



Special Education Teacher Tuition Assistance (SETTA) Application

Tuition reimbursement for paraprofessionals and educational interpreters
to become special education teachers

DESCRIPTION:

The SETTA program provides funding to Public Education Agencies (PEAs) for tuition reimbursement to paraprofessionals and educational interpreters that leads to certification in early childhood special education, mild/moderate disabilities, moderate/severe disabilities, hearing impaired, or visually impaired. Paraprofessional and educational interpreter candidates must be currently serving a student(s) with disabilities in the classroom and have been employed by the PEA for two (2) full school years by June 30, 2023 in order to be eligible for the program. Paraprofessionals and educational interpreters who receive tuition reimbursement must commit to working for the PEA in a professional special education capacity for a minimum of two (2) full years upon completion of the program and receipt of the special education teacher certification.

DIRECTIONS:

Complete the entire application for the paraprofessional or educational interpreter candidate to be eligible for tuition reimbursement to become a special education teacher. Submissions are limited to one application per PEA. Applications must be submitted no later than 5:00 p.m. on Friday, **February 24, 2023**. Late or incomplete applications (including those without all required signatures) will not be considered.

Email the completed application to the Educator Recruitment and Retention Inbox at ESSRandR@azed.gov using the subject line [District or charter school name]: 2023 SETTA Application.

Applications will be reviewed by a team of evaluators. Applications earning the highest scores in the evaluation process will be approved until the funding that is set aside for the program is depleted.

Questions regarding the application should be directed to ESSRandR@azed.gov.

EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT SERVICES

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING AND SUSTAINABILITY

**“Grow-Your-Own” Program
Special Education Teacher Tuition Assistance (SETTA)
Tuition Reimbursement Program**

Application

COVER PAGE

Public Education Agency Name:	CTDS#:	
Superintendent:	Email:	Phone:
Special Education Director:	Email:	Phone:
Project Coordinator:	Email:	Phone:
Finance Contact:	Email:	Phone:
Supervisor/Mentor Teacher/Instructional Coach:	Email:	Phone:
Candidate:	Email:	Phone:
Certificate Desired:		

Signatures: By signing this cover sheet, each signer agrees to the terms and conditions of this tuition assistance opportunity, including all assurances, agreements, and requirements outlined in this application and in any PEA revisions to this document in response to reviewer questions/comments prior to the candidate’s acceptance into this tuition assistance program.

Superintendent/Charter School Administrator

Special Education Director

Supervisor/Mentor Teacher/Coach

Candidate

SETTA TUITION REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

The signers of this application, including the candidate, agree to comply with the following:

1. The candidate who has not completed an associate's degree or 60 community college, college, or university semester credit hours that will transfer in full to the college or university special education educator preparation program (EPP) shall first complete this requirement, paid for by this program's funds at an Arizona community college, before transitioning to a college or university.
2. The candidate shall enroll in an Arizona State Board of Education–approved educator preparation program (EPP) that leads to special education teacher certification([view the list of approved programs that lead to special education certification](#)).
3. Funds shall be used to pay community college and college or university tuition and fees for all classes that meet the program's requirements. Funds may also be used for a textbook allowance. E-books and rentals should be purchased if it is more economical to do so. Funds may not be used to pay for remedial classes or additional classes beyond the scope of the requirements for an associate's degree and/or bachelor's degree.
4. The candidate shall successfully complete a minimum of 15 credit hours for each full program year (August- July) until completion of the EPP. If the candidate is unable to meet the minimum course requirements during any program year, he/she shall submit a written petition for consideration by the SETTA program coordinator and receive written confirmation of approval. This petition shall describe why the minimum course requirements cannot be met and shall indicate the number of credit hours that will be completed. Failure to do so will result in the cancellation of the program and the return of all funds spent during that program year. Classes that start but are not completed during the program year shall not be reimbursed by SETTA funds. (Acceptable reasons for an inability to fulfill the annual minimum semester credit hour requirements are for health reasons or emergency situations only.)
5. Depending on the number of applicable semester credit hours earned by the candidate at the start of the SETTA program, the candidate shall complete the EPP within two (2) to five (5) years. Five years maximum shall be allowed for a candidate who has completed zero (0) semester credit hours by the start of the program.
6. The funding shall not exceed \$3,000 per year for the first 60 credit hours toward degree completion nor \$15,000 for subsequent credits toward degree completion. Textbook reimbursement is limited to \$1,000 per year.
7. The candidate shall achieve at least a B grade for each core class, at least a C grade for all other classes, and a minimum 3.0 cumulative grade point average (GPA) at the end of each program year. A candidate who fails to meet the grade requirement in a class shall pay for that class out of pocket and still meet the year-end cumulative 3.0 GPA or risk termination from the program. The designated PEA representative and candidate shall develop and implement a corrective action plan in collaboration with the SETTA program coordinator to assist the candidate in meeting this program requirement.
8. The candidate and supervisor/mentor teacher/instructional coach shall meet a minimum of one (1) time during each quarter that school is in session. Meeting notes shall be written on the Quarterly Meeting Notes template and emailed to the SETTA program coordinator or designee by the required dates.
9. The following documents must be submitted at the completion of each semester: (a) course tracking tool provided by ADE, (b) unofficial transcripts, (c) receipts for the purchase of books, and (d) receipts for tuition payments or other documentation itemizing tuition payments.
10. SETTA is a tuition reimbursement program. Potential expenses are pre-approved, and reimbursement is provided after each semester is completed and program requirements are met.
11. The PEA shall enforce the accountability measures that are described in the SETTA PEA Accountability Plan.
12. The candidate shall remain employed by the PEA in a position that supports students with disabilities in the classroom through the duration of the program. If he/she quits or is terminated for failure to meet the PEA's

