Teacher Salary Supplement Program (TSSP)

Frequently Asked Questions

Educator/Applicant

If you have questions regarding the **TSSP**, you may find these commonly asked questions and answers designed for the Educator/Applicant helpful. **Use the "Ctrl+F" to search specific words or phrases.** If your question is not answered, please review the TSSP website or contact the Program Specialist by email at tssp@schools.utah.gov.

1. **Where and when can I apply?** The application is submitted electronically on the **TSSP Service Site**. The application must be submitted between **October 1st** and **April 30th** the first year an educator is eligible. Earlier application deadlines exist if electing the Semester or Trimester payment terms. Refer to the Home page of the TSSP Service Site for the various application deadlines. It is recommended that the educator set an annual reminder in their calendar to review their application and update the payment term.

2. **How often am I required to apply?** Educators must first create an account (once), confirm the email for the account, and then will be able to submit their application. Applications created in the 2020-2021 program year will "roll over" into the subsequent years *if they have qualified for any portion of the bonus.* After that, the application will renew each program year even if there is a lapse in eligibility. It is recommended that **the teacher periodically verify the application status throughout the school year** to confirm that all program requirements have been met, that no changes have been made during the program year, all data is accurate, and the **payment term for that year is elected appropriately** prior to the LEA and USBE approvals.
   Example 1: Elle G. Bility applied in 2020-21 and received the bonus, her application is automatically renewed for the 2021-2022 program year. In the following program year (2022-2023), the district changes Elle's assignment that deems her ineligible for the TSSP bonus, but her application will still renew in subsequent years although she may not receive the bonus. Elle has a "lifetime" application.
   Example 2: Ed U. Kater applied for the TSSP bonus in 2020-2021 but had not yet earned his degree, so he did not qualify for the bonus. Therefore, his application would *not* roll over into the 2021-2022 program year because he did not receive funds. The next school year, Ed's degree is posted in CATUS for the 2021-2022 program year, and he now shows as qualified. Ed needs submit a new application in 2021-2022 and will not need to resubmit an application for the subsequent years as he has now qualified for the bonus. If all the qualifications in future program years are not met making him ineligible again, his application will continue to roll over, but show as "not qualified". Ed has a "lifetime" application starting in the 2021-2022 program year.

3. **Can I select any payment term?** The payment "term" or cycle should match the school's schedule. If your LEA is structured with a semester cycle, you can only request a semester or annual payment. *Any term elected that does not match the LEA schedule will be automatically switched to an Annual payment term by either the LEA or USBE.* If you have elected or want to change your term, send an email to the Program Specialist.

4. **I had an account in the last TSSP system before 2016, do I have to reapply?** Yes. You will need to first create an *Educator Profile* in the new system, confirm your email address and contact information and set up your password. The applications can then be submitted during the application window once the profile has been created.

5. **I have been trying to access my account, but the system will not allow me to enter.** The TSSP Service Site login screen defaults to your email address but be sure that you are entering your **Username**. Remember that the Username and password are both case-sensitive. Use the "Forgot your Username" or "Forgot your Password?" options on the Log in page (https://tssp.schools.utah.gov) to reset those.

6. **How do I reset my TSSP account password?** If you need to reset your password, please be sure to use a different browser than Chrome. For some reason Chrome does not like the TSSP Service Site or it does not like Chrome… we do not know why it happens. Firefox, Safari, or Microsoft Edge seems to work. When you open a new browser:

- Clear your browser history,
- Go to the [TSSP Service Site](#) login page,
- Click on the "forgot password" link even before you try to log in.
- Find the Reset email and follow the prompts. Be sure to check junk mail, spam, or even trash.

7. **My email has changed, how do I update it?** Log in to your TSSP account to update your email address from the Home page:
   - Click the "Manage" link in the "My Account" section.
   - Update email address
   - Save
   - You will be required to confirm your email address again.

