Participant Handbook

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TEACH EARLY CHILDHOOD® NEBRASKA

A Program of Nebraska Association for the Education of Young Children

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Welcome and Introduction

Dear TEACH Recipients and Sponsoring Programs:

Congratulations on receiving a TEACH Early Childhood® Nebraska scholarship! I hope you are proud of your decision to continue your education. As a recipient, you should be proud of your commitment to increasing your knowledge and skills. Higher education is a key component of a high-quality early childhood program that will benefit the children and families you serve. As a sponsoring program, you are investing in the future quality of your program. The fact that your program is making this investment demonstrates your commitment to children and families.

Whether you are a recipient or a sponsoring program, the purpose of this handbook is to orient you to the TEACH Early Childhood® Nebraska program. It is important to have a clear understanding of TEACH to maximize your scholarship benefits and to get the most from your experience. Please read it carefully. Throughout this scholarship, I will serve as a counselor and guide for recipients and sponsoring programs. Feel free to discuss any issues related to the scholarship with me.

If there are any questions or concerns, I'm available to help. My job is to serve and support both recipients and sponsoring programs as we are all partners in this process for the benefit of Nebraska's children.

Sincerely,

Julie R. Warford
TEACH Program Coordinator
Nebraska Association for the Education of Young Children

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1 – Overview of the TEACH Early Childhood® Nebraska Scholarship

A. History

The TEACH (Teacher Education and Compensation Helps) Early Childhood® program was created by Child Care Services Association, now known as Early Years, in Chapel Hill, NC in 1990 with the purpose of increasing the level of education of teachers working with children age birth to five, while making college education affordable, decreasing turnover, and increasing wages.

Since its beginning, the program has received national attention due to linking teacher education and compensation. The program has expanded to over 20 states. Nebraska has administered the TEACH Early Childhood® scholarship since 2001. We have a variety of models to help early care and education providers work towards early childhood certificates, diplomas, degrees, and teaching certificates, or just complete early childhood coursework to meet a program's staffing qualifications.

B. Administering Agency

TEACH Early Childhood® Nebraska is administered by the Nebraska Association for the Education of Young Children (NeAEYC). NeAEYC is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to representing the Nebraska early childhood workforce and serving their needs. NeAEYC has worked for many years to promote quality care and education for the children of Nebraska.

C. Role of the Program Coordinator

The job of the Program Coordinator is to provide college and scholarship guidance to TEACH recipients and their sponsoring programs. They process scholarship paperwork and regularly communicate with participating colleges and universities. They hold a minimum of a bachelor's degree in early childhood education or a related field. They come to our program having had a variety of experiences in the early care and education field.

The Program Coordinator is available to assist you if there are questions regarding the scholarship, if you need help contacting your school, selecting courses, or just need guidance on balancing work, school, and personal responsibilities. Keeping in contact

with your Program Coordinator will help ensure you are always on the right path with your education plan.

D. Role of the Sponsoring Program

The TEACH Early Childhood® scholarship is not just a partnership with the recipient. The sponsoring program plays a key role in supporting the recipient as they journey through the education program. Having the financial and moral support of the sponsoring program is a critical key to success for TEACH recipients. While the recipient is in school, the sponsoring program will:

- Pay for 10% of the cost of in-state tuition and books for the recipient,
- Provide release time, and
- Provide additional compensation in the form of a bonus or raise after the recipient successfully completes a contract.

E. Confidentiality

NeAEYC shall respect and maintain the confidentiality of all personal information. All information is maintained electronically on an encrypted drive with secure passwords. We will not sell your personal information. *However, information concerning employment, scholarship, and/or academic status may be shared with your sponsoring program and/or school*.

F. Funding

The financial support of our partners is imperative for the continuation of our program to improve the education of our early childhood workforce. We are appreciative of the confidence our partners have in the TEACH program. Currently, primary funding comes through the Nebraska Department of Education and Step Up to Quality as a subgrant using federal child care funding.

