

**KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
DIVISION OF EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN SERVICES
TRAINEESHIP PROGRAM APPLICATION**

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA, 2004) is a law ensuring services to children with disabilities throughout the nation. IDEIA governs how states and public agencies provide early intervention, special education, and related services to more than 6.5 million eligible infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities. The Act increased the need in Kentucky for qualified special education and early childhood teachers. The Division of Exceptional Children Services (DECS) addresses this need through the Kentucky Traineeship Program in Special Education (Traineeship Program) by allocating federal professional development (CSPD) funds to provide tuition assistance for special educators and preschool teachers in obtaining certification in the area in which they are teaching. With the increasing shortage of fully certified teachers seeking teaching positions in special education and early childhood education, a major focus of the Traineeship program is on teachers seeking alternative certification, emergency or probationary certification, and working toward full certification while enrolled in a Kentucky institution of higher education.

Traineeship Program funds are available to help defray part of the tuition costs for courses that lead to teacher certification in special education or early childhood education. Currently approved programs include the University of Kentucky, University of Louisville, Morehead State University, Eastern Kentucky University, Kentucky State University, Murray State University, Western Kentucky University, Northern Kentucky University, Georgetown College, University of the Cumberlands, Bellarmine University, Spalding University, Asbury College, Brescia University, Campbellsville University, and Union College. The areas of certification approvable are Visually Impaired, Hearing Impaired, Learning & Behavior Disorders, Moderate & Severe Disabilities, Early Childhood Education IECE, Communication Disabilities, *Director of Special Education (see #8 below).

QUALIFICATIONS

Applicants must meet qualifications at the time the application is approved. The applicant must:

1. Be a citizen or permanent resident of the United States;
2. Hold at least a baccalaureate degree;
3. Hold a teaching certificate in general education based on a degree and be employed on an **Emergency** or **Probationary** certificate; or, if enrolled in an alternative certification program hold a Temporary Provisional Certificate. A **Substitute** certificate or a classified teacher assistant are not acceptable for participation in this program;
4. **Not be certified in the area in which applicant is currently teaching;**
5. Be enrolled in a state or private college or university in Kentucky that has a state approved special education, IECE, or Director of Special Education program;
6. For special education certification the applicant must be employed in a Kentucky public school district as a **full-time** special education teacher in the area for which they are seeking certification while participating in the Traineeship Program;
7. For IECE certification the applicant must be employed as a full-time preschool teacher during the school year in a Kentucky public school district or be employed as a full-time preschool teacher under contract or agreement with a Kentucky public school **district to provide services for 3, 4, and 5 year-old children with disabilities (e.g. schools, Head Start and approved private contractors) while participating in the Traineeship program.**
8. For Director of Special Education (DOSE) individuals must actually be serving a district in the primary role of DOSE on a probationary or temporary provisional certificate.
9. Not be an employee of the Kentucky Department of Education; and
10. Not be a recipient of another traineeship, scholarship, or fellowship for tuition for the courses for which a Division of Exceptional Children Services (DECS) traineeship is awarded.

If you have questions about eligibility, please contact the Traineeship office for assistance at 859-442-3506.

<http://traineeship.nku.edu>
Traineeship@nku.edu

REQUIRED APPLICATION PROCEDURES

(Failure to adhere to these requirements will disqualify the application)

Application Form Part A:	Complete and submit “ Part A, Personal Data Form, ” EACH semester. Part A must be submitted each semester in order to be eligible for continued approval consideration. Only those courses required for special education certification can be approved for Traineeship funding.
Part B:	Complete the upper portion of “ Part B, Certification and Employment Data form. Your school superintendent or personnel director must complete and sign the bottom part, “Verification of Employment Status.” Part B is only submitted one time unless employment status changes.
Curriculum Contract or Program of Study Plan	Attach a signed copy of the curriculum contract or program of study plan. Your university advisor <u>must</u> sign the contract/program. Highlight the remaining courses needed to meet certification requirements, including the courses planned for this semester. DO NOT include courses beyond those needed for special education or IECE certification. Do not include classes that are only required for your Master’s or rank change.
Teaching Certificate	You must submit a copy of your current teaching certificate or forward a copy to the Traineeship Program as soon as it is received from the Professional Standards Board.

TERMS OF REGULAR TRAINEESHIP PROGRAM

SUBMISSION

Applications **must be postmarked** on or before the following deadlines for each semester:

FALL SEMESTER	JULY 1
SPRING SEMESTER	NOVEMBER 1
SUMMER SEMESTER	APRIL 1

Do not FAX your initial application forms. ONLY applications with ORIGINAL signatures are acceptable.

