



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 the [Standard Teaching Certificate](#) in the area of early childhood special education, mild/moderate disabilities, moderate/severe disabilities, deaf/hard of hearing, or visually impaired. See the [Special Education Teacher Certification Pathways](#) for more information. 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, 2025, 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 21, 2025**. Late or incomplete applications (including those without all required signatures or unofficial transcripts) may not be considered.

Complete the [SETTA Application Form](#) and email the completed application cover page (found in this document on page 2) along with an unofficial transcript(s) to the [Educator Recruitment and Retention Inbox](#) using the subject line [District or charter school name]: 2025 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 the [ESS Recruitment and Retention Inbox](#).

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 must 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 transcript, (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 ADE ESS SETTA program coordinator or designee after the award.
14. The PEA SETTA program coordinator will send the Educator ID number from the Special Education Teacher Certificate to ESSRandR@azed.gov 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, procedure, 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.

SETTA Application Preview

Use this application preview as a note-taking guide before completing the [SETTA Application Form](#). Please note that all responses must be submitted in the [SETTA Application Form](#).

Contact Information

1. Provide the name of the public education agency.
2. Provide the name of the special education director.
3. Provide the email address of the special education director.
4. Provide the phone number of the special education director.
5. Provide the name of the SETTA project coordinator.
6. Provide the email address of the SETTA project coordinator.
7. Provide the phone number of the SETTA project coordinator.
8. Provide the name of the supervisor/mentor teacher/instructional coach.
9. Provide the email address of the supervisor/mentor teacher/instructional coach.
10. Provide the phone number of the supervisor/mentor teacher/instructional coach.

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.

11. Describe the methods used to solicit your eligible candidate. Explain why the candidate was selected. Cite multiple sources (250 word maximum). Some considerations may have been the review of:
 - The recommendation provided by the candidate's direct supervisor.
 - Performance evaluations.
 - Work record and attendance.
 - Previous college experience or specialized training and licenses or certificates
 - Interactions with school staff.
 - Rapport with the students, especially with students with disabilities, who are served by this candidate.
12. Please list any other factors about the PEA or community that are relevant to this application. (250 word maximum)

Candidate Information

The candidate must be a paraprofessional or educational interpreter who is serving students in the classroom and have been employed by the PEA for two full school years by June 30, 2025.

13. Provide the SETTA candidate's name.
14. Provide the SETTA candidate's job title/position.
15. Provide the SETTA candidate's email address.
16. Provide the SETTA candidate's phone number.
17. Provide the grades served by the SETTA candidate in their current position.
18. Enter the dates the candidate has been employed at the PEA (month/year-month/year).

Candidate Narrative

19. To be completed by the teacher candidate: In no more than 500 words, describe why you are pursuing a career in special education and your plans and goals as a special education teacher following your graduation and certification.

Previous College or University Coursework

20. Please indicate college or university degree already attained. Attach an unofficial transcript(s) with application cover page. If no degree has been acquired yet, please select "None."
- None
 - Associate's degree
 - Bachelor's degree
 - Master's degree
21. Does the candidate have previous coursework to apply toward this degree? If yes, please include an unofficial transcript(s) with application cover page.
- No
 - Yes

Anticipated Community College or University Educator Preparation Program of Attendance

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.

22. Provide the community college or university name(s) the candidate plans to attend. If the candidate plans to attend one institution of higher education and then plans to transfer to another institution to complete the degree requirements required for the special education teacher certification, please provide the names of both institutions.
23. Provide the name of the degree the candidate plans to pursue.
24. Provide the website showing degree course requirements.
25. Provide the tuition and fees schedule website(s) from the college or university the candidate plans to attend.

Certification

26. Please indicate the appropriate Standard Teaching Certificate the candidate will be pursuing below.
- Early Childhood Special Education, Birth through Grade 3
 - Mild/Moderate Disabilities, K-12
 - Moderate/Severe Disabilities, K-12
 - Deaf/Hard of Hearing, Birth-Grade 12
 - Visually Impaired, Birth-Grade 12

PEA Accountability Plan and Supports for Successful Outcomes

Please describe the accountability measures that the PEA will have in place to track and monitor the completion of program requirements.

27. To be completed by the mentor teacher: The PEA is responsible for ensuring the success of the candidate. Describe the support mechanisms the PEA will have in place to promote the candidate's successful completion of the program and ensure the candidate's retention in special education. (250 word maximum).
28. To be completed by the mentor teacher or SETTA coordinator at the district or charter: Describe the plan 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) and the resources that will be available to the candidate if he or she struggles with the content of a class. (250 word maximum).
29. To be completed by the SETTA program coordinator at the district or charter: Describe the

arrangements for the completion of the student teaching experience. (250 word maximum)

30. Provide the name, title, and email address of the person who will complete the follow-up survey and ensure that a copy of the SETTA candidate's transcript indicating degree completion and the Educator ID number from ADE Certification are sent to ADE/ESS.