2-325 Arizona Teachers Academy

Revision Dates

10/1/2026, 11/20/2025, 2/11/2022, 6/11/2021, 4/16/2021, 2/12/2021, 11/22/2019 (adopted)

A. As provided in A.R.S. § 15-1655, and as further defined in this policy, eligible postsecondary institutions shall provide scholarships to eligible students enrolled in the Arizona Teachers Academy, who commit to teaching in Arizona public schools.

B. Postsecondary Institution Eligibility

1. Eligible postsecondary institutions are defined by A.R.S. § 15-1655.

2. Arizona community colleges and Indian tribes that qualify as eligible postsecondary institutions under A.R.S. § 15-1655 shall execute an agreement with, and return the agreement to, the board prior to the dissemination of any Teachers Academy funds.

3. Eligible postsecondary institutions may develop new or existing teacher preparation programs that are student-focused and that employ proven, research-based models of best practices.

a. Programs offered as part of the Teachers Academy may include the accelerated models provided by A.R.S. § 15-1655(B).

b. While each Teacher Academy eligible program may not exclude sophomore and freshman students from applying for the program, each program may give priority to senior and junior students for any available scholarships.

C. Student Eligibility

1. To be eligible for an Arizona Teachers Academy tuition and fees scholarship, students must meet the following criteria:

~~a.~~ Be admitted and enrolled in the Arizona Teachers Academy as an undergraduate, post-baccalaureate, or graduate university or community college student.

b. File a free application for federal student aid (FAFSA) each year enrolled in the Arizona Teachers Academy and accept all federal, state, institutional, and private grants and scholarships awarded prior to the tuition waiver scholarship being applied to outstanding tuition and fees associated with the Arizona Teachers Academy program of study.

2. To be eligible for a tuition scholarship to earn dual enrollment eligibility, a teacher must:

a. Be currently teaching a dual enrollment course; and

b. Need additional coursework to satisfy the accreditation requirements for the eligible postsecondary institution.

3. Prior to receiving any Teachers Academy funding for any covered purpose under A.R.S. § 15-1655, a student must sign a student agreement that requires the student to meet the eligibility requirements for the Arizona Teachers Academy and specifies the terms of continuing eligibility, the post-graduation or post-certification service obligations, the student's repayment obligations due to failure to meet the eligibility requirements or service obligations, the possibility for collections activity in the case of default, and any other terms required by the Executive Director or their designee.

D. Tuition and Fee Scholarships

1. Tuition and fee scholarships are last dollar scholarships that cover the cost of tuition and fees after all other gift aid is received.

2. Scholarships provided through the Arizona Teachers Academy may include:

a. Up to the actual cost of tuition and fees for a maximum of two academic years or four semesters for graduate students;

b. Up to the actual cost of tuition and fees for a maximum of four academic years or eight semesters for undergraduate university and community college students.

c. Up to the actual cost of obtaining the requisite course work, but not to exceed a maximum of two academic years or four semesters for graduate university students, to satisfy the requirements for teaching

a dual enrollment course as adopted by a higher learning commission that accredits degree-granting postsecondary educational institutions in the north central region, including this state.

d. For the purposes of this section, summer terms are not considered part of the academic year nor count as one of the scholarship semesters.

E. Support for National Board Certification

1. To be eligible for a national board certification scholarship, a teacher must be currently employed in an Arizona public school and seeking National Board Certification through an approved provider as identified by the executive director.

2. The executive director shall identify postsecondary institutions that provide support for National Board Certification.

3. Each postsecondary institution that enters into an agreement with the board for National Board Certification funding shall provide one-time scholarship to teachers currently employed in an Arizona public school seeking National Board Certification to support the fees associated with initial certification.

4. The amount of funding available for National Board Certification shall be approved by the board.

F. Coordinating Induction Services

1. Eligible postsecondary institutions shall provide induction services to academy graduates during the first year of teaching immediately following completion of the Teachers Academy.

a. Induction services are only provided in the first year if the graduate is in the process of meeting his or her service obligations within the required timeframe.

b. Institutions are not required to provide induction services to students who have not met the service obligation.

2. Funding for induction will be based on the number of academy graduates that graduated in the prior fiscal year.

3. Institutions may be required to report to the board regarding the induction services provided.

G. Distributing Monies in the Arizona Teachers Academy Fund to Eligible Postsecondary Institutions

1. For each fiscal year, board staff shall notify eligible postsecondary institutions of the amount of funds allocated to the institution for the upcoming fiscal year.

   a. Scholarship funding allocations shall be based on prior year enrollment in the Arizona Teachers Academy at the participating institutions and subject to legislative appropriations and any other sources of revenue to the Arizona Teachers Academy fund.

   b. Tuition scholarship funding is last dollar scholarships that cover the cost of tuition and fees after all other gift aid is received.

2. Eligible postsecondary institutions shall provide to the executive director or the executive director's designee, the actual amount of scholarships provided in Academy programs identified by student, and any other documents and related data as requested.

3. The executive director shall make distributions based on the reported actual amount of scholarships provided appropriately prorated for the applicable academic period.

   a. The executive director may reallocate unused scholarship funds among the eligible postsecondary institutions.

   b. The executive director shall reimburse eligible postsecondary institutions for inductions services offered in the first year after completion of the Arizona Teachers Academy program.

   c. The executive director shall distribute monies for National Board Certification to institutions that have entered into an agreement with the board to offer scholarships to Arizona teachers seeking National Board Certification.

