Teacher Recruitment & Retention Resources

A comprehensive list of state and federal incentives, financial aid and programs.

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Arkansas Geographical Critical Needs Minority Teacher Scholarship
Minority students may receive up to $1,500 per academic year for four (4) years or the completion of a degree if they agree to teach in the Delta or an area of the state designated as having a critical shortage of teachers by the State Board of Arkansas. State program administered through UAPB.
Linda Bell • 870.575.8256 • bell_L@uapb.edu Ray Watley • 870.575.8552 • watley Rc@uapb.edu

Arkansas Teacher Housing Development Foundation
Program is in the development stages of assisting teachers by directing them to homeownership and rental opportunities available to teachers through local lenders and multifamily housing developments. Housing incentives will allow highly effective teachers to relocate to a high-need district through rental assistance, forgivable loans and down payment assistance.
Melanie Yelder, Director • 501.683.5401 • melanie.yelder@dfa.state.ar.us

Arkansas Workforce Centers Provides full funding for two (2) years of college and help finding new jobs through self-service labor market information and job seeking databases for qualifying persons.
1.866.ARWORKS (1.866.279.6757) www.arworks.org

Federal Perkins Loan Teacher Cancellation
Teachers may have up to 100 percent of a Federal Perkins Loan discharged (cancelled) for teaching fulltime in a public or nonprofit elementary or secondary school system. Qualifying persons must serve fulltime as 1) a teacher in a school serving students from low-income families; 2) as a special-education teacher, including teachers of infants, toddlers, children, or youth with disabilities; or 3) as a teacher in the fields of mathematics, science, foreign languages, or bilingual education, or in any other field of expertise determined by a state education agency to have a shortage of qualified teachers in that state.

Federal Stafford Loan Forgiveness
The program allows eligible borrowers to receive forgiveness for their outstanding student loan balances on FFEL and Direct Loans. It also allows for forbearance of repayment during the 5-year teaching period leading up to forgiveness. Fulltime elementary and secondary teachers in designated low-income schools may receive up to $5000. Fulltime math, science and special education teachers in designated low-income schools may receive up to $17,500 in loan forgiveness.
Federal Student Aid Information Center • 800.4.FED.AID (800.433.3243) • www.studentaid.ed.gov

Minority Masters Fellows (MMF)
MMF provides forgivable loans to graduate level minority students who were recipients of MTSP (see above). Recipients may receive a maximum of $7,500 for one academic year (or up to $2,500 per summer for a maximum of three summers). Recipients must teach in an Arkansas public school or public institution of higher education for two (2) years after completion of their Masters program. This shall be in addition to any teaching obligation the recipient may have to fulfill based on receipt of MTSP funds. (2007 Applications due June 1st.)
Arkansas Department of Higher Education • finaid@adhe.edu • (800) 547-8839 • www.adhe.edu
Arkansas Department of Education Office of Teacher Recruitment and Retention • (501) 682-5535 • www.teacharkansas.org
Arkansas Geographical Critical Needs Minority Scholarship • University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff School of Education • (870) 575-8261 • www.uapb.edu
Arkansas Student Loan Authority • ASLA EdLoan Program for Teachers • (800)443-6030 • www.asla.info
U.S. Department of Education • 1-800-4-FED-AID • www.studentaid.ed.gov
Minority Teachers Scholars Program (MTSP)
MTSP provides forgivable loans to undergraduate minority students seeking an initial teacher license. Recipients may receive MTSP for a maximum of four (4) semesters or six (6) trimesters or until requirements for licensure are completed. Recipients may receive $5,000 per academic year and must teach in an Arkansas public school for five (5) years after completing teacher license requirements. The teaching requirement will be reduced to three (3) years for designated subject and/or geographic shortage areas. (2007 Applications due June 1st.)

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National Board for Professional Teaching Standards
Funds the initial application fee and provides program support for Arkansas teachers who have taught three (3) years in an Arkansas school and who wish to become National Board Certified. A $5,000 stipend is paid annually to any NBCT in Arkansas who continues to be employed in accordance with legislative provisions governing bonus eligibility.

Arkansas Department of Education - Office of Teacher Quality
Michael Rowland, Program Advisor • 501.682.1146 • michael.rowland@arkansas.gov
http://arkansased.org/teachers/certification_program.html

Non-Traditional Licensure Program
State administrated program for professionals holding at least a bachelor’s degree. Participants enter the classroom as fulltime teacher of record and attend Instructional Modules while earning an initial Arkansas teaching license. The program provides stipends for Year1 NTL teachers who have taught in a designated high-need geographic and/or subject area. Number of stipends awarded each year is dependent upon the number of qualified teachers. Amount of individual stipend is dependent upon teaching assignment and number of qualified teachers in each category and does not exceed the cost of the NTL program fee.

