PA Mental Health Education Learning Program in Schools (PA HELPS)
Program Background

• Program launched in March 2023
• Provides funding to students who complete their internship in PA and obtain employment in that certification
• Recipients must agree to work at a school entity in PA for a minimum of 3 years following completion of their educational specialist degree
• PHEAA works with Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to provide funding in the following fields:
  – School nurse
  – School psychologist
  – School counselor
  – School social worker
What is an Eligible LEA?

• By program and PDE definition, LEAs are:
  – School districts, intermediate units, area career and technical schools, charter schools, regional charter schools, or cyber charter schools located in the Commonwealth

• To be eligible for PA HELPS, LEAs must:
  – Complete and execute a PA HELPS LEA Application and Agreement
  – Provide PHEAA with a copy of the internship agreement
  – Employ a site supervisor for the intern that holds a certification in the same field that the intern is pursuing
    • Exceptions are currently in place for school social workers
  – Use 100% of the awarded funds to compensate the intern for their internship
    • Awards can be used to cover previously negotiated or agreed upon stipend amounts and legally required payroll deductions
Who are Eligible Interns?

- Eligible interns are:
  - Residents of PA
  - Enrolled in a PDE-approved Educational Specialist Preparation Program (ESPP) that leads to educator certification
  - Already accepted to an internship at an approved LEA
  - Committed to work at an LEA in an approved field for a minimum of 3 years following completion of the respective ESPP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Award During Internship</th>
<th>Commitment Award</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School Psychologist</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>School Nurse</td>
<td>$2,500</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>School Counselor</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>School Social Worker</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
What is an Eligible Internship?

• Eligible internships are:
  – Part of an ESPP for school-based mental health professionals
  – Established through an agreement between the LEA and the ESPP
  – Supervised by both faculty of the ESPP and a school-based mental health professional employed by the LEA
  – Builds upon classroom learning experiences using best practices
Frequently Asked Questions

Q How should the LEA pay the intern?
   A PHEAA has no requirements surrounding method of payment.

Q What are the tax implications for this program?
   A Interns are responsible for seeking the advice of their own tax advisors as PHEAA is not able to advise interns regarding the potential income tax liability.

Q When will LEAs receive disbursements?
   A Depending on the internship length, LEAs will receive disbursements via Automated Clearing House (ACH) payments in the fall, spring, or both.

Q Our intern is planning to transfer to a different LEA to complete the second portion of their internship. What do LEAs need to do in this case?
   A Immediately provide PHEAA with the percentage of the internship completed, and PHEAA will determine eligibility for the balance of the internship at the new LEA.

Q I’m an intern. Can I apply on my own?
   A No. Interns cannot apply on their own for PA HELPS stipend payments. LEAs must complete an application and work with PHEAA for disbursements and record-keeping.
PA Student Teacher Support Program

PHEAA – Providing affordable access to higher education. (Public Information)
Program Background

• Program approved in December 2023
• Provides financial support to students completing student teaching in an Educator Preparation Program (EPP) approved by the PA Department of Education (PDE)
  – Awards also available for cooperating teachers
• Additional funding available to student teachers working in areas which attract few student teachers or have high rate of open positions
  – High-need areas will be determined by PHEAA in coordination with PDE
• Application will be available to students in April 2024
• 2023-24 allocation: $10 million
  – PA budget discussions aim to increase the program allocation
Institutional Eligibility

• Be a PA school district, intermediate unit, private school, area career and technical school, charter school, regional charter school, or cyber charter school
  – Referred to here as "LEA/Nonpublic school"

• Submit all PHEAA-required documentation for program participation

• Assign student teachers to eligible cooperating teachers

• Use 100% of the awarded funds to compensate the student teacher and cooperating teacher
  – Funding through PA Student Teacher Support Program should not replace any institutional funding provided to student or cooperating teachers
Student Teachers Must:

- Be enrolled in an approved educator preparation program in an approved Institution of Higher Education (IHE) in PA
- Hold required clearances for employment in public or private schools in PA
  - Department of Human Services Child Abuse History Clearance
  - Pennsylvania State Police Request for Criminal Records Check
  - Federal Criminal History Record Information (CHRI)
- Meet minimum 3.0 GPA requirement
- Agree to work as a teacher at an LEA/Nonpublic school within PA for a period of no less than 3 years
  - If service commitment is not met, PHEAA may recover payments made to the teacher

Cooperating Teachers Must:

- Hold certification in the subject area in which they will be providing guidance to the student teacher
- Have received at least 3 years of satisfactory ratings as a certified teacher
- Have at least 1 year of certificated teaching experience in the school entity where the student teacher is placed
2024-25 Application available in April 2024

