

# Teacher Salary Supplement Program (TSSP)

## Frequently Asked Questions

### LEA Administrator

If you have questions regarding the TSSP, you may find these commonly asked questions and answers designed for the LEA Administrator helpful. Use the “Ctrl+F” to search specific words or phrases. If your question is not answered, please contact the Program Specialist at [tssp@schools.utah.gov](mailto:tssp@schools.utah.gov).

- 1. I am our LEA’s designated approver for TSSP, and I have a CACTUS number. How do I obtain access to our educator applications?** You will first need to create your profile in the TSSP Service Site, then contact the Program Specialist to have your administrative access granted.
- 2. How often should I be reviewing applications submitted for TSSP?** It is recommended to review new applications monthly, and all applications at least 3 weeks prior to the end of each approval window. This timeline will allow you to identify any data correction necessary prior to the processing deadline and allow educators to complete the appeal submission recommendations or corrections, if applicable.
- 3. What do I need to enter to DENY an application?** This entry will depend upon the reason for the denial. Elect the most appropriate reason from the list, then enter an explanation in the box. All information entered in the reason box **will be automatically sent via email to the educator once submitted**. You are encouraged to provide enough information to the participant to either explain the reason for the denial and/or how to resolve the denial, if applicable.
- 4. I approved an application in error. How do I correct the entry?** Immediately notify the Program Specialist by email indicating the CACTUS#, Full name, and type of error.
- 5. I can see several applications, but I am unable to approve them.** LEA approvals are not available until *after* each cycle has closed and only applications for that window can be approved (Trimester, Semester). The approval access is traditionally an 8-day window to review and approve each cycle’s application. During the approval window, *every application for that cycle type* must be either PASSED or DENIED. Denied applications require a reason for the decision.
- 6. How do I correct a CACTUS data error in the TSSP Service Site?** All data that appears in the TSSP Service Site is pulled directly from CACTUS. Correcting the information in CACTUS will automatically correct it in the TSSP system within a few minutes. You need only to refresh the TSSP screen for the update.
- 7. How do I correct applications that do not qualify due to “degree”?** If the degree major posted shows as “Other – See Transcript”, you do not correct it. The educator will need to review the list of acceptable degree majors and determine if it should be considered as a “substantially-equivalent” degree. The educator should then submit an appeal if appropriate before the May 31<sup>st</sup> deadline.
- 8. How do I correct applications that do not meet the 10-year experience requirement?** If the history is incorrect or missing, you do not correct it. The educator will need to submit an appeal and provide supporting documentation to verify the correction/update before the May 31<sup>st</sup> deadline. This verification could include a copy of the employment record, educator contract, or other employment history.
- 9. I have missed the deadline for TSSP application approvals. Can I still review and approve pending applications?** If the deadline has passed and the TSSP application access is closed, contact the Program Specialist immediately. If the window has closed, all unapproved applications may be “skipped” until the next payment cycle. Any missed payments will be caught up at the end of the program year. Approval windows cannot be “reopened” as they will delay funding for the entire payment term.
- 10. I have missed the final deadline for TSSP application approvals at the end of the year. Can I still review and approve the applications?** There may be an option to approve the applications for payment to be issued in the “Correction” payment cycle in October. However, if all the funds have been exhausted, there may not be the option to qualify for the corrective payment term. Contact the Program Specialist for options.

