldest to newest).
- (2) Second, all other eligible loans ranked first by rate of interest (highest to lowest) and secondly, by loan disbursement date (oldest to newest).

(f) Any amount of excess of the Participant's outstanding student loan balance, or the entire benefit amount for the participants with no outstanding student loan balance, shall be paid directly to any person otherwise eligible for employment incentive payments pursuant to this section.

(g) If OSRHE determines that any TSEIP disbursement was authorized based on misleading or incorrect information, the Participant must reimburse such payment to OSRHE.

[Source: Added at 18 Ok Reg 2773, eff 6-25-01; Amended at 18 Ok Reg 3559, eff 8-8-01 (emergency); Amended at 19 Ok Reg 248, eff 10-23-01 (emergency); Amended at 19 Ok Reg 1503, eff 5-28-02; Amended at 25 Ok Reg 800, eff 3-11-08 (emergency); Amended at 26 Ok Reg 1327, eff 5-25-09]

610:25-27-8. FISCAL LIMITATIONS OF THE PROGRAM

(a) If insufficient funds are available for employment incentive payments to qualified persons during any fiscal year, the Chancellor may make reductions in the payments made to those qualifying. [70 O.S. §698.3(D)].

(b) Each year the benefit to all eligible teachers will be determined on, or as of June 30, for the group of teachers that achieved eligibility for TSEIP benefits (having satisfied all program requirements) by the end of that school year. If, in any given year, funds are not available for employment incentive payments at the maximum amount, due to a reduction in employment incentive payments as determined by the Chancellor, the amount to be disbursed to all eligible participants will be reduced uniformly. Upon distribution of that amount, the obligation of the program to those eligible teachers shall be satisfied. The foregoing is true even if no funds are available for disbursement.

[Source: Added at 18 Ok Reg 2773, eff 6-25-01; Amended at 18 Ok Reg 3559, eff 8-8-01 (emergency); Amended at 19 Ok Reg 248, eff 10-23-01 (emergency); Amended at 19 Ok Reg 1503, eff 5-28-02]

610:25-27-9. VERIFICATION AND NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

(a) Verification requirements which must be satisfied prior to disbursement of program benefits include:

- (1) An Employment Compliance Form submitted to OSRHE after the fifth year of eligible teaching service. An authorized school official must complete the form.
- (2) The Loan Balance Verification Form must be submitted to OSRHE in the fifth year. The lender(s) must certify that the loans are in good standing and provide a June 30 balance.

(b) Until all mutual obligations of the Participation Agreement are satisfied, Participant must respond to all communications and requests from OSRHE within the time indicated.

(c) Until all mutual obligations of the Participation Agreement are satisfied, Participant must provide written notification to OSRHE of any change in legal name or address of any change in status, which affects TSEIP eligibility.

[Source: Added at 18 Ok Reg 2773, eff 6-25-01; Amended at 25 Ok Reg 800, eff 3-11-08 (emergency); Amended at 26 Ok Reg 1327, eff 5-25-09]