   Watch for a new email from **NoReply-TSSP-USBE (noreply.tssp@schools.utah.gov).** This email may go to your Junk/SPAM/Trash folder. Click the link to confirm the new email address. If the link is inactive, copy and paste the larger link at the bottom of the email into your address bar to confirm the account. *The USBE is not responsible for misdirected email or the failure to receive notices and other information from USBE that is sent to the teacher/applicant's email of record.* Teacher/applicants receive an electronic courtesy notification for each processing action.

8. **I created an account but did not get the confirmation email.** First confirm that the email did not go to your Junk or SPAM folder. If you still cannot find the email, follow the "Returning User" link, and select the "Forgot your Username". If you still are not receiving the email, contact the Program Specialist for assistance.

9. **I applied for this year, but my application does not show that I am TSSP Qualified, why?** This program was created to draw qualified individuals into education for specific subject areas such as *Chemistry, Physical Science, Physics, Secondary Mathematics, Computer Science, Deaf Education, and Special Education.* These subject areas are based on legislation to help hire/retain educators in subject areas that have been identified with staffing shortages. Additional program information and qualifications can be found on the USBE website at https://schools.utah.gov/licensing/program/educatorincentiveprograms. To qualify for the TSSP bonus, the educator **must meet three** of the legislative requirements:
   - TSSP-qualifying Assignment in a Utah local education agency (LEA), **and**
   - Hold a current Utah Educator License and endorsement for the qualified TSSP assignment, **and**
   - Show a degree MAJOR in the applicable subject area in your CACTUS profile, **or**
   - Show in CACTUS 10+ years as a qualified educator in a TSSP-qualifying subject area.

10. **I have worked over 10 years in Utah in my qualified subject area, but the system does not show that I qualify.** If your CACTUS record reflects the assignment history, it will automatically be updated in your TSSP application as soon as the new programming is completed. However, if your CACTUS does not show this history, you will need to submit an Appeal for the Assignment History and provide supporting documentation to verify the correction/update before the May 31st deadline. This verification could include a copy of the employment record, educator contract, or other employment history.

11. **If I do not earn my degree until the end of the school year, (or any time after the submission of the application) can I still receive the bonus?** Possibly. To receive the bonus, educators must meet ALL qualifications *before May 31st of the program year.* Any term payment "skipped" because of eligibility will be adjusted in the final payment at the end of the program year.

12. **I missed the deadline for my application. Can I apply after the deadline has closed?** Maybe. This depends upon the payment term you selected on your application. If you have missed the Semester or Trimester Application deadline, you would still be eligible to submit an Annual Application. However, once the Annual Application deadline has passed (after April 30th), no additional applications can be submitted for that program year. Due to legislation and budget constraints, the USBE must determine if proration of bonuses will need to occur, so no late submissions are permitted.

13. **Do I need to submit more than one application if I apply for a Semester or Trimester payment schedule?** No. In the TSSP program, you will only need to submit ONE application and elect the payment term. Each LEA determines the payment cycle that matches the school schedules.

14. **When I review my CACTUS account, it does not show my degree. How do I get this posted?** The USBE must receive an ORIGINAL paper or electronic transcript. Paper transcripts are not required to be a "sealed" document but must be on the university parchment, however, electronic transcripts must be sent from the university's clearing house DIRECTLY to USBE at "transcripts@schools.utah.gov". Forwarded electronic documents are unacceptable. Please either send the form Posting of a Degree on CACTUS with original paper transcripts or send an email to the Program Specialist and alert them that an electronic transcript has been requested to post a degree. Include in the email your full name, CACTUS #, and university name. Degree posting may take 10 business days from download or receipt of the official transcript.

15. **CACTUS shows my degree major as "Other - See Transcript", how do I get this fixed?** The initial design of the CACTUS system only allows selection from a pre-existing list of degree majors. If your major does not *exactly* match one of these options, the system will default to "Other - See Transcript". If you feel that your degree major is entered incorrectly, submit a Posting of Degree on CACTUS form. However, if the degree major does not exist, you may need to consider submitting an appeal.

