

Arizona Teachers Academy

Universities and Community Colleges

Program Summary

Program Overview

Pursuant to A.R.S. § 15-1655, the Arizona Teachers Academy (ATA) provides scholarships to Arizona students enrolled in a public university program, community college post-baccalaureate teacher certification program, or tribal college program and teachers seeking national board certification who commit to teaching in Arizona. For each academic year that a student receives a tuition waiver as part of the ATA, they are required to teach one full school year in an Arizona school. The academy includes accelerated models for high-demand teacher specializations, critical needs areas of the state, post-baccalaureate coursework, dual enrollment teachers, and students in noneducation programs who are completing teacher preparation courses. Since the program's inception in FY 2018, the Arizona Board of Regents (ABOR) has provided centralized administrative support for the academy.

After students complete an ATA program of study, postsecondary institutions partner with district and charter schools to place teachers in schools after graduation. Academy graduates may fulfill their service commitment by teaching in a public school or a school primarily serving students with disabilities. If the student does not fulfill the obligation to teach, they are required to reimburse ABOR for a proportional amount of the scholarship depending on the number of years they participated in the ATA and the number of years spent fulfilling their service commitment after graduation. ABOR is also required to establish a process for deferring service or repayment for students who have completed the ATA and have chosen not to fulfill the obligation to teach in Arizona after graduation.

The amount of the scholarship is up to the actual cost of tuition and fees, after all other financial gifts, aid, and grants, for:

- A maximum of 2 academic years (4 semesters) for graduate students
- A maximum of 4 academic years (8 semesters) for undergraduate students
- A maximum of 2 academic years (4 semesters) for community college students
- One-time for teachers seeking national board certification

The non-appropriated Arizona Teachers Academy Fund consists of appropriations made for administering the ATA and any additional funds received by ABOR for administering the academy. Monies in the fund may only be used for: 1) reimbursing universities, community colleges, and tribal colleges for scholarships; 2) support for teachers currently employed in an Arizona public school seeking a national board certification; 3) induction services for ATA graduates; and 4) implementing a marketing and promotion plan. Marketing and administrative costs may not exceed 3% of monies in the fund each year.

Funding and Enrollment

In FY 2018 and FY 2019, the state did not provide funding to administer the program and costs were incurred by the universities. Since FY 2020, the budget has included \$15.0 million from the General Fund to ABOR for distribution to all participating postsecondary institutions.

The ATA has also received several one-time distributions, including \$6.0 million from the Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund (GEERF) in FY 2021, \$15.0 million authorized by Proposition 207 as a transfer from the Medical Marijuana Fund in FY 2021, and \$15.0 million from American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds allocated by the Governor's Office in FY 2023. See *Table 1* for a history of ATA funding.

In FY 2022, ABOR reported total expenditures of \$24.7 million. Of this amount, \$22.7 million is for university and community college scholarship costs, \$1.5 million is for induction services, \$205,000 is for national board certification, \$176,400 is for other testing and certifications, and \$181,400 is for administrative and marketing expenses.

The academy distributed scholarships to a total of 3,494 students in FY 2022 at a cost of approximately \$7,100 per student. ABOR reports that there were 614 academy graduates teaching in public schools in FY 2022. See *Table 2* for a history of ATA enrollment.

	<u>FY 2020</u>	<u>FY 2021</u>	<u>FY 2022</u>	<u>FY 2023</u>
General Fund	\$15,000,000	\$15,000,000	\$15,000,000	\$15,000,000
GEERF	-	6,000,000	-	-
Proposition 207	-	15,000,000	-	-
ARPA	-	-	-	15,000,000
Total	\$15,000,000	\$36,000,000	\$15,000,000	\$30,000,000

	<u>FY 2018</u>	<u>FY 2019</u>	<u>FY 2020</u>	<u>FY 2021</u>	<u>FY 2022</u>
Arizona State University	165	290	985	1,190	1,515
Northern Arizona University	59	161	900	952	1,014
University of Arizona	15	28	155	360	368
Maricopa Community College	-	-	200	228	242
Pima Community College	-	-	127	156	171
National Board Certification	-	-	340	165	184
Total	239	479	2,707	3,051	3,494

Prepared by Cameron Mortensen, Fiscal Analyst