

Authority: IDEA, Section (a)(8) .and T.C.A. § 49-10-110

IV. ELIGIBILITY

The successful applicant must meet the following criteria:

- (1) Be a citizen of the United States with priority given to residents of Tennessee.
- (2) Be admitted to the undergraduate or graduate program of one of the participating Tennessee colleges and universities listed in 1(2) above, depending upon the student's current status. Candidates with less than a Bachelor's degree should be admitted to the undergraduate program as a degree seeking student in an area of special education. Candidates with a Bachelor's degree should be admitted to the graduate school as a degree seeking or non-degree seeking student.
- (3) To continue receiving BASE TN financial support, the student must be admitted to the teacher education program during the second semester of enrollment. Preference will be given to candidates whose Plan of Study reflect intended admission to the teacher education program by the beginning of the second semester of enrollment. Preference will also be given to candidates who have successfully passed PRAXIS I, meet the ACT/SAT requirements and/or satisfy the GPA, MAT and/or GRE requirements of the involved university or college.
- (4) Not hold a Tennessee teacher's license in an area of special education.
- (5) Submit a signed and notarized Student Service Agreement to the Tennessee college or university where admitted to the undergraduate or graduate program, indicating intent to teach in a state-approved Tennessee public school and serve children with disabilities ages birth through 21 on a full-time basis two years for each year (FTE) an award is received.
- (6) Submit a copy of the approved Plan of Study developed cooperatively with the certification officer (or other such representative of the college or university) where the candidate intends to study. The approved Plan of Study must include the signature of the certification officer (or other such representative of the college or university).
- (7) Not accept any other financial aid that carries with it a conflicting service obligation. For the purposes of the BASE-TN Teaching Program, participation in the Minority Teaching Fellows Program shall be considered as accepting aid which carries a conflicting service obligation. Prior recipients of the Teacher Loan/Scholarship Program, the Teacher Loan Program for Disadvantaged Areas of Tennessee, and Tennessee's Special Education Institutes may be eligible for the BASE-TN Teaching

Program, although funds may not be received from two or more programs during any one academic year. Students may receive BASE TN Teaching Program support from one college or university only.

- (8) Submit a complete application to the representatives of the college or university of choice by the established deadlines as determined by the participating colleges and universities. (See section I(2) above for a list of the participating colleges and universities. See Appendix A for a list of the college and university representatives and the application due dates.) The application must include all required supporting documents (e.g., copies of college transcripts, etc.).

NOTE: Do not send the BASE-TN Teaching Program Application to the Tennessee Department of Education.

See Appendix B for a copy of the BASE-TN Teaching Program Application. The application may also be obtained from the college and university representatives listed in Appendix A of this document, or it may be downloaded at the following site:
www.state.tn.us/education/speced/).

- (9) Agree to inform the Tennessee college or university (where enrolled) and the Tennessee Department of Education, Division of Special Education, in writing when any significant change in status occurs and provide documentation to support it. This shall include, but is not limited to changes in name, address, and enrollment. After obtaining teacher licensure, the recipient shall also inform the Tennessee college or university where a Plan of Study was completed when a teaching position has been obtained, when there are changes in teaching assignments, or if/when the teaching service is terminated.
- (10) Shall not be in default on any loan received to attend a postsecondary institution and can provide written evidence.
- (11) Upon completion of program of study and meeting requirements for Tennessee teaching licensure, participants must post their resumes with the Department of Education's online teacher recruitment service, *Teach in Tennessee* (<https://www.k-12.state.tn.us/teachtn>).

Authority: IDEA, Section (a)(8) and T.C.A. §§49-10-110

V. METHOD OF SELECTION

- (1) Each year that funds are available, preliminary ratings of applications will be made two or more times per year by the College and University Selection Committees based upon established criteria for participation in the BASE-TN Teaching Program. The College and University Selection Committees will review the top rated candidates to determine the final selections. Each Selection

Committee will include at least one representative from the Tennessee Department of Education. (The Tennessee Department of Education, BASE-TN Office, may request copies of the applications to determine funding needs, etc.)