16. **I have confirmed with the USBE/LEA that my degree major is not available in CACTUS, how can my TSSP application be considered?** You will need to submit your electronic TSSP application first, (your application will show as not qualified). Then refer to Program Appeals for the steps to submit an appeal, if you feel the degree should be considered "substantially equivalent".

17. **My Special Education area is not listed as a Degree Major on my transcript. How is it fixed?** In the event your degree major is not listed as "Special Education", but appears as either a *minor, concentration, emphasis, program, plan,* or *specialty,* we are unable to list these classifications as a major. The direction from the legislature has been very specific regarding this qualification because these alternative listings are not considered a degree and may not be eligible for an appeal.

18. **How do I correct the CACTUS data in TSSP because my assignments/FTE are incorrect?** Contact your LEA Human Resources to make corrections to assignments, percentages, or FTE.

19. **Why is an assignment listed twice in my application?** Some assignments may qualify for the TSSP bonus through more than one subject area. To verify the eligible percentage, only add the assignment percentages highlighted in green and multiply it by $4100 and the FTE for the estimated value of the bonus.

20. **How do I know if my application has been approved?** The TSSP Service Site allows participants to log in anytime and view their current application status (and review historical applications starting 2017FY). The "Audit History" section will show when you, your LEA, or USBE has viewed or made changes to your application. If an item is underlined in the "Type" column, you can hover over the item to see the system notation or processor's notes. Until the end of the approval window, the application will show as "pending".

21. **Why was my application denied?** All applications require the approval of both your LEA and the USBE. If either of these agencies denied the application (or did not process the application), the system will show a reason/explanation with the date it was denied. If you feel this was an error, contact your LEA for assistance.

22. **How do I calculate the value of my TSSP bonus?** The basic formula is:

Eligible Assignment % x FTE x 4100 x WPU % = "TSSP Award"

An additional amount is calculated for benefits that is funded to the LEA. All awards are subject to tax and other elected deductions.

23. **When can I submit an Appeal?** An appeal can be submitted after the electronic application has been created for that program year. The steps for submitting an appeal can be found at Educator Licensing. All appeals must include the completed and signed application, along with the OFFICIAL transcript (sealed documents are not required) or the completed Verification of Educator Experience Form. ***Applications and supporting documents must be RECEIVED by USBE before May 31st to be considered.*** Incomplete applications or applications missing

transcripts or supporting documentation will not be processed. Due to funding requirements and deadlines, late appeal applications cannot be accepted.

24. **What is my option if I do not agree with the Appeal Board decision?** All appeal applications are reviewed by a panel to verify the coursework or assignments are following the current Legislative rules. All decisions are final.

25. **If I am submitting for payment installments (Trimester or Semester), what happens if my application is on an appeal and not approved by the deadline?** In the event an appeal is submitted, and the decision is not completed by the trimester /semester deadline, the application will be converted to an Annual application so that the educator does not lose the value of the first-payment cycle.

26. **How long does it take to receive my approved TSSP Bonus?** We anticipate 4-6 weeks from the deadline until the payment authorization is funded to the LEA. Traditionally, the USBE approval date in your application electronically allocates the funding to your LEA at the end of that month through the Monthly Allotment Memo. The distribution through your payroll will depend on your LEA's payroll cycle at the time the electronic deposit is received. Due to this difference, some teachers may receive their payment earlier than others.

27. **Am I able to submit 1st Semester or 1st Trimester applications after the deadline?** No. These application options will be disabled and cannot be submitted or approved. However, you are welcome to submit an Annual application for full payment to be distributed at the end of the program year.

28. **What is the difference between a *TSSP Award*, *NBPTS Award, Other, Benefit* and the *Total* amount showing in my application?** The TSSP award is calculated using this formula: Eligible Assignment% x FTE x $4100 x WPU %. The *TSSP Award* amount is what the educator receives in their payroll before applicable taxes or deductions. The total award amount of $4100 may increase annually based on the Weighted Pupil Unit (WPU) percentage.
The Benefit amount is calculated by using this formula: TSSP Award x URS Tax Rate (0.3013). The *Benefit Amount* is the funds TSSP provides *to the LEA* to cover their costs of paying the additional taxable amounts that include Retirement, Workers Compensation, Medicare, and Social Security. This employer-paid Benefit value is also included in the electronic transfer to your LEA. These funds are reported on the payroll under the "Employer-Paid Benefits" section on your paycheck.
The payment *Total* is the value of all bonuses including the TSSP Award, NBPTS Award (if eligible), and employer-paid *Benefit*. The NBPTS (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards) Award is another salary bonus available to educators who have earned a NBPTS certification and teach in a classroom setting in Utah. Currently, there is no use of the "Other" category.