However, you can FAX continuing and grade forms.

Mail applications to:
 Special Education Traineeship Program
 Northern Kentucky University
 245 Johns Hill Road
 Highland Heights, KY 41099

(Please do not send certified mail. It only slows down our receipt of your forms.)

NOTE: Applicants must notify the Traineeship Program staff immediately if awarded funding from another program, agency, or organization for courses for which Traineeship Program funds are requested or awarded.

SELECTION

Traineeship Program funds are paid **ONLY** for courses needed to obtain KENTUCKY CERTIFICATION in one special education teaching area, Interdisciplinary Early Childhood Education or Director of Special Education.

Previously funded participants receive priority consideration provided all requirements for eligibility are met. Participants who receive a grade below a “B” for any one course in the preparation sequence or who fail to submit grades will be ineligible for one semester. Participants who earn a second grade below a “B” or who fail to submit grades a second time are no longer eligible to receive Traineeship funding.

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New applicants are considered on the basis of (1) the availability of funds (2) local school district need (*Part B of the application*), and (3) the continuing need for special education teachers in Kentucky.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

If a Traineeship application is denied the applicant may appeal the decision by writing a letter within 15 days of the postmarked date of the denial letter. The appeal shall state the grounds for the appeal and shall be addressed to the Director of the Traineeship Program, Northern Kentucky University, 245 Johns Hill Road, Highland Heights, Kentucky 41099. The Director shall respond in writing to the applicant within 15 days of the receipt of the appeal.

APPROVAL

Approval is granted for approved applicants on a semester basis. The maximum number of hours approved for the Traineeship Program is six credit hours per semester. Many universities have varying class schedules. Therefore, the Traineeship Program considers the fall semester as mid-August through December. The spring semester is considered January through mid-May and summer semester is considered mid-May through mid-August.

Approved new applicants are eligible to apply for funding for **FOUR (4)** semesters provided all other participant requirements of the Traineeship Program are met. Applicants **must** apply each of the four consecutive semesters **or** request a waiver from the Traineeship office.

*For example, an applicant who was approved and funded during the 2008 fall semester would be eligible during the 2009 spring semester and the 2009 summer semester, and in the fall 2009 semester provided all other terms of the Traineeship Program were met. Special conditions **may** warrant interruption for a semester (e.g., maternity leave, serious illness, availability of approvable course offerings, etc.). A request for special conditions for a program interruption will be reviewed once verification documentation is received.*

ACCEPTANCE

Acceptance of funding **means** that the approved applicant **agrees to all the terms and procedures** of the Traineeship Program, including **deadlines for applications and grade reports**.

Course changes or substitutions, without prior approval by the Traineeship staff are the financial responsibility of the applicant and not the Traineeship Program. The program cannot be responsible for penalty fees associated with university registration or fee payment schedules.

PAYMENT

Tuition is paid directly to the university **ONLY** for approved courses that are specified in the applicant approval letter. Other costs or expenses (books, insurance, transportation, athletic fees, late registration fees, room and board, etc.) are the responsibility of the approved applicant. Extended campus course fees and student teaching fees may be paid with Traineeship funds.

If you have any questions, please contact the Traineeship Program staff at (859) 442-3506. All applications and correspondence related to the Traineeship Program must be submitted to:

Special Education Traineeship Program
Northern Kentucky University
245 Johns Hill Road
Highland Heights, KY 41099

<http://traineeship.nku.edu>
Traineeship@nku.edu

**TRAINEESHIP PROGRAM
PART A Personal Data Form
(Must be submitted EACH semester)**

Return Application to:
 Traineeship Program
 Northern Kentucky University
 245 Johns Hill Road
 Highland Heights, KY 41099
FAX 859/442-3529

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY: Hours approved: _____
 IHE Attending: _____
 Certification Sought: _____
 Current Certification: _____
 District: _____
 Postmark Date: _____

SEMESTERS FUNDED: 1st 2nd 3rd 4th

NAME: _____
 (last) (first) (middle init.) Certification Program

E-Mail Home _____ E-Mail Work _____

SOC. SEC. # _XXX-XX-____ (last 4 digits) PHONE: _____
 or -STUDENT ID # _____ (home) (work)

HOME ADDRESS: _____
 (street) (city) (state) (zip)

WORK ADDRESS: _____ CURRENT POSITION _____
 (school)

_____ (street) (city) (state) (zip)

Have you previously received Traineeship Program funding? ___ NO ___ YES ___ Semester/Year

Semester for which you are applying: (circle one) Note postmark deadline.
SUMMER FALL SPRING _____ Year
 Due 4/1 Due 7/1 Due 11/1

Summer is considered mid May-mid August. Fall is considered mid August-December. Spring is considered January- mid May.