- (2) The following priority groups have been established for the BASE-TN Teaching Program:
 - (a) **First priority** shall be given to candidates with a Bachelor's degree or higher whose approved Plans of Study indicate intent to complete all remaining course work and other requirements for Tennessee licensure in an area of special education within 12 to 24 calendar months from effective date of original award. This first priority includes "career switchers" or persons with a major other than an area of special education who now seek to obtain Tennessee teaching licensure in an area of special education (e.g., persons who hold a degree in general psychology, English, and elementary education). The BASE-TN Teaching Program will provide financial support in the form of tuition remission and books to complete licensure requirements as reflected in each student's Plan of Study.
 - (b) **Second priority** shall include persons who (a) are currently working full-time as an educational assistant in a Tennessee approved public school, (b) have earned at least two years of transferable college credit, (C) are currently serving students with disabilities on a full-time basis, and (d) submit written intent to earn a Bachelor's degree in special education within a maximum of three calendar years. The BASE-TN Teaching Program will provide financial support in the form of tuition remission and books to complete graduation requirements leading to initial Tennessee license in special education as reflected in each student's Plan of Study.
- (3) The **ranking of applicants** must consider grade point average, prior teaching experience with children with disabilities, number of semester hours required to satisfy requirements for Tennessee teaching license in special education, and teacher shortage areas within the field of Special Education. Criteria for applicant rankings may also include standardized test scores, evidence of commitment (e.g., experiences that would indicate an interest in teaching students with disabilities), and other such factors that shall be identified as relevant to meeting the goals and interests of The BASE-TN Teaching Program.

Authority: IDEA, Section (a)(8) and T.C.A. §§49-10-110

VI. AMOUNTS AND TERMS OF AWARDS

- (1) **All such grants or awards shall be evidenced by signed and notarized Student Service Agreements** maintained by the teacher education program of the Tennessee college or university where the recipient is enrolled with a roster of the students forwarded to the Tennessee Department of Education, Division of Special Education, at the end of each semester (fall, spring and summer). The maximum award available to any student shall be established each semester consistent with the student's approved Plan of Study. The amount of the award shall be determined by the number of semester hours carried by the student.
- (2) **Payments for the eligible students' tuition will be provided one semester at a time** payable to the college or university where the student is enrolled. Prior to disbursing the funds for the student, the institution shall ensure that the recipient continues to be enrolled in a teacher education program for the number of hours outlined in the student's approved Plan of Study and that the recipient is making satisfactory progress in accordance with the goals of The BASE-TN Teaching Program and the written requirements of the University's teacher education program.
- (3) **Cancellation**
 - (a) For each two years of creditable full-time teaching service, as defined in these guidelines, the recipient shall receive cancellation credit of one academic year's award (i.e., the equivalent of 30 semester hours).
 - (c) Cancellation shall apply only if the recipient **completes** a Plan of Study leading to Tennessee teacher license in the area of special education (i.e., initial teaching license or an endorsement) in an area of special education and subsequently teaches special education in an approved Tennessee public school serving students with disabilities ages birth through 21.
 - (c) A grace period of SIX months may be granted to allow the recipient the opportunity to secure employment to begin cancellation credit. When a recipient has obtained a creditable teaching position, some or all of the grace period may be waived at his or her written request forwarded to the teacher education program of the college or university where the student completed the approved Plan of Study.
 - (d) Recipients who believe that they are employed in teaching positions which qualify them for cancellation credit must notify the Tennessee college or university where the program was completed of that teaching status. Those individuals the institutions determine to be in a creditable full-time teaching position shall be granted a postponement on repayment to allow them the opportunity to complete two full years of teaching for each year of BASE-TN Teaching Program financial support. Upon

completion of said years of teaching, cancellation credit will be applied upon receipt of the verification of such service.

