

**WICHITA PUBLIC SCHOOLS/ UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 259**  
**SPECIAL EDUCATION CERTIFICATION FORGIVABLE LOAN PROGRAM**  
**INFORMATION SHEET**

**July 2019**

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Thank you for your interest in the Wichita Public Schools/Unified School District No. 259 Special Education Certification Forgivable Loan Program. Final approval has been obtained to start using the new Special Education Forgivable Loan Agreement. The Special Education Forgivable Loan Program and Agreement have been redesigned for any new applicants starting in July of 2019 going forward. The new Special Education Forgivable Loan Program and Agreement changes identified below do not affect Teachers who were previously approved as recipients of the program.

We are excited to establish a partnership with Wichita State University to offer courses for Teachers earning the special education endorsements of Low Incidence (Functional) or High Incidence (Adaptive). The partnership with Wichita State University will be conducted in a cohort model taught by Staff Members who are Wichita Public School employees during the day. Courses for this program will be held on Tuesday evenings in person in a cohort model at the Alvin E. Morris Administrative Center (AMAC). Additional details about the Wichita State University partnership will be provided to those Teachers who are seeking the special education endorsements of Low Incidence (Functional) or High Incidence (Adaptive).

We do understand that the changes made to the program were dramatic. However, to ensure that this program continues to remain available as a resource for Teachers, changes were necessary. Some of the reasons for the changes to the program are to allow more Teachers to benefit from the program, a more equitable use of the resources, and the ability to properly budget for future recipients.

**Highlights of The New Program Agreement:**

- Teachers will meet with a Representative of the Wichita Public Schools Special Education Forgivable Loan Committee to determine the appropriate College or University (School) to attend and course of study to obtain the required special education endorsement.
- The program is designed to provide financial support towards earning a special education endorsement only in a high needs area of special education.
- Although courses taken towards earning a special education endorsement may count towards earning a degree, the program does not pay for additional courses for Teachers to earn degrees at the Associate, Bachelor, Master, Specialist, or Doctorate levels.
- The program only pays for courses identified in a plan of study that are required to earn the special education endorsement in the agreed upon special education area of certification.
- The District only pays for up to a maximum of six (6) credit hours per semester.
- The District only pays up to a maximum of \$8,000.00 towards earning the special education endorsement in the particular high needs special education area no matter which institution the Teacher attends.
- The \$8,000.00 total includes tuition, fees, and required textbooks.
- The District will no longer pay any College or University directly for any charges associated with tuition, fees, and required textbooks.
- Teachers will be required to pay for any charges associated with tuition, fees, and textbooks up front paid to the College or University at their own expense. After the Teacher has passed the required course on the plan of study with a letter grade of A, B, or C, the Teacher will submit invoices, receipts, and transcripts showing the grade earned for each course within 30 days of the date the grades are issued to the Teacher.
- Every time the Teacher requests the District to provide reimbursement for courses completed, the Teacher must sign a Promissory Note that includes the loan amount and the current Applicable Federal Interest Rate.
- The payments made under this program by the District are treated as loan proceeds up to a maximum \$8,000.00. Completion of all the requirements of the program shall be treated as taxable compensation to the Teacher in the calendar year such forgiveness occurs, and the District will include the amount of debt forgiveness on the Teacher's Form W-2.

**Teachers Seeking Special Education Endorsements of Low Incidence (Functional) or High Incidence (Adaptive):**

- The new Special Education Forgivable Loan Program and Agreement will require Teachers to obtain these special education endorsements through Wichita State University in the cohort model taught by Wichita Public School employees by taking courses in person on Tuesday evenings at the Alvin E. Morris Administrative Center (AMAC).
- Additional details about this program will be provided to those individuals seeking these special education endorsements.
- There might be some rare exceptions to this and that is why Teachers will meet with a Representative of the Wichita Public Schools Special Education Forgivable Loan Committee to visit about the details of the program.

**Teachers Seeking Special Education Endorsements of Deafness or Hard of Hearing, Early Childhood Unified for Teaching In Low Incidence, Gifted, Visual Impairment, or Teacher Apprentice Program (TAP)/Limited Apprentice License for High Incidence:**

- Teachers will have the option of determining which College or University they attend to seek these special education endorsements.
- For programs offered in Kansas, the Kansas State Department of Education provides a list of Approved Educator Preparation Programs and Institutions listed by Endorsement and Institution. That information can be obtained at: <https://www.ksde.org/Agency/Division-of-Learning-Services/Teacher-Licensure-and-Accreditation/Postsecondary/Educator-Preparation/Approved-Educator-Preparation-Programs>
- Knowing that the District only pays up to a maximum of \$8,000.00 towards earning the special education endorsement in the particular high needs special education area, it is recommended that Teachers strongly consider the costs associated with tuition and fees when determining which College or University they attend.