employment or SETTA program expectations, the individual's participation in the program will be cancelled, and all funds spent during the program year shall be returned to ADE/ESS.

13. A copy of the SETTA participant's transcript indicating degree completion shall be forwarded to the SETTA program coordinator or designee after the award.
14. A copy of the special education teacher certificate shall be received by the SETTA program coordinator or designee within six months of the candidate's graduation.
15. Upon completion of the college or university special education EPP and receipt of the special education teacher certificate, the candidate shall work for the PEA in a professional special education capacity for a minimum of two (2) full years.
16. The candidate and PEA will complete follow-up surveys for two consecutive years after graduation.
17. The PEA understands that the tuition reimbursement program will provide funding for the cost of tuition, fees, and books if these occur: (a) Federal IDEA funds are available to support this program; (b) the PEA maintains its commitments by adhering to these Assurances; and (c) the candidate continues to be eligible to receive the benefits of this funding as defined.
18. The PEA must meet all special education process, procedures, and funding requirements: (a) the PEA has special education policies and procedures that have been approved and adopted by the local governing board; (b) the special education policies and procedures are on file at the PEA's administrative office; (c) the PEA has notified ADE/ESS/Program Support and Monitoring of any current revisions made to the special education policies and procedures; and (d) the PEA is in good standing and in full compliance with the State Board of Education or the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools and the Arizona Department of Education regulations and administrative requirements.
19. The PEA understands that if this application has been accepted for funding and there are current issues of non-compliance with IDEA, funds from this program will be withheld until issues are resolved. If there is no resolution, funding may be withheld and repayment required.
20. The PEA understands that if this application has been accepted for funding and there are outstanding unpaid registration fees from previous ESS trainings, conferences, or institutes, funds from this program will be withheld until the outstanding unpaid registration is paid. If fees are not eventually paid by the time the project closes, funding will be void and repayment required.
21. The PEA confirms that accountability measures to ensure the candidate's success will be practiced by: (a) tracking and monitoring the candidate's progress to ensure fiscal and programmatic accountability; (b) by providing support through quarterly meetings with a mentor; and (c) developing a corrective action plan for additional identified supports as needed.
22. The PEA will continue to employ the candidate until he or she completes the program requirements unless the candidate quits or fails to meet employee expectations and is released from employment.
23. The PEA will employ the candidate as a special education professional for a minimum of two (2) years after completing his or her special education certificate coursework and receiving the special education teacher certification.

CANDIDATE SELECTION AND SUPPORTS

Please type a comprehensive response to each question in the white text cell below each section.

NOTE! The white text cells will expand as you type.

Candidate Selection

The SETTA tuition reimbursement program is intended to help a PEA in its recruitment efforts to increase the number of highly qualified special education teachers. The PEA should demonstrate thoughtful consideration in the selection of a candidate who will successfully complete the educator preparation program (EPP) and teacher certificate requisites and assume special education teacher responsibilities.