G. Definitions

“Recipient” refers to the early childhood employee who is going to college to obtain a degree in early childhood with help from the TEACH Early Childhood® Nebraska scholarship.

"Sponsoring Program" refers to the child care program where the TEACH recipient is employed at least 30 hours per week.

2 – Eligibility for TEACH Early Childhood® Nebraska

A. Applicants

a. To be eligible for a TEACH Early Childhood® scholarship, an applicant must:
   i. Work at least 30 hours per week in a licensed child care, preschool, or family child care program; Head Start; or approved public school pre-k program in Nebraska,
   ii. Have the support and sponsorship of your employer,
   iii. Be able to financially assist in payment of tuition, fees, and books, &
   iv. Be pursuing early childhood coursework at one of our partnering Nebraska schools.

B. Sponsoring Programs

a. For an employer to sponsor a TEACH Early Childhood® scholarship recipient, a sponsoring program must:
   i. Be listed on the Nebraska Child Care Licensing Roster, if applicable,
   ii. Agree to provide release time to approved scholars and pay annual bonuses or raises for completed contracts, and
   iii. Be able to financially assist in payment of tuition, fees, and books.

3 – Applying for a TEACH Early Childhood® Nebraska Scholarship

TEACH Early Childhood® offers a variety of scholarship models to help finance coursework that leads to college credit in an early childhood related field. Those interested can find all application materials and other resources on our website: www.nebraskaaeyc.org/teach.html. Applications may be submitted by mail to NeAEYC, 650 J St., Suite 23, Lincoln, NE 68508 or they may be emailed to teach@nebraskaaeyc.org.

A. Applications

a. A complete application consists of:
   i. All pages of the application completed by the applicant and sponsoring program (answer every question),
   ii. Income verification (A recent paystub or a detailed statement of income for family child care providers), and

iii. An informal degree audit (bachelor degree applicants).

Approved applicants will receive an award call from the TEACH Program Coordinator. After accepting the scholarship on the call, an award packet, including a TEACH contract and other important documents, will be sent, which must be signed by the recipient and sponsoring program.

TEACH Early Childhood® Nebraska processes applications on a rolling basis. Applications are approved if the applicant meets all qualifications and funding is available.

B. Deferrals

Circumstances often arise that prevent approved scholars from starting classes in the term they originally planned. In such cases, the scholar must inform the Program Coordinator as soon as possible. TEACH Early Childhood® Nebraska will allow scholars to defer their start date by two terms. If more than a two-term deferral is needed, we will drop the current contract and scholars must reapply.

4 – Contract Requirements

A. Overview

Approved applicants will receive a TEACH contract, which must be signed by the applicant, the employer, and TEACH. By signing, all parties indicate they have read, understood, and agree to the terms of the contract and Participant Handbook.

1. As part of the application, applicants signed the Personal Responsibilities Agreement (PRA).
2. Recipients and employers are responsible for paying a percentage of tuition and books each term.
3. Most contracts run for 12 months and are renewed annually until the recipient completes their educational goal.
4. Recipients agree to complete a minimum of nine (9) credit hours (semester system) or twelve (12) credit hours (quarter system) with a C or above during each contract period.*
5. Recipients must maintain employment with their current employer for at least 12 (associate degree) or 18 (bachelor degree) months after the contract is completed.

*If a scholar is unable to complete nine (9) or twelve (12) credits in the contract year, the Program Coordinator will meet to discuss options with the recipient. Progress will be verified each term. If adequate progress is not being made, the TEACH contract will be withdrawn.

B. Contract Renewals

If adequate progress is being made and contract requirements are fulfilled, TEACH contracts will be renewed annually until the contracted coursework is completed.

C. Contract Extensions

At the discretion of the Program Coordinator, a contract may be extended if special circumstances prevent the recipient from completing course requirements within the contract period. Such circumstances must be approved on a case-by-case basis, and only a one-term extension may be granted.