- (e) Fractions of a year of less than one semester as a teacher of special education will not be credited toward cancellation. Recipients who have completed a single semester of creditable full-time teaching service may request a postponement of up to one year to allow them the opportunity to secure another special education teaching position in Tennessee. Cancellation credit will then be applied upon receipt of verification of the completion of such service.
- (f) The debt shall be canceled in case of the death of the recipient.
- (g) If a recipient is determined to be totally and permanently disabled under the standards established by T.C.A., Title 8, Chapter 36, Part 5, for determining disability for members of the Tennessee Consolidated Retirement System, the outstanding debt shall be canceled. A recipient is not considered totally and permanently disabled on the basis of a condition that existed prior to his/her application unless the recipient's condition has substantially deteriorated since he/she submitted the application. If at any time subsequent to an initial determination of disability the recipient's condition improves to the point where a total and permanent disability no longer exists, the institution may reinstate any outstanding obligations previously canceled.
- (h) The amount of this award plus interest may not be discharged in a bankruptcy filed during the first seven years after the repayment of the award first becomes due (exclusive of any periods of deferment or other authorized suspension of the repayment period).

(4) Repayment

- (a) The award must be repaid should the recipient choose not to honor the terms and conditions of the Student Service Agreement. Repayment will include the full amount of the award received plus interest accrued from the date of each disbursement and shall be based upon a nine percent per annum interest rate calculated from the date of original award. Repayment may be in whole or in monthly installments of at least one-hundred dollars over a period of not more than **five years** from the end of the grace period. Payments of less than the amount required to amortize the full amount of the award within **five years** may be made only if the recipient documents to the institution's satisfaction his/her inability to make payments of that amount. All interest shall be based upon the unpaid balance due. The accrued interest may be capitalized.
- (b) Repayment by recipients who complete the Plan of Study shall begin on the first day of the month following the end of the grace period.

- (c) Repayment by recipients who fail to complete the Plan of Study shall begin on the first day of the month after the college or university has determined that the student is no longer enrolled in its teacher education program or other failure to comply with the terms of the agreement. Interest shall begin to accrue immediately after termination of the award.
- (d) Repayment of principal and interest will be prorated to reflect the portion of the teaching obligation not completed. Such repayment shall begin on the first day of the month after the college or university has determined that the recipient's creditable teaching service has terminated. Repayment of the non-canceled portion may be made in whole or in monthly installments over the remaining months of the five-year repayment period. All interest shall be based upon the unpaid balance of the award.
- (e) The college or university where the candidate completed the approved Plan of study and the Tennessee Department of Education assume the legal responsibility for enforcing the collection of such indebtedness against the individual.

Authority: IDEA, Section (a)(8) and T.C.A. §§49-10-110

VII. APPEALS PROCEDURE.

- (1) Generally, the rulings of the program's Director, Tennessee Department of Education, Division of Special Education, in conjunction with the university or college Certification Officer, or Dean of Education - as deemed appropriate by the Director- shall apply.
- (2) An individual who believes that the ruling was not in accordance with the published Guidelines and the goals and intent of the BASE-TN Teaching Program may appeal to the Assistant Commissioner, Tennessee Department of Education, Division of Special Education, for relief. The ruling of the Assistant Commissioner shall be the last administrative remedy.

Authority: IDEA, Section (a)(8) and T.C.A. §§49-10-110

VIII. PRECEDENCE OF THE ACTS

These Guidelines are subordinate to IDEA, Section (a)(8) and T.C.A. §§49-10-110 and are intended to facilitate their implementation. Any portion of these Guidelines which are adjudicated as contrary to law are to be considered null and void. All other portions of these guidelines shall be severed therefrom and considered in full force.

Authority: IDEA, Section (a)(8) and T.C.A. 49-10-110.

V. HOW TO APPLY FOR BASE-TN ASSISTANTSHIPS AND FELLOWSHIPS

Interested persons who meet the eligibility criteria shown in part IV above should contact the appropriate college or university representatives listed in Appendix A of this document. Completed BASE-TN Teaching Program Applications may be obtained from these representatives. A copy of the BASE-TN Teaching Program Application may also be found in Appendix B of this document. The completed application **MUST** be submitted to the college or university where the applicant intends to enroll by the appropriate deadlines indicated by the participating colleges and universities. (See Section 1(2) of this document as well as the BASE-TN Teaching Program Application form for a list of the participating institutions.) The applicant must also satisfy other requirements of the participating colleges and universities (e.g., admission to undergraduate or graduate school) as designated by the institutions.