Student teachers return application to PHEAA

PHEAA creates student records and determines provisional eligibility

PHEAA notifies students and IHEs

IHEs confirm eligibility

PHEAA updates student teacher eligibility

PHEAA sends agreements and application for cooperating teachers to LEAs/Nonpublic schools

LEAs/Nonpublic schools and cooperating teachers return agreements and applications

PHEAA notifies student teachers of awards and of disbursement dates

PHEAA generates rosters and disburses funds

Awards released to student teachers

Certified rosters are returned to PHEAA

Student teachers finish practicum

Cooperating teachers receive awards and high-need bonuses (if applicable) are paid

Blue = PHEAA; Yellow = Student Teacher; Green = IHE OR Educator Preparation Program (EPP); Teal = LEAs/Nonpublic schools
What Do Schools Need To Do?

- **IHEs and EPPs** must confirm eligibility of student teachers which includes:
  - Enrollment in EPP
  - Student meets the 3.0 GPA requirement
  - Student has obtained the required clearances
  - Student teaching practicum has been scheduled for Fall 2024 or Spring 2025
  - Placement location and start/end dates
    - Placement for fall term must be reported by 7/1/24 (student can push practicum to spring without losing eligibility)
    - Placement for spring term must be reported by 12/1/24
    - Graduate or Post-baccalaureate EPPs deadline is 12/15/24

- **LEAs/Nonpublic schools** are responsible for:
  - Completing required program participation agreements with PHEAA
  - Releasing the award to the student teacher
  - Returning the roster to PHEAA certifying the payments
  - Paying cooperating teacher and High-Need Bonus (if appropriate)

**Disbursements are scheduled to be 7 days prior to the start date contingent upon completion of documentation and placement dates.**
What Do Students and Teachers Need To Do?

• **Student teachers are required to:**
  – Complete and return the application as soon as possible
    • Funds are awarded on a first-come, first-served basis
  – Successfully complete Student Teaching
    • A minimum of 12-weeks of student teaching is required for Level 1 Certification
  – Keep demographic information updated with PHEAA
  – Complete 3-year service commitment
    • Employment as a teacher in certification field at an LEA/Nonpublic school within the Commonwealth

• **Cooperating teachers must:**
  – Complete application
    • Student disbursement will not be reliant on completion of coop teacher application
Develop and release applications for student teachers and cooperating teachers

- Release expected next week, will be available via pheaa.org/StudentTeacher until December 1

Process applications, determine provisional eligibility and notify students

- Initial eligibility is determined by students’ indication of enrollment at an approved EPP AND student teaching scheduled for Fall 2024 or Spring 2025

Generate rosters to notify IHEs of eligible applicants

Confirm eligibility when updates are received from IHEs and EPPs

Send school agreements and cooperating teacher applications to LEAs/Nonpublic schools

- Program participation agreements including ACH agreements and cooperating teacher application will be sent to the LEAs/Nonpublic schools after student placement is reported

Notify students of awards and disbursement dates

- Emails to student teachers will be generated once all agreements are received from the LEAs/Nonpublic schools and processed

Disburse funds to LEAs/Nonpublic schools

- Student rosters will also be sent with the disbursement
Benefits for Student and Cooperating Teachers

- **Qualifying student teachers** will receive $10,000
- Student teachers working in high-need areas are eligible to receive an additional $5,000
  - Awardees that do not meet the 3-year commitment may be required to repay the awarded funds
- **Qualifying cooperating teachers** will be eligible to receive a grant payment of up to $2,500 per assignment
  - Cooperating teachers may be awarded for subsequent assignments as funding allows
Program Reminders

• PA Student Teacher Support Program allows participation of private schools; PA HELPS does not
• Additional program information can be found:
  – PA Student Teacher Support Program: pheaa.org/StudentTeacher
    • Program administrative decisioning is still in progress
    • PHEAA staff is actively accepting feedback regarding program details
  – PA HELPS: pheaa.org/pahelps
    • LEA application for 2024-25 is available on the website
    • Site Supervisor's Specialist Certification should be in the original name provided when the certification was received
      – If discrepant, the point of contact can provide a disclaimer in their email with the LEA Application
• Encourage students to keep contact information up-to-date with PHEAA
  – Interns and student teachers will receive important updates via email
    • Interns receiving PA HELPS awards should continue to update contact information during their 3-year commitment period to ensure stipend communications are received
Contact Us

PHEAA.org

Dedicated line for schools and program partners:
1-800-443-0646

Email addresses for each program can be found on our Contact List

1200 N. Seventh St. Harrisburg, PA 17102

Interact With Us on Social Media
Thank You!