Contracts will normally be extended one term to coincide with a graduation date. Otherwise, a contract may be renewed, even if the scholar will not complete a full year before graduating.

D. Information Changes

Scholars and employers must report all changes to our office as soon as possible. This includes contact information, employment status, school admission and enrollment, and any other factor pertinent to the scholarship. If changes are not reported in a timely manner, repayment will be required for any financial loss sustained by the TEACH program as a result.

5 – Applying to a College or University

A. Choosing a College or University

TEACH Early Childhood® scholarship applicants must select a college or university that has been approved by TEACH. To be approved, a college or university must be a Nebraska-based public institution that is accredited, offer a program in early

childhood education for college credit, and agree to bill TEACH Early Childhood® directly for our recipient's tuition and books.

Applicants may visit our website to see a directory of participating colleges and universities. Applicants must follow the admission and enrollment process for the selected school. The Program Coordinator is available to help any scholar who is unsure about which program might be best. They can also connect potential scholars with contacts at a participating college or university to answer questions. When applying and enrolling, applicants must make sure they select an approved early childhood education program.

Taking placement tests is part of the admissions process at many Nebraska colleges and universities. Applicants should allow plenty of time for admissions decisions. If an applicant has previous college coursework, the college or university will require official transcripts from all colleges or universities attended. The Program Coordinator can also review transcripts to see which credits from previous colleges or universities might transfer. Always get transfer decisions in writing from a school official. TEACH Early Childhood® is unable to pay college application fees, new student enrollment fees, transcript fees, or past due balances.

Recipients must meet the college or university's requirements for admission and graduation. TEACH will withdraw a contract for failure to meet admissions requirements or for not following the approved degree plan set by the college or university.

B. Selecting a Degree Pathway

TEACH Early Childhood® scholarships are awarded only to eligible applicants admitted to approved colleges or universities and enrolled in an early childhood education program.

Recipients starting with a high school diploma should begin their college experience with an associate degree in early childhood education. The Program Coordinator can visit with recipients about which degree and program is most compatible with their situation. Students beginning with an associate degree must complete that degree before moving on to another program.

Recipients who have an associate degree or at least 60 college credits are eligible for a bachelor degree scholarship.

C. Other Financial Aid

Scholars are required to apply for additional financial aid in the form of grants and other scholarships. Students can go to studentaid.gov to apply.

1. **Pell Grants:** Students who qualify for Pell Grants may use this assistance in addition to the TEACH scholarship. Pell Grants will pay for any tuition and book charges first and then TEACH will cover anything it doesn't.
2. **Student Loans:** The goal of the TEACH Early Childhood® scholarship is to help scholars obtain a debt-free education. Terms of student loan repayment often include exorbitant interest rates and monthly payments that extend for decades. Even minimum loan payments can make it difficult, if not impossible, for early childhood professionals to achieve financial security. For this reason, we strongly discourage recipients from accepting student loans. TEACH pays the school in full for tuition and books and then bills recipients and sponsoring programs for their percentage. Loans should be unnecessary for recipients. Be careful and seek guidance before agreeing to any financial aid package offered by your college or university.

D. General Education Requirements

If a student must take transferable general education requirements that are less expensive to complete at a community college, TEACH Early Childhood® requires completion of those courses at the lower-cost institutions as credits that transfer.

6 – Overview of the TEACH Early Childhood® Nebraska Process

A. After Being Accepted to College

1. Recipients will be assigned an advisor by their college or university to help them plan and register for courses. Recipients must make sure they are enrolled in the correct early childhood education program.
2. Recipients are strongly encouraged to enroll in early childhood coursework FIRST to gain confidence in academic skills before registering for more difficult general education courses, such as math and psychology.