4. The executive director may prorate any distributed funding based on the amount of dollars available.

5. The executive director may establish a process for and distribute funds to cover the costs of obtaining a teaching certificate, including the cost of

exams required for certification. If a student does not follow the proscribed payment process, they may not be eligible for reimbursement.

H. Compliance with Arizona Teachers Academy Program and Service Obligations and Conditions of Repayment

1. Prior to receipt of funds, a student shall enter into a written agreement as discussed in subsection C (3) of this policy, which shall set forth the terms of repayment of funds in the event the recipient does not satisfy the teaching or program obligations.

    a. For each academic year that the student successfully completes and for which the student receives an Arizona Teachers Academy Scholarship, the student must agree to teach for one full school year in a public school in this state.

        i. If the student does not fulfill the student's obligation to teach in a public school, the student must reimburse the Arizona Board of Regents for the proportional amount of the scholarship for tuition and fees that the student received that corresponds to the number of school years the student agreed to teach but did not teach in a public school in this state.

    b. For students who are teaching and receiving the scholarship concurrently, the commitment period beings after graduation from the Arizona Teachers Academy.

    c. For teachers who are seeking a national board certification, the teaching commitment is one additional year after completing the requirements of the national board certification program obligations.

2. If a student enrolls in a summer term, that term may not be included in the calculation of the student's postgraduation public service commitment.

3. Students who do not successfully complete the academic year in good academic standing or who cease to be enrolled in the Arizona Teachers Academy shall reimburse the board for the total amount of funding received for that year.

4. The executive director or the executive director's designee shall monitor Arizona Teachers Academy graduates' progress toward meeting their teaching obligations.

5. Recipients will have a grace period of 12 months after graduation, or completion of an approved course of study leading to a teaching credential, to sign a teaching contract in an Arizona public school.

6. If the recipient has not secured employment to teach in an Arizona public school and submitted any requested documentation to the Board office or designee, the repayment shall begin at the end of the 12-month grace period.

7. Students who do not fulfill their obligation to teach in an Arizona public school shall reimburse the board for the proportional amount of the scholarship for tuition and fees that the student received that corresponds to the number of school years the student agreed to teach but did not teach.

8. The board staff or designee shall establish repayment terms consistent with the student's agreement, including an amortization schedule. Repayment shall be interest-free and shall not exceed ten years. The executive director or the executive director's designee may establish administrative procedures governing repayment, deferment, collections, and referral of delinquent accounts.

I. Deferment of the Service Obligation

1. The executive director or the executive director’s designee, upon written request of a recipient, may grant deferment of time for satisfying the teaching commitment if the recipient:

   a. Is temporarily unable to work and/or disabled for a period not to exceed three years, as established by written documentation from a health care provider, or

   b. Is called to active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States, or

   c. Is enrolled, registered and progressing toward timely degree completion in a graduate degree program that would delay required teaching requirement to one year following completion of the graduate degree program or two years post-bachelor’s degree, whichever is less, or

   d. Is unable to fulfill their teaching commitment due to extraordinary circumstances beyond their control.

2. In each case, the recipient must provide complete and verifiable documentation to support the request.

J. Cancellation of Service Obligation

1. The executive director or the executive director's designee, may cancel the service obligation made under this program if they determine that:

   a. The recipient is totally and permanently disabled as established by written documentation by a health care provider;

   b. The recipient has died. The executive director or the executive director's designee shall require a copy of the death certificate or other appropriate confirmation of the recipient's death; or

   c. The recipient or their spouse was relocated out of state by the Armed Forces of the United States.

K. Data Collection and Reporting

1. Each eligible postsecondary institution shall provide to the board as specified by the executive director or the executive director's designee, information as requested by board staff to meet the board's reporting requirements under A.R.S. § 15-1655(H).

2. Each eligible postsecondary institution shall provide to the board as specified by the executive director or by the executive director's designee, information as requested by board staff to meet the board's reporting requirements under A.R.S. § 15-1655(G).

L. Definitions

1. Public School: for the purposes of fulfilling the service obligation, "public school" refers to any public institution as defined in A.R.S. § 15-101(22), and explicitly includes, but is not limited to:

   a. Charter schools as defined in A.R.S. § 15-101(3); and

   b. Schools that serve primarily public school students with disabilities as defined in A.R.S. § 15-1655.

2. Teach: for the purposes of fulfilling the service obligation, "Teach" means to be employed in an Arizona public school in a position which devotes at

least fifty percent of the person's time to the planning and delivery of instruction and evaluation of student learning.

Policy History

11/22/2019	Approved by the Board on second reading.
2/12/2021	Policy revision approved by the Board on first reading with immediate implementation.
4/16/2021	Policy revision approved by the Board on second reading. Another revision was also approved by the Board on first reading with immediate implementation.
6/11/2021	Policy revision approved by the Board on second reading.
2/11/2022	Policy revision approved by the Board on second reading.
11/20/2025	Policy revision approved by the Board on second reading.
10/1/2026	Policy revision approved by the Board on first reading with immediate implementation.

Related Information