Arkansas Department of Education - Office of Teacher Quality
Barbara Culpepper, Lead Program Advisor • 501.682.5763 • barbara.culpepper@arkansas.gov
Ann Deloney, Program Advisor • 501.371.1582 • ann.deloney@arkansas.gov

Special Education State Improvement Grant (SIG)
1. Expanded Pathwise Mentoring Program
   Program provides a $2,000.00 mentoring stipend for the first year of teaching in a special education classroom and follows the same procedures as the Pathwise System. Qualifying schools are from districts designated as having high attrition or as being more than 50% understaffed in special education. Each mentor receives $1200.00 and each mentee receives $800.00.
   Cindy O’Riley, Coordinator • 501.682.4222 • cindy.oriley@arkansas.gov

2. Paraprofessional Grants
   Funding provides a stipend for 50 paraprofessionals to complete an AA degree with a commitment to continue in a 4-year educational program to earn a teaching license in special education. The selection is done through an application process through a Commissioner's Memo.
   Susie Branon, Administrator • 501.682.4222 • susan.branon@arkansas.gov
3. **Teacher Retention Grants**
A reimbursement program for up to 75 teachers earning a license in special education. Selection is also done through an application process announced through a Commissioner's Memo.

Susie Branon, Administrator • 501.682.4222 • susan.branon@arkansas.gov

State Teacher Assistance Resource (STAR)

1. **STAR Loan Forgiveness (2007 Applications due June 1st.)**
STAR provides forgivable loans to students seeking an initial teacher license who commit to teaching in designated subject and/or geographic shortage areas in Arkansas after completion of licensure requirements. STAR loans are $3000 to $6000 per academic year for a maximum of three (3) years or until requirements for licensure are completed. Recipients must teach in an Arkansas public school in a designated subject and/or geographic shortage area one (1) year for each year of STAR funding received.

2. **STAR Loan Repayment Grant (2007 Applications due June 1st!)**
If funds are available, current teachers may receive assistance in repayment of federal student loans in the amount of $3000 to $6000 per year for a maximum of three (3) years. Applicants must be licensed teachers who graduated from a teacher education program after April 1, 2004, and teach in an Arkansas public school in a designated subject and/or geographic shortage area. STAR Loan Forgiveness recipients are not eligible to apply for STAR Loan Repayment.

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Teacher Opportunity Program (TOP)

1. **TOP Dual Licensure-Loan Forgiveness (2007-2008 Applications coming soon!)**
TOP provides forgivable loans to current teachers returning to college to receive an additional license in an approved subject shortage area. TOP loans include funding for tuition, mandatory fees, and books. The maximum TOP loan is $3000 per academic year for a maximum of three (3) years, with the teacher's school district being responsible for 1/3 of the loan and the Arkansas Department of Higher Education (ADHE) being responsible for 2/3 of the loan. Recipients must teach in an Arkansas public school for three (3) years after completion of their dual license.

2. **TOP Reimbursement Grant (Applications due March 1st.)**
School districts are not required to participate in TOP Dual Licensure-Loan Forgiveness. Therefore, if funds are available, TOP offers tuition reimbursement to current teachers unable to participate in TOP Dual Licensure-Loan Forgiveness. Teachers may apply for reimbursement for up to six (6) credit hours per academic year for courses taken towards receiving an additional license.

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ACT 100 of the 2003 Extraordinary Session funds a $450,000 budget for a statewide teacher center with special focus on critical shortage subject areas and hard to staff school districts. Teacher Recruitment functions as a program within the Office of Teacher Quality, Donna Zornes, Coordinator, and Beverly Williams, Assistant Commissioner, Human Resources/Licensure.

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Mike Sanders, Troops to Teachers • 501.683.1081 • mike.sanders@arkansas.gov
Danny Sullivan, Recruiter • 501.683.1088 • danny.sullivan@arkansas.gov
www.teacharkansas.org

1. **Educators Career Fair 2007**
   To be held each May with Arkansas school districts, schools of education, ADE programs and educational organizations providing information on incentives and financial aid to educators who wish to add an area of licensure, earn an advanced degree, renew an expired license or seek employment as an Arkansas educator.

2. **High Priority Recruitment & Retention program**
   A pilot program of six (6) ADE designated High Priority Districts was launched in 2006. Participating districts were provided with specific Professional Development training on best practices and policies of recruiting teachers for hard-to-staff districts. Each district received a booth display set up and paid fees to attend university and college education job fairs.