B. Steps to Complete Each Semester/Quarter

Plan Courses:

1. Meet with your college advisor every term to plan and register for next term's courses.
2. For recipients new to the scholarship, TEACH highly suggests you start with just one class so you can see how school will fit into your work and personal life.
3. Once established with good grades, they may be approved to take more credit hours.
4. For students that do not have a good grade history established, the number of approved courses each term will be limited by TEACH.
5. Scholars who elect to go over the number of approved courses will need to arrange payment for those courses directly with the college.
6. Approval is needed from sponsoring programs for students with a good grade history to exceed more than the nine (9) or twelve (12) credits in the contract year.

Submit your paperwork:

1. Submit class information as soon as you are officially registered. *ALL SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL BY TEACH AND WILL BE BASED ON EMPLOYER APPROVAL, GRADES, AND COMPLETION OF PAST COURSEWORK*. It must include:
    a. Class name,
    b. Course number,
    c. Credit hours, and
    d. Online or in class.
2. After the class information is received and approved by TEACH, we will email a charge approval to the college/university to give them authorization to bill TEACH Early Childhood® Nebraska for tuition and books. *WITHOUT YOUR CLASS INFORMATION, AN AUTHORIZATION CANNOT BE SENT, WHICH MEANS YOU WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE COST OF YOUR TUITION AND BOOKS*. We are also not responsible for cancelation of registration if your class information is not received in our office.
3. Scholars must let us know <u>immediately</u> if they change classes after their registration has been submitted to TEACH.
4. Scholars will be notified of any unapproved coursework. They will be 100% responsible for tuition, fees, and books associated with any unauthorized course.

5. Scholars may choose to buy or rent books without using their TEACH account. A detailed receipt must be sent immediately after purchase for reimbursement. However, purchasing textbooks using your TEACH account is the easiest way to utilize the scholarship.
6. Scholars and/or employers will log release time throughout the term on the Form C. The employer and the recipient will sign the form before submitting it at the end of the term.
7. Scholars must send a copy of their grade report showing final letter grades. Current grades may be needed before approval of the next term's schedule. Charge approvals for future terms will be placed on hold if there are missing grades.

C. Steps to Complete at the End of a Contract

1. When a contract is complete and up for renewal, the TEACH Program Coordinator will mail new contracts and an Information Update Form to recipients, as well as a notification letter to sponsoring programs.
2. Recipients will complete and return the contract and Information Update Form. Both the recipient and employer must sign each form.
3. Once TEACH receives your final grades to complete your contract, your first half bonus will be requested.
4. Upon graduation, recipients will need to send TEACH a copy of their degree.

D. Other Fees

1. PRAXIS testing fees are eligible for reimbursement by TEACH.
2. TEACH is unable to pay for these additional fees:
    a. Application fees,
    b. Transcript request fees,
    c. New student enrollment fees, and/or
    d. Past due balances with enrollment prior to TEACH participation.

7 – Release Time

Release time is an integral and necessary part of the success of the TEACH Early Childhood® Nebraska (TEACH) bachelor and associate degree scholarship programs. This scholarship component supports the student by freeing time for them to balance the demands of full-time employment, school, and home life.

Release time is paid time away from work for students to go to class, study, or attend to personal needs. The child care program will pay the student for the time away from the program at their normal rate of pay and TEACH will reimburse the program for half of that time at $15.00 per hour.

For example: If a student is normally scheduled to work 40 hours per week, they would only be scheduled 36 hours while classes are in session and they are enrolled, but still paid for 40. The program/student will keep track of the time on the Release Time Claim Form (Form C). If the student takes the full release time, four hours per week for 16 weeks in the semester*, they will claim 64 hours of release time for the term. At the end of the term, the Form C will be signed by both the student and program. The Form C is then submitted to TEACH. The program will be reimbursed for 32 hours (half of the 64) at $15.00 per hour, for a total of $480.00. (We cannot reimburse anything over half of the 64.)