11. **An educator worked the first portion of the school year, and has terminated their employment (retired/transferred/relocated out of the area), can they still receive TSSP funding for the portion of the year they completed?** This payment will depend upon the reason they have left your employment AND when they terminated. If the educator left on good terms (not fired for cause or other types of reprimand) and they **finished** the semester/trimester contract, they may qualify for the bonus for the portion of the year they worked. Contact the Program Specialist for clarification prior to processing the termination in CACTUS.
12. **An educator has left my LEA but qualified for the TSSP bonus for the time they worked. Can the funding be transferred to another LEA?** Funding should be distributed to the LEA who approved the TSSP application. This distribution may require an additional payroll check being issued to the educator after they have left your employment. If the educator is now working in another LEA, the next payment would fall under the new LEA's responsibility for review, approval, and funding. Contact the Program Specialist to coordinate funding approval.
13. **When will the approved funding be sent to my LEA?** We anticipate 4-5 weeks from the close of the approval window following the USBE approvals. The payment is sent via the Monthly Allotment Memo at the end of the month and should be distributed in the next available payroll cycle.
14. **How long do I have to process the funds?** It is recommended that the TSSP funds be distributed to the educator during the next available payroll cycle.
15. **How do I find out how much money has been sent to my LEA?** Funding reports are available in the TSSP Service Site. Select **Payments\$** from the menu, (to view other years,  filter and enter the program year) and then click the "eye" icon  in the corresponding payment cycle that shows as "Allocated" for funding details. This report will give you the total funds distributed under the Applications by LEA section.
16. **I have the total funds sent to my LEA; how do I determine the amount for each TSSP participant?** You must be granted access to the "reports" found in the TSSP Service Site. This report will allow you to determine the payroll amount for each educator. Log into the TSSP Service Site, select "\$Payments", then click on the "eye" icon  for the most recent payment to access the report for your LEA. The LEA Distributions report can be downloaded to an excel format using the arrow icon . The total distribution amount will also be posted on the Monthly Allotment Memo for the line item "MSPB MSPB-Minimum School Programs Basic-Summary" for "Teacher Salary Supplement Program". If you are unable to access these reports, contact the Program Specialist.
17. **What portion of the funds goes to the educator, and what portion is for the taxes?** The funding that is awarded to the educator as salary includes: TSSP Award, NBPTS Award, and Other. Funds listed under "Benefit" should be listed under the "Employer-paid Benefits" portion of the payroll as these funds cover Retirement, Workers Compensation, Social Security, and Medicare. All TSSP Award monies are subject to deductions such as health care, or state and local taxes.
18. **Am I authorized to enter notes in the applicant's "Audit History" area?** Yes. To enter information in this section, click on the  icon and select the type of notation, verify the date and time of the action, and then enter the information in the Comment section and then click "Add". It is possible to cut/paste text or emails into this area. *Please remember that this field is visible to the educator.*
19. **How do I add or remove someone as a TSSP Administrator for my LEA?** When adding or removing someone as a TSSP Administrator in your LEA, please have the HR Director/TSSP Supervisor (unless you are this person) send an email to the Program Specialist at [tssp@schools.utah.gov](mailto:tssp@schools.utah.gov) with the following information for a person who **does not have a CACTUS number**:
  - Full name
  - Username of their choice (cannot be an email address)
  - Email
  - Phone number
  - Title/Role
  - Who new person is replacing and their complete information

If the new person **has a CACTUS number**, they need to create their own account in the TSSP Service Site.

Watch for an email from [noreply.tssp@schools.utah.gov](mailto:noreply.tssp@schools.utah.gov) will be sent. This email may go to their Junk/SPAM/Trash folder. They need to click the link in the email to confirm the account. If the link is inactive, copy and paste the larger link at the bottom of the email into the address bar instead. Once the email has been confirmed, contact the Program Specialist so the appropriate LEA roles and claims can be added to grant the new person access to the TSSP system. Wait 24 hours, then they should log into the [TSSP Service Site](#) to view the applications for your educators in the current program year.

20. **How does an applicant obtain a loan application verification request for this bonus?** Awards to TSSP 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. You, as the TSSP LEA approver, has the responsibility of confirming the applicant's eligibility each program year and the USBE is responsible to administer the payments. Even though the system may show the applicant has 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.

21. **How often is an educator 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, maybe once or twice a month, 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 CACTUS for the 2021-2022 program year, and he now shows as qualified. Ed should 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.

22. **When should I verify CACTUS data for TSSP approvals?** As the LEA Administrator, you will want to verify and correct any CACTUS data **before May 31<sup>st</sup>** of each program year. This process should be done periodically for ALL educators assigned to your LEA because correct CACTUS data also facilitates a smoother and quicker end of year rollover.

23. **As the TSSP Administrator, what do I approve regarding the TSSP application?** As the LEA Approver, it is not your responsibility to deny an application for the *program qualifications*, **only the 3 "employment" questions** listed below during a funding cycle. In review of each application, you will need to confirm the following:

- Educator's CACTUS information is correct.
- Educator has completed the employment contract to date.
- Educator received a satisfactory rating on their most recent evaluation.

**Enter PASS or DENY** (if denied, you will be **required** to enter an explanation that will be automatically sent via an automated email to the educator). The USBE will Pass/Deny the application for compliance with the program criteria. In the unlikely event that you have passed or denied an application incorrectly, **please notify the Program Specialist immediately so that the correction can be made prior to funding.**