Kentucky university attending: (check)
 ___ Asbury ___ Bellarmine ___ Brescia ___ Campbellsville ___ Cumberland
 ___ EKU ___ Georgetown ___ KY State ___ Morehead ___ Murray
 ___ NKU ___ Spalding ___ Union ___ UK ___ U of L ___ WKU

COURSES REQUESTED FOR THIS SEMESTER. Applicant may request up to 6 credit hours:
Course Number Credit Hours Course Title Start/End Dates

I hereby certify that the statements made by me in this application are true, complete, and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief. All courses requested are for certification in the area specified. I will notify the Traineeship Program staff if I accept assistance from another source. I agree to Traineeship Program terms and timelines, and understand that failure to comply may disqualify me from participation in the program. I understand that the purpose of the Traineeship Program is to provide highly qualified teachers for Kentucky Public Schools and I acknowledge my intent to teach special education or early childhood education in the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

Applicant Signature: _____ Date: _____

I verify that the above named applicant is employed as a full-time special education teacher or special education administrator _____ public school district.

For IECE certification applicants I verify that the above named applicant is employed as a full time preschool or Head Start teacher by the _____ public school district.

Principal Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

<http://traineeship.nku.edu>
Traineeship@nku.edu

Return Application to:

Traineeship Program
Northern Kentucky University
245 Johns Hill Road
Highland Heights, KY 41099

**PART B
REGULAR TRAINEESHIP APPLICATION
Certification and Employment Data**

(To be completed by first-time applicants only
UNLESS changes occur in your employment status.)

NAME: _____
(last) (first) (middle)

CURRENT TEACHING CERTIFICATION:

LEVEL/AREA: _____
CERTIFICATE NUMBER: _____
DATE OF EXPIRATION: _____
Attach a copy of your current teaching certificate or send a copy to the Traineeship Program as soon as it is received from the Education Professional Standards Board.

AREA of CERTIFICATION REQUESTED:

- Visually Impaired
- Learning & Behavior Disorders
- Early Childhood Education IECE
- *Director of Special Education
- Hearing Impaired
- Moderate & Severe Disabilities
- First Steps IECE
- Communication Disabilities

*For Director of Special Education (DOSE) individuals must actually be serving a district in the primary role of DOSE on a probationary or temporary provisional certificate.

EDUCATION:

Degree Earned	Name of Institution	Major	Date Earned
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

PREVIOUS EMPLOYMENT:

Teaching Position (Area/Level)	Place of Employment	Dates of Employment
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

REQUIRED: Attach a signed copy of the curriculum contract or program of study plan. Your university advisor must sign the contract/program plan. Highlight the remaining courses needed to meet certification requirements, including the courses planned for this semester. **DO NOT include courses beyond those specifically required for special education or IECE certification.** Do not include classes that are only needed for a Master's or Rank change (e.g. foundations courses).

VERIFICATION OF EMPLOYMENT STATUS (Must be completed by superintendent or personnel director)

I verify that the above named applicant is employed as a full-time special education, preschool teacher or special education administrator in this district for the 20__/20__ school year. The completion of special education certification by this person (a) is **critical** OR (b) is **not critical** to meet an immediate special education or IECE personnel needs in this district.

Please explain:

SIGNATURE: _____ DISTRICT: _____ DATE: _____
(District Administrator)

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TRAINEESHIP PROGRAM

APPLYING FOR CONTINUATION FUNDING

VERY IMPORTANT - PLEASE NOTE

If you are eligible to apply for continued funding for the next semester, follow the guidelines listed below.

- Each semester you must complete, sign, and submit a new Part A. It is critical that your name be listed **exactly** the same as on previous applications. If your name, address, phone number, email or other information has changed and needs to be updated in your file, please **attach a note** indicating the changes.
- Submit a new curriculum/ program plan and obtain your advisor's signature **ONLY** if you have changed universities, or made changes in your certification program.
- Complete **Part B** and obtain your superintendent's signature **ONLY** if:
 - Your teaching **position** has changed; or
 - You have changed **employment**.
- Applications must be postmarked on or before the following dates for **each** semester:

○ FALL SEMESTER	JULY 1
○ SPRING SEMESTER	NOVEMBER 1
○ SUMMER SEMESTER	APRIL 1

NOTE: Always keep a copy of the information you send to the Traineeship Program.