29. **How do I know my course assignment qualifies for TSSP?** Course codes are based on the current Qualified Subject Areas for TSSP as defined by the Utah legislature. Once an application is submitted, you will be able to review your CACTUS data in the TSSP Service Site for the current program year. The TSSP Service Site will highlight in green all course code assignments that qualify. If the assignment is highlighted in yellow, this indicates that it is an approved course, *but you do not meet the subject qualifications* (such as not having the endorsement or applicable degree major or work history or your license is expired). Course codes not highlighted are not part of the TSSP program.

30. **I have one class assignment where I assist students with (Math/Chemistry/Physics) in "Student Study Skills". Why is this assignment not part of the TSSP program?** Based on the Utah Legislature's current definition regarding Course Assignments, Student Study Skills (25-02-00-00-010) does not qualify for TSSP because the Student Study Skills class can support any number of subject areas and is not solely linked to Math, Computer Science, Physics, Chemistry, Special Education, or Deaf Education. We are unable to include it in the TSSP assignment codes and do not have the authority to make an exception.

31. **If I submitted an appeal last year, will I be required to submit another appeal?** No. Once your appeal has been reviewed by the Appeal Panel and the decision made, it is documented in the system. However, if your application was denied for a *different* subject area not previously reviewed on an appeal, you will need to submit a new appeal for the additional subject area.

32. **Does having any math or science-related endorsement qualify me for the bonus?** No. Although an endorsement typically confirms an individual's expertise and proficiency in each field, it does not meet the acceptable requirements for a degree major alone, based on the current legislative rules. The endorsement is only one of the program's requirements.

33. **If I missed an application, can I be considered for the bonus for a previous year?** No. Once the application window for that program year has closed, no bonus can be considered.

34. **Do I need to qualify for the TSSP Bonus to receive the NBPTS Bonus?** No. Each bonus eligibility is qualified independently but utilizes the same application to track and process the salary-based bonuses. One bonus is not contingent upon the other.

35. **The Legislative code references an "integrated science" degree. How do I earn an Integrated Science degree?** An Integrated science degree is a historical degree which is no longer attainable or in existence but has been included in the program's legislative rules.

36. **The Approval Deadline has passed, but I still have not received my bonus?** First, review your TSSP Application under the "History" section to confirm that your bonus was processed and approved by both the LEA and USBE. The system will show values in the "Payments" section. Allow at least 2 weeks for funding to be allocated after the last day of the month in which your bonus was approved. If you still have not received funding by mid-month, contact your LEA Payroll department for distribution information.

37. **Does teaching experience in a TSSP-approved subject area at an accredited Utah private school count?** No. An accredited "private school" does not meet the USBE Board Rule definition of a local education agency (LEA), which is a public school district, charter school, or the Utah Schools for the Deaf and Blind (USDB); see R277-100-2-17ab.

38. **How do I obtain a loan application verification request for this bonus?** Awards to NBPTS applicants are entirely dependent on continued legislative funding and authorization. No applicant has any guarantee of continued participation in the program. Based on the design of the TSSP program, this type of verification is unavailable. Your TSSP LEA approver has the responsibility of confirming your eligibility each program year and the USBE is responsible to administer the payments. Even though the system shows you have met the eligibility requirements for this bonus, there is no guarantee of its approval (example: if an educator were to leave their position before the end of the year or receive a sub-standard performance review) and the value changes based on the number of participants each year and could likely be reduced or even eliminated by the State Legislature at any time.