*Students attending a school on the quarter system (MCC only) will claim four hours per week for 11 weeks in the quarter (total of 44 hours for the term). The program will be reimbursed for 22 hours (half of the 44) at $15.00 per hour, for a total of $330.00. (We cannot reimburse anything over half of the 44.)

Who Is Eligible?

• Teachers and teacher assistants participating in the TEACH bachelor or associate degree scholarship programs.
• Family child care providers participating in the TEACH bachelor or associate degree scholarship programs are eligible for a Sub Reimbursement, a similar stipend.
• Directors and assistant directors are ineligible for release time.

How It Works?

• The program and the student will work together each term to develop a schedule for work, school, and release time. The program has the final decision on when release time is given.
• It is a requirement of the TEACH program that the sponsoring program offer the student four hours of release time per week (or the equivalent of), while classes are in session and the student is enrolled. Students do not receive release time for any term that the student does not take classes or if a student drops or withdraws from classes.
• The maximum number of hours that will be reimbursed is four (4) hours per week.
• The maximum number of hours per term that will be reimbursed is 44 hours per quarter (MCC only) or 64 hours per semester (all other schools).

• Release time requirements are meant to be flexible to meet both the student and the program's needs, and may include such options as (but not limited to):

- o Allowing the teacher to come in late or leave early during the week,
- o One half day (4 hours) off per week,
- o One full day (8 hours) off every other week,
- o Pay for lunch break (where they are not responsible for a group of children during this time), or
- o Pay for holidays or snow days that would not normally be paid.

• Students that have the option of staying on-site to utilize program resources for study time should not be counted in classroom ratios during their release time. Students should not be required to stay on-site.
• Programs should not wait to be reimbursed by TEACH to pay their employees the release time. Release time should be included in the employees' regularly scheduled paycheck.
• Students and/or programs track the time the scholarship recipient is off for release time on a Form C. Form C's are mailed to all programs in the acceptance packet and can also be printed from our website at http://www.nebraskaaeyc.org/teach-early-childhoodreg.html under, "Recipients and Sponsor Resources".
• After the end of the term, the student and director will sign the Form C and submit it to TEACH by mail or email. The program will be reimbursed for half of the allowed release time hours at the rate of $15.00 per hour.

8 – Academic Issues

A. Grades

a. Recipients must send a copy of their final grades to the TEACH Program Coordinator at the end of each term once they have been posted. The grade report must list final letter grades and have the recipient's name. Charge approvals will not be sent for the next term for any recipient who has not submitted grades. Recipients who refuse to furnish grade reports will be withdrawn from the TEACH Early Childhood® scholarship. No information about grades will be disclosed outside of TEACH staff, college officials, and their sponsoring program.
b. We can only accept grades of C or above. A grade of D will be treated like an F for purposes of the TEACH contract. In addition, a withdrawn grade does not count toward fulfillment of the minimum credit hours required per contract. If a student receives a grade of incomplete, we may extend the contract an additional term to allow time to record the final letter grade once the course is completed.

B. Repeated Coursework

a. If a grade lower than a C is recorded, the recipient must communicate with the Program Coordinator to discuss an improvement plan for successfully completing the course. This plan may include reducing overall course loads. Recipients should also meet with their college advisor to discuss and plan to successfully complete the course. Advisors may recommend support, such as applying for accommodations for diagnosed disabilities and/or academic coaches, if available. If the Program Coordinator is satisfied with the recipient's plan and motivation, TEACH Early Childhood® will pay for the course a second time. No course will be covered by the TEACH scholarship more than two times.

C. Adding, Dropping, or Withdrawing from a Class

a. Recipients must notify their Program Coordinator as soon as possible if they add, drop, or withdraw from a class. It is the student's responsibility to know the dates of critical deadlines on the college calendar, which can be found in the TEACH section of the Nebraska AEYC website, www.nebraskaaeyc.org.
b. If a recipient fails to drop or withdraw from a class before tuition is charged, the recipient and their sponsoring program will still be responsible for their percentage of the cost of tuition and books. The recipient will also no longer be eligible for their travel stipend or sub reimbursement, if applicable. Sponsoring programs can still claim their release time up to the date when their recipient dropped or withdrew from their class.