1. What methods were used to solicit your eligible candidate? Why was the candidate selected? Cite multiple sources. Some considerations may have been the review of:
 - a. The recommendation provided by the candidate's direct supervisor.
 - b. Performance evaluations.
 - c. Work record and attendance.
 - d. Previous college experience or specialized training and licenses or certificates.
 - e. Interactions with school staff.
 - f. Rapport with the students, especially with students with disabilities, who are served by this candidate.

You may also review additional data, information, or criteria used to evaluate the candidate's abilities and potential to succeed in this tuition assistance program.

Supports for Successful Outcomes

The PEA is responsible for ensuring the success of the candidate.

2. What support mechanisms will the PEA have in place to promote the candidate's successful completion of the program? What supports are currently or will be in place to ensure the candidate's retention in special education?

Supports for successful completion:

Supports to ensure retention in special education:

Other Factors

3. Please list any other factors about the PEA or community that are relevant to this application.

PEA ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN

Please describe the accountability measures that the PEA will have in place to track and monitor the completion of program requirements in the white text cells below each question.

NOTE! The white text cells will expand as you type.

1. Who will be responsible for tracking the quarterly meeting dates? (name, title, email address)

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2. How will the PEA ensure that the meeting notes are forwarded to the ESS SETTA Coordinator?

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3. Who will be responsible for monitoring the candidate's academic progress to ensure that grade requirements are met (minimum B grade for each core class; minimum C grade for all other classes; minimum 3.0 GPA) (name, title, email address)? How will this be tracked?

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4. Describe the resources that will be available to the candidate if he or she struggles with the content of a class.

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5. Describe arrangements for the completion of the student teaching experience.

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6. Who will ensure that a copy of the SETTA participant's transcript indicating degree completion as well as a copy of the SETTA participant's special education teacher certificate will be forwarded to the SETTA program coordinator or designee after the award (name, title, email address)?

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7. Who will ensure that a copy of the special education teaching certificate will be forwarded to the SETTA program coordinator or designee after it is awarded and within six months of graduation (name, title, email address)?

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8. Who will complete follow-up surveys once the candidate has graduated (name, title, email address)?

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CANDIDATE EDUCATION PLAN

Candidate Eligibility Criteria

The candidate must:

1. Be a paraprofessional or educational interpreter who is serving students in the classroom.
2. Have been employed by the PEA for two full school years by June 30, 2023

Certifications that Satisfy the Application Requirements

The candidate may select a special education teacher certificate plan from the following categories:

- [Early Childhood Special Education, Birth–Grade 3/Age 8](#)
- [Mild/Moderate Disabilities, K–12](#)
- [Moderate/Severe Disabilities, K–12](#)
- [Visually Impaired Special Education, Birth–Grade 12](#)
- [Hearing Impaired Special Education, Birth–Grade 12](#)

Candidate Information
Please complete the following table with information about the candidate.
Candidate's name:
Candidate's race/ethnicity:
Current job title/position:
Grades served in current position:
Dates of current employment at the PEA (month/year–month/year): ¹

Previous College or University Coursework
Please complete the following table with information if applicable.
Name of college or university previously attended:
Number of credits completed for each college or university:
Current GPA:

Community College Information
Complete this section if the candidate has not yet completed an associate's degree or 60 semester credit hours that will transfer in full to the State-Board of Education approved college or university EPP program. Skip this section if the candidate has already fulfilled this requirement (see SETTA Program Requirements, #1, above).
Community college name:
Associate's degree name:
Website showing degree course requirements:
Tuition and fees schedule website:
Anticipated number of community college semester credit hours to be completed during the first year of the program:
Total number of community college semester credit hours that will be paid by this program before the candidate transitions to the college or university EPP program:

¹ The paraprofessional or educational interpreter must have been employed by the PEA for two years by June 30, 2023 to be eligible for this tuition reimbursement program.

Community College or University Information

Complete this section with information about the State Board of Education-approved college or university that the candidate plans to attend to complete special education teacher certification.

Community college or university name:

Bachelor's degree name:

Website showing degree course requirements:

Tuition and fees schedule website:

Anticipated number of college or university semester credit hours to be completed during the first year of the program:

Total number of college or university semester credit hours that will be paid for by this program:

Estimated First-Year Funding Needs

Based on the information provided in this Candidate Education Plan, estimate the total amount of funds that will be needed for this candidate's first-year tuition, fees, and textbooks.

Estimated first-year funding needs: