

Tomorrow's Teachers Scholarship Program (TTSP)

Background:

The Tomorrow's Teachers Scholarship Program is purposed to attract and encourage a diverse population of qualified high school and currently enrolled college students to teach in the Massachusetts public school system. The scholarship is designed to provide financial assistance for tuition, fees, and related educational costs, as calculated by the institution in the Cost of Attendance (COA), for a bachelor's degree or post-baccalaureate coursework at an eligible public institution of higher education in the Commonwealth, that meets the certification requirements for employment at a Massachusetts public elementary or secondary school. This program is subject to appropriation.

Eligible Institution:

A 4-year public institution within the public system of higher education under Section 5 of Chapter 15A of the General Laws.

Eligible Program:

Any undergraduate degree program or post-baccalaureate coursework in an approved educator preparation program at a 4-year public institution within the public system of higher education under Section 5 of Chapter 15A of the General Laws.

Eligible Student:

To be eligible for the Tomorrow's Teachers Scholarship Program, an applicant must:

- Be a permanent legal resident of Massachusetts for at least 12 months (1 year) prior to the start of the academic year and remain a permanent resident to maintain eligibility
- Be a U.S. Citizen or non-citizen eligible under Title IV regulations
- Annually complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) for consideration of scholarship funds
- Not be in default on any federal or state Student Loans for attendance at any institution, or owe a refund for any previous state financial aid program
- Has not earned prior baccalaureate degree, or the equivalent, except for those pursuing or intending to pursue post-baccalaureate course work in an approved educator preparation program at a Massachusetts 4-year public institution of higher education
- Enroll, as a matriculated student, in an undergraduate or post baccalaureate degree program, full-time (minimum of 12 credits, or the equivalent), unless otherwise agreed upon, in an approved course of study that meets the licensure requirements for employment at a Massachusetts public elementary or secondary school
- Meet satisfactory academic progress (SAP) according to the institution's requirements.

Scholarship Conditions and Recipient Responsibilities:

- Complete the scholarship application and sign a promissory note, annually, for continuation of scholarship funds.
- Provide an official transcript at the conclusion of each academic year to confirm continued eligibility requirements for program of study and progress towards degree completion. Incoming first-year students are required to submit a declaration of their major from the institution's registrar's office.
- Sign a scholarship agreement to "obtain the appropriate certification in accordance with section 38G of chapter 71" and "commit to teaching for 4 years in a school district, as defined in section 2 of chapter 70, in the commonwealth." Failure to complete the required 4-year teaching service will result in a repayment of funds as defined in the agreement.
- Become employed as a teacher of record, within 12 months of degree completion or the completion of post-baccalaureate course work in an approved educator preparation program
- Annually provide proof of employment to document fulfillment of the service obligation
- Acknowledge that this scholarship is considered repayment through service and in absence of fulfilling that commitment, the scholarship reverts to a loan that must be repaid by the scholarship recipient, per the terms of the Scholarship Promissory Note.
- Acknowledge the set forth repayment through service schedule, that one year of teaching will forgive one year of scholarship.

Award Value:

Subject to appropriation, the academic year award amount for eligible applicants under this program shall not exceed \$25,000 per student, as determined annually by the Department of Higher Education. The scholarship may be used to cover educational expenses included in the COA, as calculated by the institution. This may include, but is not limited to, tuition, fees, room and board, books and supplies, transportation, childcare, and personal expenses, for a bachelor's degree program or post-baccalaureate coursework.

Students at the undergraduate level may receive scholarship funds for up to a maximum of 4 years, 8 semesters (120 credits). An additional year of scholarship assistance may be awarded based on extenuating circumstances, with an approval of a written appeal.

Students pursuing post baccalaureate coursework may receive scholarship funds for up to a maximum of 3 semesters.

Award Disbursement:

Each participating institution must certify that the recipient is eligible in accordance with guidelines established for the Tomorrow's Teachers Scholarship Program and verify that the student is enrolled in an approved educator preparation program. Additionally, disbursement of awards will not be made until the student's signed promissory note has been received and approved.

Forfeiture of Scholarship Award:

Recipients of the Tomorrow's Teachers Scholarship Program who fail to complete their teaching obligation, are required to repay all scholarship funds, as outlined in the promissory note.

Participation Agreements:

All institutions receiving funds under the Tomorrow's Teachers Scholarship Program for eligible recipients must have an active Massachusetts State Financial Aid Participation Agreement on file with the Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA).

Audit Requirements:

- a) It shall be the responsibility of each college and university to maintain documentation of a recipient student's eligibility for the Tomorrow's Teachers Scholarship Program.
- b) The Commissioner shall require each campus to furnish annually to the Board of Higher Education a report detailing specific information regarding recipients of the Tomorrow's Teachers Scholarship Program. OSFA will coordinate specification and procedures for this report.
- c) All financial books, records and documents pertaining to this program shall, at all times, be open to inspection, review, and audit by the Commissioner, the State Auditor or their authorized representatives who shall have access to the premises wherever such books, records, and documents are located. The institution shall retain such financial books, records, and documents for seven years. An institution may retain such records for a period of five years if approval is received from the Records Conservation Board in accordance with General Laws, Chapter 30, Section 42.