<http://traineeship.nku.edu>
Traineeship@nku.edu

HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR GRADES

For audit purposes, grade submission is required for each course funded by the Traineeship Program. Each semester, including your final semester, you must send verification of the grades you received for the approved courses completed during that semester. An official transcript is not required. Send one of the following:

- A copy of your on-line grade report from the university
- A copy of your unofficial transcript; **or**
- A letter from the course instructor on university letterhead.

Grade submissions should be postmarked on or before the following dates.
(These dates are not the same as the deadlines for applications.)

- **January 15** for courses completed during the **fall** semester;
- **June 15** for courses completed during the **spring** semester;
- **September 15** for courses completed during the **summer** semester.

NOTE: Participants who receive a grade below a “B” for any one course in the preparation sequence or who fail to submit grades will be ineligible for one semester. Participants who earn a second grade below a “B” or who fail to submit grades a second time and are no longer eligible to receive Traineeship funding.

Participants who do not complete a course and receive an “I” for incomplete, must complete the course PRIOR to the end of the next semester. If the course is not completed by this time, an explanation from the advisor will be required. If the problem is not resolved, the applicant will not longer be eligible for Traineeship tuition assistance.

You can FAX, email or mail your grade report.

Mail your grade report by the required timeline to the address below:

Traineeship Program
Northern Kentucky University
245 Johns Hill Road
Highland Heights, KY 41099

Email: <mailto:traineeship@nku.edu>

Fax: 859/442-3529

<http://traineeship.nku.edu>
Traineeship@nku.edu

Q and A

TRAINEESHIP PROGRAM QUESTIONS and ANSWERS

Listed below are questions asked most often by Traineeship Program applicants. If you have additional questions, please call (859) 442-3506.

QUESTION What is the Special Education Traineeship Program?

ANSWER: The Division of Exceptional Children Services designed the Traineeship Program in the late seventies primarily as a way to assist Kentucky's school districts in staffing vacant special education teaching positions. The program is an incentive for teachers to obtain special education or IECE certification. The goal is to have highly qualified teachers in special education and early childhood classes. **Traineeship funding may only be used for courses required for special education or early childhood certification.** The program is funded on a yearly basis and continued funding cannot be guaranteed. Courses required for a master's degree or a fifth year program are not necessarily certification requirements. Classes required for degree or rank change cannot be funded. Once an applicant is approved funding, it is usually available for four (4) semesters or 24 semester hours.

QUESTION I forgot to send in a Part A form for the new semester before the deadline. Will I still receive funding?

ANSWER: Due to major federal and state budget cuts, it is imperative that all applications be postmarked by the deadline. If all funds are allocated there will be no funds left to approve your request. Meeting the application and grade report deadlines is absolutely necessary to insure that your application will be considered.

QUESTION What if I cannot send my application in by the deadline because my university has not published the schedule of classes?

ANSWER: Submit your application **before the deadline** listing the courses you expect to take on Part A of the application. If you need to make changes after the course schedule is available, contact the Traineeship Program staff and ask for a Course Change. If the new course is approvable, your approval letter will be amended and sent to you. Your university will be notified of the approved course change. You must notify the Traineeship Program of all changes.

QUESTION Will I be notified when it is time to send in my grades or Part A form?

ANSWER: You are responsible for meeting all deadlines. All information is available in the application or on the web page <http://traineeship.nku.edu>. You can also call or email the staff if you have questions.

QUESTION When will the funds be sent to my college or university?

ANSWER: Colleges and universities are notified of students who have been approved for the Traineeship tuition assistance funds. The colleges or universities invoice the Traineeship Program after the drop/add period. It may take time for the funds to arrive and be posted to your account.

<http://traineeship.nku.edu>
Traineeship@nku.edu

QUESTION What if my university does not offer the course(s) I need during the semesters I am eligible for the funding from the Traineeship Program?

ANSWER: You **might** consider taking the course(s) you need for special education certification from another university and transfer credit to your university. Check with your advisor. If your advisor approves course substitutions, ask your advisor to **write a letter or email the Traineeship staff with the substitution approval**. In the letter/email, your advisor will:

- Explain the reason for the transfer;
- Name the university where you will take the course substitution;
- List the name(s) and number(s) of the course(s) being accepted from the other university; and
- State the course name(s) and number(s) being replaced on **you curriculum contract/program plan**.

You can also request a waiver for that semester from the Traineeship Program.

QUESTION I applied to the Traineeship Program and was approved for the 2008 fall semester. However, I had to drop my courses. Does the 2008 fall semester still count as my first semester?

ANSWER: **If** the Traineeship Program **paid tuition** for the approved courses, then the 2008 fall semester does count as your first semester. It is **EXTREMELY** important that you keep the Traineeship program informed of **ALL** changes you make in your program. Traineeship funds cannot be used to pay penalty fees.

