

Mississippi Teacher Fellowship Program Application

Overview

In 1998, the Mississippi Legislature passed House Bill 609 which addresses the critical teacher shortage in the state, which Section 13 of this bill providing for the University Assisted Teacher Recruitment and Retention Program. As a result of Section 13 of HB 609, the Mississippi Teacher Fellowship Program (MTFP) is designed as an innovative partnership to address Mississippi's teacher shortage.

The purpose of the program is to attract and retain qualified teachers in the critical teacher shortage areas of Mississippi. Scholarships will be awarded through an application process to persons seeking a Master of Education or Educational Specialist degree at the Mississippi institution of higher learning in exchange for employment in these geographical shortage areas. The vision for the Mississippi Teacher Fellowship program is to provide educational experiences to students enrolled in at-risk schools that will allow these students to participate fully in the economic and social opportunities of our nation.

Selected participants will receive financial scholarships for a maximum of three (3) academic school years, not to exceed the completion of a Master of Education degree or Educational Specialist degree. In addition, participants will receive stipends for books and supplies. Each participant will receive a full-time teacher's salary and benefits package through his or her individual school district.

Service Obligation

Participants selected for the Mississippi Teacher Fellowship Program shall agree to employment as a licensed teacher in a Mississippi school district identified as a critical shortage area for a period or not less than three (3) consecutive years. This time period includes the years of service rendered while the participant obtains his or her Master of Education degree or Educational Specialist degree.

Any person participating in the program who fails to complete the service obligation shall become liable immediately to the Mississippi Office of State Financial Aid for the sum of all awards (tuition and book stipends) made to that person under the program, plus interest accruing at the current Stafford Loan rate at the time the person abrogates his/her participation in the program. Repayment must be made within 36 months.

Placement

The Mississippi Teacher Center (601) 359-3631 will assist participants in arranging placement interviews with the Mississippi school districts in need of teachers. The public school districts are responsible for hiring individual participants. The full acceptance of participants into the program is contingent upon their employment by a school district located in a region where a critical shortage of teachers exists, as identified by the Mississippi Department of Education. Accordingly, participants will be required to show evidence of a contract with an approved district for full admission into the program.

Qualifications

Participants must meet the following requirements by the state date of the program: (a) hold a Mississippi teacher's license (see Application Process, section 4), (b) be employed by a Mississippi Critical Teacher Shortage Districts as designated by the Mississippi Department of Education, (c) submit all applications materials (listed below) to the MTFP Program Office, and (d) be accepted in a Master of Education or Educational Specialist program at one of the following eligible Mississippi institutions: Alcorn State University, Belhaven University, Blue Mountain College, Delta State University, Jackson State University, Mississippi College, Mississippi State University, Mississippi University for Women, Mississippi Valley State University, The University of Mississippi, The University of Southern Mississippi, or William Carey University.

Application Process

Review of application materials listed below will begin May 1st of each year. The review will continue until all slots are filled, with scholarships beginning in August of each year. In addition to the application form, candidates are asked to submit the following:

1. **Personal Essay:** In no more than two (2) typed pages, candidate should discuss their interest in teaching in Mississippi as a member of the Mississippi teacher Fellowship Program. Include a description of personal experiences and qualifications that will make you an effective teacher in a geographical teacher shortage area in Mississippi.
2. **Resume:** Include a current resume outlining work experience, extracurricular activities, and significant and scholastic honors.
3. **One letter of recommendation from a professor or employer familiar with the candidate's character, interests, and academic ability:** Where possible, letters should speak specifically about personal qualities or experiences that indicate the candidate is suited for classroom teaching.
4. **Verification of Mississippi Teacher Licensure:** Verification of Mississippi license (i.e. copy of certificate) must be submitted to the Mississippi Teacher Fellowship Program as part of the application process. Candidates applying for Mississippi licensure should submit all licensure application forms and materials directly to the Office of Educator Licensure. For information regarding teacher licensure in Mississippi, candidate may refer to: Mississippi Department of Education's Website: <http://mde.k12.state.ms.us> or contact the Office of Educator Licensure at (601) 359-3483.
5. **Verification of employment in a critical shortage district:** Please submit a letter of verification and start date of employment from your district office. For assistance with placement, you may contact a recruiter with the Mississippi Teacher Center at (601) 359-3631.
6. **Transcripts:** Please submit an official transcript from undergraduate or graduate (if applicable) work.
7. **Verification of acceptance in a Master of Education or Educational Specialist degree program at a Mississippi IHL:** Please submit verification of acceptance in a graduate program (i.e. copy of acceptance letter)

The Mississippi Teacher Fellowship Program complies with all applicable laws regarding affirmation action and equal opportunity in all its activities and programs and does not discriminate against anyone protected by law because of age, creed, color, national origin, race, religion, sex, handicap, veteran, or other status.

Mississippi Teacher Fellowship Program Application Application Form

Personal Information

Name: _____
Last First Middle and Maiden

Preferred Name: _____

Social Security Number: _____

Present Mailing Address: _____
Street or Post Office Box

City State Zip County

Home Phone Number: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Permanent Mailing Address: _____
Street or Post Office Box

City State Zip County

Ethnic Background (optional): African American Asian American Caucasian
 Hispanic American Native American Other

Gender (optional): Female Male Birthdate (optional): _____

How did you learn about us? _____

Educational Background

High School Attended: _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Graduation Date: _____ Date GED earned: _____

List all colleges/universities attended. Attach an additional page if needed.

Name of College City & State Dates Attended Degree Received

What degree will you be seeking when entering MTFP? Masters Specialist
Anticipated start date of this degree? _____
If you are currently in a Master's/Specialist Program, how many hours have you earned? _____
How many hours will you have earned by August (present year)? _____
Are you national board certified? Yes No
Comment: _____

Licensure and Placement

Do you currently hold a valid Mississippi Teacher's License: Yes No
If no, please specify the steps you are taking to receive Mississippi licensure, including an estimated schedule for receiving licensure. _____

Are you currently employed in a Mississippi critical needs school district: Yes No
If yes, in which critical needs district are you currently employed? _____
Please list your start date of employment with the above district. _____
List subjects/Grade level currently teaching. _____

If you are not currently employed in a Mississippi critical district, please list all districts you are seeking employment. _____

Are you a former recipient of any of the following Mississippi funded programs (check all that apply)?

- Counseling and School Administration
- Critical Needs Alternate Route Teacher
- Critical Needs Teacher
- Graduate Teacher (i.e. Formerly Summer Graduate Loan)
- Mississippi Teacher Fellowship Program
- William Winter Alternate Route Teacher Scholar
- William Winter Teacher Scholar

Certification

I certify that the information provided on this application is complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I authorize all educational institutions and the Office of Educator Licensure to release any information relative to my being considered for this fellowship to any individual administering and/or monitoring the Mississippi Teacher Fellowship Program. I am aware the Mississippi Teacher Fellowship Program is a three consecutive year classroom teaching commitment in a Mississippi critical needs district. I understand that failure to complete the teaching commitment results in the repayment of the fellowship within 36 months to the Mississippi Office of State Student Financial Aid. I am aware that detailed information regarding the rules and regulation of the program is presented to recipients during a required orientation event scheduled after acceptance notifications are issued. This information is also available for applicants upon request to the program office.

Signature of Applicant

Date of Signing

Mississippi Teacher Fellowship Program

School of Education

The University of Mississippi

Post Office Box 1848

University, MS 38677-1848

Phone number: (662) 915-3991

Fax number: (662) 915-3848

Toll-free number: 1-888-611-5160

E-mail: mtfp@olemiss.edu

Website: <http://www.mtfp.net>