D. Field Experience/Practicum Coursework and Student Teaching

a. Most early childhood education programs require some type of practicum, field experience, or both. Recipients should speak directly to their college advisor to find out what the college's rules are about field experience/practicum coursework. Colleges may allow students to complete these courses in the sponsoring program where they are employed. However, they may not.
b. If recipients are required to complete student teaching outside of the program where they are employed, they can still retain their TEACH contract, even though they will temporarily drop below the minimum required working hours at their sponsoring program. Recipients need to inform the Program Coordinator of when they intend to student teach as soon as possible.

E. CDA Scholarship

a. TEACH pays 90% of the cost of the three to four college classes required to obtain the CDA, including textbooks. Recipients are responsible for the other 10%. These classes include:
   i. Introduction to Early Childhood Education,
   ii. Health, Safety, Nutrition,
   iii. Infant / Toddler Development, and/or
   iv. Preschool Child Development.

b. These classes cover the 120 clock hours of professional development required for the CDA and will eventually transfer towards an associate degree in early childhood education.

c. TEACH pays a $250 bonus once coursework is complete. Recipients will submit a copy of their transcript and a copy of their CDA certificate to receive their bonus.

d. No sponsoring program is required for the CDA scholarship.

F. Praxis Exams

a. TEACH will reimburse PRAXIS testing fees at 100% for bachelor degree recipients. For TEACH to send a reimbursement check, recipients will need to submit a copy of their receipt and their scores. Any outstanding balance will be deducted from a reimbursement.

9 – Finances

A. Responsibilities

a. It is the responsibility of recipients and sponsoring programs to pay their percentage of tuition and books each term. If there is a balance owing on an account, the balance must be cleared prior to the beginning of the next term. When agreeing to sponsor a TEACH recipient, sponsoring programs must ensure they have the financial resources necessary, especially if they have multiple recipients. Please talk with the Program Coordinator if you ever have any concerns about the financial aspects of the scholarship.

B. Payment of Tuition and Fees

a. TEACH pays for 100% of the cost of tuition and books up front and then waits for the college to send us the invoice for all of our TEACH recipients later on in the term. Sometimes we won't receive the invoice from the college until the end of the term, so recipients may see that they still owe money in their

account. Most of the time, that is just there as an FYI, since TEACH hasn't been billed yet. If a recipient has a question about this, they will want to contact the business office at their school, not the financial aid office, since TEACH is considered third-party billing, not financial aid.

b. Once TEACH receives the invoice from the college, we will determine the sponsoring program's 10% of the cost of their recipient's tuition and books, as well as the recipient's 10% of the cost of tuition and books. (For family child care providers and director-owners, we will determine their 20%.) At that time, we will then send the recipient an invoice or a check. The check would be for the difference between the recipient's travel stipend, their sub reimbursement, if they're a family child care provider, and their 10% or 20% of the cost of tuition and books. (For sponsoring programs, an invoice or a check will not be sent until release time has been submitted in order to deduct the claim amount from the balance due.)
c. Checks can occasionally be delayed since we have to request and wait for the money from our funders before checks can be issued. Please don't delay in cashing or depositing any checks once they are received.

C. Travel Stipend

a. Recipients are eligible for a travel stipend each term they are registered and completing coursework. TEACH will automatically process a claim for the travel stipend. Tuition and books will be deducted from travel stipends. If recipients drop or withdraw from their coursework, they will no longer be eligible for a travel stipend.