QUESTION Can my other scholarship pay for my books if I am an approved Traineeship Program participant?

ANSWER: Yes, the Traineeship Program pays partial TUITION ONLY for the courses needed for special education certification. Other grants or scholarships can be used to cover other expenses. Traineeship Program participants cannot be a recipient of any other traineeship, stipend, scholarship or fellowship for TUITION for the courses approved for funding under the Traineeship Program that exceed the basic amount of tuition. You must notify the Traineeship Program staff immediately if you receive funding from another program or agency for any course for which Traineeship Program funds are awarded or requested. Be sure to check and make sure the rules under the other funding source allow you to accept Traineeship Program funding at the same time.

QUESTION What are some reasons that applications are not approved?

ANSWER: In general, applications are not approved for the following reasons:

- ⇒ Incomplete application (e.g., forms missing, forms not signed or dated, parts of forms left blank, etc.).
- ⇒ Application received after the deadline. *(continued)*

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- ⇒ Traineeships are not designed to assist support personnel or to assist in obtaining certification in an area other than special education. Recipients must be seeking to extend certification in an area where certification requirements have not yet been met.
- ⇒ Recipients must hold at least a baccalaureate degree and a teaching certificate issued by the Kentucky Education Professional Standards Board. A “Substitute Certificate” is not acceptable.
- ⇒ The courses requested are not necessary for the certification area listed. Courses required for a master’s degree or a fifth year program are not necessarily certification requirements.
- ⇒ The courses requested on **Part A** do not match the courses listed on the **curriculum contract/program plan**.
- ⇒ Due to the limited funds available, highest priority areas were funded first.
- ⇒ The grade report was not submitted.
- ⇒ The four consecutive semester rule was not followed or a waiver was not requested.
- ⇒ Applicant did not notify Traineeship Staff of a previous semester’s class change.

QUESTION How many hours may I take in the summertime?

ANSWER: The number of hours approved for the Traineeship Program’s summer semester is limited to six (6).

QUESTION If I get a “C” in a course that is funded by the Traineeship Program, can I take the course over again at my own expense and be reinstated in the Traineeship Program?

ANSWER: As stated in the Terms of the Traineeship Program, participants who receive a grade below a “B” for any one course in the preparation sequence or who fail to submit grades will be ineligible for one semester. Participants who earn a second grade below a “B” or who fail to submit grades a second time and are no longer eligible to receive Traineeship funding.

QUESTION What if I cannot complete a course and get an “I” for incomplete?

ANSWER: You must complete the course **PRIOR** to approval of your application for the **NEXT SEMESTER**. If you have not completed the course by this time, you must submit an explanation from your advisor. If the problem is not resolved, you will no longer be an eligible applicant.

QUESTION I sent my application in four weeks before the deadline, but it was three weeks after the deadline before I got my approval letter. Why did it take so long?

ANSWER: The application review process begins **after** the deadline to be sure that all previously funded applicants receive priority consideration. Generally, internal timelines call for notices (letters) to be mailed to applicants and universities within three weeks after the deadline. However, there are several hundred applications to be processed, and the review process can extend past the deadline. Grant funding amounts are always dependent on state contracts and that is often delayed and beyond our control.

<http://traineeship.nku.edu>
Traineeship@nku.edu

QUESTION I want to change jobs and work for a private not for profit agency. Can I still receive Traineeship funding?

ANSWER: No. Recipients of Traineeship funds are required to be employed as full-time special education or early childhood teachers in a Kentucky Public School District. You must be teaching in the area for which you are seeking tuition assistance. You must notify the program of any change in your employment.

QUESTION How much tuition assistance will I receive if I am accepted into the Traineeship Program?

ANSWER The tuition assistance is \$300 per credit hour and is paid directly to the university. Other costs or expenses above this amount are the responsibility of the applicant.

QUESTION I applied for the Traineeship program and then registered for my classes. Now I find out that I have been denied because funds are not available to pay for these classes. What am I going to do?

ANSWER: Remember that Traineeship funds are not guaranteed. Please consider this before you register for the classes. You should contact the financial aid office at your university to obtain information regarding additional grant or scholarship programs. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 provides Part D funds for preservice education. Colleges and universities apply directly to the federal government for Part D funds. Ask the special education or early childhood department chairperson at your university about any Part D funds available.

The KHEAA program http://www.kheaa.com/prog_tchschl.html may also be a resource for you.

If you have additional questions, please contact our office:

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Northern Kentucky University
245 Johns Hill Road
Highland Heights, KY 41099

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