Note: The BASE-TN Teaching Program financial awards are competitive and must be coordinated with other financial assistance received by the applicant before and/or after being awarded in keeping with the requirements of the colleges or universities where the applicant seeks to enroll. This includes - but is not limited to- employer and/or agency tuition reimbursement programs, loans, and grants from other sources.

X.. FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For additional information regarding these Guidelines or the BASE -TN Teaching Program, contact:

Dr. Cleo J. Harris, Director of the BASE-TN Initiative
Tennessee Department of Education, Division of Special Education
5th Floor, Andrew Johnson Tower
710 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, TN 37243
Telephone: 615-532-3259
E-mail: cleo.harris@state.tn.us

OR

Contact the appropriate college or university representative shown in Appendix A to these guidelines.



APPENDIX A

**BASE-TN TEACHING PROGRAM
College and University Representatives or Contact Persons**

Dev. 07-13-04

NAME / E-MAIL ADDRESS	UNIVERSITY	ADDRESS	CITY / STATE / ZIP	TEL / FAX	APPLICATION DUE DATES
DR. K. CHARLES COLLIER ccollier@cumberland.edu	Cumberland University	School of Education One Cumberland Square	Lebanon, TN 37087	615-444-2562, Ext 1110 615-444-2569	08-16-04 (Fall) 12-10-04 (Spr/Sum)
DR. DEBBIE THOMAS dthomas@fisk.edu	Fisk University	1000 17 th Avenue North	Nashville, TN 37208-3051	615-329-8745 615-329-8802	08-01-04 (Fall) 11-01-04 (Spr/Sum)
MR. RICHARD BOWERS rbowers@fisk.edu	Fisk University	1000 17 th Avenue North	Nashville, TN 37208-3051	615-329-8683 615-329-8802	
DR. RALPH CALHOUN ralph_calhoun@nile.loc.edu	LeMoyne-Owen College	807 Walker Avenue	Memphis, TN 38126-9989	901-774-9090, Ext 576	08-01-04 (Fall)
DR. JAMES P. TAKONA	LeMoyne Owen College	807 Walker Avenue	Memphis, TN 38126-9989	901-942-6233 901-942-7369	11-15-04 (Spr/Sum)
DR. BELLA HIGDON behigdon@mtsu.edu	Middle TN State University	P.O. Box 69	Murfreesboro, TN 37132	615-898-5016 615-898-5309	08-01-04 (Fall)
DR. SHERRI TRENT shtrent@mtsu.edu	Middle TN State University	P.O. Box 531	Murfreesboro, TN 37132	615-898-2628 615-898-5309	10-15-04 (Spr/Sum)
DR. TOM WILLIS twillis@tntech.edu	TN Technological University	Box 5074	Cookeville, TN 38505	931-372-3558 931-372-6270	07-19-04 (Fall) 12-06-04 (Spring) 04-26-05 (Summer)
DR. BARBARA RAY barbara-ray@utc.edu	University of TN - Chattanooga	615 McCallie Avenue	Chattanooga, TN 37403	423-425-4538 423-425-5380	08-12-04 (Fall) 12-01-04 (Spring)
DR. MIKE HANNUM mhannum@utk.edu	University of TN - Knoxville	Claxton Complex A423	Knoxville, TN 37996-3400	865-974-4155 865-974-8718	08-13-04 (Fall) 11-19-04 (Spring) 05-06-06 (Summer)
DR. SANDRA COOLEY-NICHOLS smcooley@memphis.edu	University of Memphis	413D Ball Hall	Memphis, TN 38152	901-678-2862 901-678-3881	07-31-04 (Fall) 10-31-04 (Spr/Sum)