D. Bonus and/or Raise

a. Upon completion of a TEACH contract, recipients are eligible for a $350 bonus from TEACH given in two increments of $175 each. The first half of the bonus is awarded as soon as the recipient completes their TEACH contract. The second half is awarded six months later after their employment has been verified at their sponsoring program.
b. Recipients are also eligible for either a matching bonus, given in the same two increments from their sponsoring program, or a 2% raise, depending on what the sponsoring program has agreed to on the recipient's application.
c. For family child care providers and director-owners, they are eligible for the $350 bonus from TEACH given in the same two increments. To verify employment, the Program Coordinator will confirm their licensure on the Nebraska Child Care Licensing Roster.

d. A recipient who leaves their sponsoring program for any reason forfeits any unpaid portion of a bonus.

E. Shortened Terms

a. If a college has shortened and/or multiple terms in one semester or quarter, we will not pay additional stipends and release time/sub reimbursements for each term or intersession. For example, we will consider the entire summer term one semester or quarter.

F. Tax Information

a. Recipients receiving payments totaling $600 or more during the calendar year will receive a 1099 form prepared by the TEACH agency.
b. In most situations, the issues are the same for center-based teachers / directors as well as family child care providers. However, family child care providers face some unique issues when addressing the reporting of income and expenses associated with receiving a TEACH scholarship to the IRS. Because family child care providers may operate as a sole proprietor or an incorporated business, issues of tracking and reporting income and expenses will be different depending on the way in which the business is organized.
c. Tuition and Books
    i. IRS Publication 970 “Tax Benefits for Education” identifies the circumstances under which a scholarship is taxable or non-taxable. Much depends on the intent of the recipient being a candidate for a degree as well as the purpose for which the funds are given, i.e. tuition vs. books, vs. travel, etc. The deductibility of educational expenses depends on whether the course of study improves skills in a current profession or if the individual is receiving training to enter a new profession. So much depends on the point of view and intentions of the recipient that it is hard to make a definitive statement. The portion of tuition and books paid by the recipient may be deductible as educational expenses if the recipient qualifies for such a deduction. Providers should check to see if they qualify to take educational expenses as deductions on their taxes.
d. Release Time
    i. Funds provided to family child care providers and center sponsors for release time are considered income, whether or not they use the funds to hire a substitute. If in fact a substitute is hired, payment to

the substitute is considered a business expense and can be deducted for tax purposes.

e. This information highlights some of the basic issues but does not attempt to give tax advice. The final authority is the IRS, and recipients and sponsors are directed to either the IRS or a tax preparer for answers to tax questions.

10 – Commitment

By signing the TEACH Early Childhood® contract, a recipient commits to remaining employed with their sponsoring program during the contract period plus an additional 12-18 months thereafter, depending on their scholarship model. Recipients must work at least 30 hours per week or more during the commitment period and must notify TEACH if there are any changes.

A. Voluntary Quit

a. The TEACH Early Childhood® contract is a commitment that should not be entered into without thoughtful consideration. The recipient is receiving an education paid at 80-90%, and the employer is getting the benefit of a classroom teacher with higher education credentials. If a recipient is considering quitting their sponsoring program, they must discuss this with the Program Coordinator BEFORE giving their notice to their sponsoring program, so they can fully understand the consequences to their scholarship.

b. When a recipient voluntarily quits their sponsoring program before fulfilling their contract and/or commitment period, the scholarship is withdrawn. Any stipends, bonuses, and/or reimbursements will be forfeited. Recipients will also be asked to pay back what has been invested in their education and may be asked to pay back their sponsoring program as well.

c. If the recipient is in the middle of a term that has already been paid for, the recipient will be allowed to finish the term, but will be responsible for paying 100% of the cost of their tuition and books back to TEACH. Their travel stipend and/or sub reimbursement will not be awarded. Sponsoring programs may still submit release time up until the recipient's last day of employment.

d. If classes have not been paid for, TEACH will have the authorization removed from the college or university and the recipient will be responsible for payment of that term's tuition and books.

