

Alabama Math and Science Teacher Education Program (AMSTEP)

Administrative Procedures

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300-4-12-.07 Organization for Loan Repayment Program

(1) It is the responsibility of the Alabama Commission on Higher Education (ACHE) to establish rules and regulations for the administration and implementation of the Alabama Math and Science Teacher Education Program (AMSTEP) Loan Repayment Program. The program will be administered in accordance with the policies and procedures established by the Alabama Commission on Higher Education.

(2) The Alabama Commission on Higher Education appoints such staff as are necessary to ensure efficient operation of the program and is the final authority in determining eligible program applicants.

Author: Tim Vick

Statutory Authority: Alabama Act 2018-504

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300-4-12-.08 Purpose of Loan Repayment Program

(1) To encourage individuals to enroll in and complete programs leading to Alabama certification in mathematics or science.

(2) To improve the educational system in Alabama by encouraging those who complete the program to accept math or science teaching positions in Alabama public schools, preferably in public school systems where the shortage of math or science teachers, or both, is most acute.

Author: Tim Vick

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300-4-12-.09 Definitions for Loan Repayment Program

(1) APPROVED INSTITUTION. A state-supported institution of higher education or a private nonprofit institution of higher education that satisfies all of the following:

(a) Is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges.

(b) Is approved by the Alabama State Board of Education (ALSBE) to prepare teachers of secondary math or science, or both.

(c) Is eligible to receive Title IV federal student aid program funds.

(d) Maintains its primary headquarters in Alabama.

(2) COMMISSION. The Alabama Commission on Higher Education.

(3) ELIGIBLE APPLICANT. A person who satisfies the criteria set out in this act and is found to be eligible by rules adopted by the Alabama Commission on Higher Education.

(4) PROGRAM. The Alabama Math and Science Teacher Education Program created by this act and administered by the commission that provides loan repayments to a teacher with a valid Alabama professional educator certificate endorsed in math or science, who teaches math or science full-time in the Alabama public school system.

(5) SCIENCE. Biology, chemistry, physics, and general science. The ALSBE approved general science certificate includes all sciences with the exception of computer science.

(6) YEAR. A school year that shall be divided into fall and spring semesters. The term does not mean calendar, fiscal, or scholastic year.

Author: Tim Vick

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300-4-12-.10 Rule Making Authority for Loan Repayment Program

(1) The Alabama Math and Science Teacher Education Program shall be administered by the commission, which may adopt any rules necessary for the administration of the program.

Author: Tim Vick

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300-4-12-.11 Eligible Applicants and Award Amounts for Loan Repayment Program

(1) Base Program: To be eligible for the base loan repayment program of two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500) per semester worked or \$5,000 per year, for a maximum of four consecutive years, an applicant shall satisfy all of the following:

(a) Be a graduate of a ALSBE approved program in math or science beginning with the Spring term of 2018, at the baccalaureate or master's level, from an approved institution leading to an initial secondary professional educator certificate endorsed in math or science. A teacher who only earns a passing score on the Praxis test in math or science to add a certificate endorsement for math or science, and who has not completed an entire approved program, does not satisfy this requirement.

(b) Holds a valid Alabama professional educator certificate endorsed in secondary math or science, or both.

(c) Is teaching math or science full-time in an Alabama public school district or at an Alabama Public Charter School Commission approved charter school.

(d) Is a citizen or a lawful permanent resident of the United States.

(e) Has been a resident of Alabama for at least 12 months before the application deadline and provides documentation proving a permanent connection to the State of Alabama. The commission shall accept any one of the following as proof of residency:

1. A current valid Alabama driver's license.
2. A current valid Alabama vehicle registration.
3. A current valid Alabama voter registration card.

(f) Has outstanding federal student loans, subsidized or unsubsidized.

(2) Supplemental Program: In order to receive a supplement pursuant to this act, in addition to all of the criteria listed above, a recipient shall also teach math or science, or both, in a geographic area within the state with an acute teacher shortage in math or science, or both. The supplement is an additional two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500) per year, or one thousand two hundred fifty dollars (\$1,250) per semester worked, for a maximum of four consecutive years.

(a) Geographic areas with acute shortages in math or science or both will be identified by the Commission in consultation with the State

Department of Education.

(b) The Commission will approve the geographic areas in which teachers will be eligible for the supplement.

(c) The list of eligible geographic areas will be published on the Commission's website.

Author: Tim Vick

Statutory Authority: Alabama Act 2018-504

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300-4-12-12 Application Procedures for Loan Repayment Program

(1) Information concerning the Loan Repayment Program shall be:

(a) Sent to the Alabama State Department of Education for distribution to the local school districts;

(b) Sent to the Alabama Education Association for distribution to its members;

(c) Sent to the Schools/Colleges of Education at all Alabama State Board of Education approved institutions;

(d) Posted on the ACHE website.

(2) Applications shall be made to the Commission on Higher Education. Applications shall be posted on the Commission's website.

(3) Applications must be received by ACHE by August 1 of each year.

(4) Loan repayment award recipients must reapply for the program annually.

(5) In addition to the application, each applicant must submit the following:

(a) Documentation that they are a graduate of an approved institution offering ALSBE approved certification programs in math or science. Submitted one time.

(b) Documentation that they hold a valid Alabama professional educator certificate endorsed in secondary math or science, or both. Submitted one time and then again when renewed.

(c) Documentation from the employing school district or at an Alabama Public Charter School Commission approved charter school that they taught the previous semester. This may be a letter from either their superintendent's office or their supervising principal. Submitted prior to each requested payment.

(d) Documentation that they hold a federal student loan. Documentation must include the amount owed. If the award amount is larger than the outstanding loan balance, the award amount shall be reduced to the amount of the loan balance. Submitted prior to each requested payment.

Author: Tim Vick

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300-4-12-.13 Procedures for Loan Repayment Program

(1) The requirements of this program, are contingent upon available funding for the program. If funding is not adequate to cover the cost of all applicants, funds will be distributed based on a first come first serve basis.

(2) Loan repayment awards shall be distributed directly to the recipient teacher in two disbursements during the applicable year: One disbursement after January 1 and the second disbursement after June 1.

(3) Payments will not be distributed for partial completion of a semester of work.

(4) The recipient shall notify the commission in writing of any change in status within 30 days after the change. Failure to notify the commission of a change in status shall affect future eligibility. All of the following constitute a change in status:

- a. A change in name.
- b. A change in residence.
- c. A change in employment status.

(5) To receive a loan repayment check pursuant to this act, an approved applicant must register online with the State of Alabama's Comptroller Office. It is the responsibility of the individual to register, the Commission cannot register someone on the Vender Services System (VSS).

(6) A loan repayment check is considered income by the United States Internal Revenue Service and must be reported as such. Recipients shall be made aware of that fact.

(7) Any funds appropriated to the program are considered non-reverting.

Author: Tim Vick

Statutory Authority: Alabama Act 2018-504

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300-4-12-.14 Appeal for Loan Repayment Program

Any person aggrieved by the actions of the Commission in its administration of this rule may, by written petition filed with the Commission within thirty (30) days after notice of the action complained of, request a rehearing by the Commission. The Commission shall schedule the requested rehearing no less than twenty (20) days, nor more than thirty (30) days after receipt of the petition. The aggrieved party may present written and oral evidence supporting its petition and may be represented by counsel, if desired. The decision of the Commission following the rehearing shall be final.

Author: Tim Vick

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