3. **Pathways to Teaching 2007**
   To be held Saturday, January 27 at the Embassy Suites in Little Rock. The annual recruitment event is designed to provide information and incentives for those interested in careers in education with special focus on high-needs subjects and schools. High school and college students and community members meet with representatives from schools of education, two-year colleges, education organizations and ADE programs. ADE’s Non-Traditional Licensure staff presents program information to potential career changers willing to teach in high-need areas.

4. **Recruitment and Retention Task Force**
   Members representing school districts, universities, Arkansas Department of Education and Education Renewal Zones are structured within four (4) sub-committees: 1) District Recruitment, 2) Marketing, 3) Events and 4) Policy. All sub-committee work is driven by the R&R Mission Statement:

   - To aggressively assist Arkansas school districts in the recruitment and retention of highly qualified teachers in shortage subject areas and High Priority geographic areas.

   - To collaborate with the Arkansas Department of Higher Education, Education Renewal Zones, Arkansas Teacher Housing Development Foundation, Minority Teacher Recruitment, Troops to Teachers, and others as applicable, in the teacher recruitment and retention effort.

   - To identify and implement the best research based practices and policies on teacher retention and recruitment for the state of Arkansas.
5. **Southeast Arkansas Education Forum**
   A collaborative effort between Education Renewal Zones, schools of education, school districts and Teacher Recruitment & Retention. Forums will be held in Fall and Spring semesters and will rotate between higher education campuses in Monticello, West Memphis, Pine Bluff and Magnolia. The two-day events are **designed to** address the critical need for teachers and the economic impact of education in the southern and eastern regions of the state. Events:
   - **District Recruitment Model Workshop**
     Providing recruiters from High Priority school districts with resources and instruction on best practices and policies in recruiting highly qualified teachers for their schools.
   - **Education Partners Reception**
     An opportunity for local Southeast Arkansas educators and school district leaders to meet with business, civic and community members and engage in partnerships in education. Topics center on the education crisis and the economic impact in Southeast Arkansas, and how the business community can assist in meeting the needs of local school districts and schools of education.
   - **Education Career Fair**
     Designed to assist Southeast Arkansas' High Priority school districts in the recruitment of licensed teachers and administrators for hard-to-fill vacancies, and to provide information to persons interested in careers in education in Southeast Arkansas.

6. **Teacher Job Search**
   Focusing on high-needs areas, NTL candidates and non-employed educators are encouraged to fill current district vacancies. Districts’ current openings are sent to potential teachers and district information is sent to candidates indicating a desire to work in high-needs areas. The program also encourages retired and non-practicing licensed teachers to return to the classroom.

7. **Teachers-Teachers.com**
   An online education job search tool which allows school district hiring personnel to recruit licensed personnel and allows licensed teachers to apply for Arkansas teaching positions online. ADE, through a joint effort between Special Education and Teacher Recruitment, provides free registration for all school districts. A fulltime support person works with each district’s hiring personnel to register, post vacancies and search the database for licensed teachers. All of Arkansas school districts are registered as users. As of March, 2006 over 2000 licensed Arkansas teachers had registered and 7,856 licensed non-Arkansas residents indicated a preference to teach in the state.

8. **Troops to Teachers-Arkansas**
   A federal program administered by the US DOE and managed by the US DOD to allow eligible military personnel to transition to a new career as public school teachers in schools serving students from designated “high-needs” districts. A fulltime Arkansas recruiter aggressively canvases in state and out-of-state military
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bases to provide information on financial incentives those who will teach in high-needs areas.

9. **University and College Job Fairs Recruitment**
   
   Exhibit across the state to encourage students to work in Arkansas and to become licensed in a critical shortage geographic or subject matter area. Information is dispersed on teaching, critical shortage areas and financial aid incentives.

10. [www.teacharkansas.org](http://www.teacharkansas.org)

    The TeachArkansas website has been utilized to promote and inform on the various programs and events throughout the year. It allows the general public, school district personnel as well as current and prospective teachers to view information regarding becoming a teacher in Arkansas. Pages on NTL allow individuals to review the program requirements, to determine their eligibility prior to entering and it provides access to contacts for more in depth inquiries. Educator Career Fair information is posted to inform attendees on the schedule and directions to the event. Teacher Recruitment IHE job fair schedules are posted so current and potential teachers know when and where to meet their TeachArkansas Recruiters in person. The Teacher Job Search links hiring personnel and applicants to the online search engine Teachers-Teachers.com for recruitment and employment purposes.