e. THE TEACH EARLY CHILDHOOD® SCHOLARSHIP IS NOT TRANSFERRABLE TO ANOTHER SPONSORING PROGRAM.
f. Only in the rare case where it is documented that a sponsoring program did not fulfill contract obligations, even after reminders from the TEACH office, would TEACH consider allowing a recipient who voluntarily quits to enter a new TEACH contract with a different sponsoring program. There may be narrow exceptions to the commitment period if leaving employment is not within control of the recipient, which will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

B. Taking a Break from School

a. If recipients would like to take a term off from school, they should talk to the Program Coordinator. Recipients are allowed two terms off in a row without having to reapply for a new TEACH scholarship. However, recipients must complete a minimum number of credit hours during their contract period. Although all situations will be considered on a case-by-case basis, if recipients aren't able to fulfill their credit hour requirement in the allotted timeframe, a contract extension will be allowed for one term.

C. Layoffs and Terminations

a. Recipients laid off through no fault of their own will not be required to repay TEACH Early Childhood®, but they will not be able to continue the TEACH scholarship without a sponsoring program. Recipients will be allowed to finish the current term, but will need to be employed in another sponsoring program that is willing to sign a new TEACH contract to continue with our support thereafter.

D. Employer Changes

a. If ownership or management of the sponsoring program changes, contact the Program Coordinator immediately. The new employer will need to agree to the terms of the original contract and sign on. If the new employer does not agree to the contract, the recipient will be withdrawn from TEACH at the end of the current term, but no repayment will be required. Depending on the circumstances, TEACH may approve a new contract for the recipient with a different sponsoring program.

E. **Switching Scholarship Models from Associate to Bachelor**
    a. Upon graduation, recipients must submit a new TEACH scholarship application if they plan to continue on to get their bachelor's degree, including a copy of their most recent paystub and an informal degree audit from the bachelor degree school of their choice. Recipients will take any classes at the community college first that will transfer to their bachelor degree school before taking any classes at the bachelor degree school.

11 – Paperwork Reminders

A. Recipients

a. Submit your class information as soon as you are officially registered.
b. If you purchased your own books, submit a copy of your detailed receipt for reimbursement at the end of the term.
c. If you work in a sponsoring program and are eligible for release time, send us your completed Form C at the end of the term.
d. Send us your final letter grade as soon as it is posted at the end of every term.

B. Sponsoring Programs

a. Participants working at least 30 hours per week or more are eligible for release time, except for directors. The recipient and sponsoring program must sign and return the completed release time claim form (Form C) as soon as possible at the end of the term. The sponsoring program will receive a check or an invoice based on the amount of release time submitted and the program's costs of tuition and books for all program sponsored TEACH recipients.

C. Annual Reminders

a. Recipients are required to apply for the FAFSA every year.
b. Contract renewals will need to be signed and returned, in addition to the Information Update Form.

12 – Telling Your Story

We want to know your stories that would make an impact on others interested in knowing why TEACH exists and what we are accomplishing. Please take any opportunity to share how TEACH Early Childhood® has helped you and the children in your care. You may send

us stories, photos, and/or videos at any time, and we will share them with our early childhood community and beyond.

13 – Contact Information

Nebraska Association for the Education of Young Children
215 Centennial Mall South, Suite 300
Lincoln, NE 68508
www.nebraskaaeyc.org
jwarford@nebraskaaeyc.org
402-858-5143

Nebraska Association for the Education of Young Children
An Affiliate of naeyc

Contact the Program Coordinator if you have any questions about your scholarship.

Examples of when we need to hear from you:

- Changes to your contact information,
- A change in any personal circumstances,
- Having trouble in or failing a class,
- Considering dropping or withdrawing from a class,
- Had a personal emergency that prevents you from attending school or work for an extended period of time,
- Considering changing jobs or are no longer employed in your program,
- Considering changing colleges, and/or
- Getting close to graduation.