

The following definitions are for the purpose of the **Enhancing Excellence in Teaching Program**. Direct questions to Kelcy Sass at [kelcy.sass@nebraska.gov](mailto:kelcy.sass@nebraska.gov).

**Eligible Graduate Program:** For purposes of the Enhancing Excellence in Teaching Program, an eligible graduate program is defined as a course of study offered by an eligible institution, which results in obtaining:

- a **graduate degree** in a shortage area specified by the State Board of Education (NDE)
- a graduate course of study leading to a **teaching endorsement** in a shortage area;
- a **graduate degree** in curriculum and instruction;
- a **graduate degree** in a subject area in which a teaching endorsement is already held; or
- a **graduate degree** in a subject area that will result in an additional teaching endorsement not considered a shortage area which the superintendent of the school district or head administrator of a nonpublic school believes will be beneficial to the students of the school district or school

*PLEASE NOTE: Graduate programs resulting in obtaining an Administrative or Special Services Certificate are NOT eligible for the Enhancing Excellence Loan Program.*

**Eligible Institution:** A not-for-profit college or university which (a) is located in Nebraska, (b) is accredited by a regional accrediting agency recognized by the United States Department of Education as determined to be acceptable by the Board, and (c) has an approved teacher education program. Institutions that meet these criteria and offer eligible graduate programs:

<a href="#">Chadron State College</a>	<a href="#">University of Nebraska at Kearney</a>
<a href="#">Concordia University</a>	<a href="#">University of Nebraska – Lincoln</a>
<a href="#">Creighton University</a>	<a href="#">University of Nebraska at Omaha</a>
<a href="#">Doane University</a>	<a href="#">Wayne State College</a>
<a href="#">Nebraska Wesleyan University</a>	<a href="#">York College</a>
<a href="#">Peru State College</a>	<a href="#">College of Saint Mary</a>
	<a href="#">Midland University</a>

**Eligible Student:** An individual who meets the following criteria:

- Is employed as a teacher at least half-time in an approved or accredited school in Nebraska;
- Is enrolled in an eligible institution in an eligible graduate program;
- Is pursuing:
  - A graduate degree or added teaching endorsement in a [shortage area](#);
  - A graduate degree in curriculum and instruction;
  - A graduate degree in a subject area in which a secular teaching endorsement is already held; or
  - A graduate degree in a subject area, not considered a shortage area, that will result in an additional secular teaching endorsement which the superintendent of the school district or head administrator of a nonpublic school believes will be beneficial to the students of the school district or school;
- Is a Nebraska resident student;

- Agrees to complete the eligible graduate program on which eligibility for EETP funds was received; and
- Commits to teach full-time in an accredited or approved public or private PK-12 school in Nebraska upon successful completion of the eligible graduate program for a time-period equal to the number of years required for loan forgiveness.

**Full-time Teacher:** An individual holding a teaching certificate that is employed equivalent to 1.0 FTE under one or more teaching contracts with an approved or accredited Nebraska PK-12 school or Educational Service Unit throughout the course of a school year or a period of two consecutive school terms that are the equivalent of one school year (for example: one spring semester and the following fall semester).

**Loan Forgiveness Year:** The first year of loan forgiveness is during the third year of teaching after completion of the graduate program.

**Low Income School:** A Nebraska school building that provides free meals to all students pursuant to the community eligibility provision, teaches in a school building in which at least forty percent of the students are poverty students as defined in Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-1003, or teaches in an accredited or approved private school in Nebraska in which at least forty percent of the enrolled students qualified for free lunches as determined by the most recent data available from NDE.

**Program of Study:** Documentation that verifies enrollment in a graduate program and includes:

- Name of institution;
- Name of applicant;
- Graduate degree or Endorsement program to be completed; and
- Coursework required to complete the program, including course numbers, names, credit hours and semester to be taken.

A Program of Study approved by the institution in which the applicant is enrolled must accompany the EETP Application for Funds upon submission to the institution.

**Note:** *If your degree program is not within your institution's educator preparation division, you must have your Program of Study signed by your degree advisor prior to submission with your application.*

**Proof of Registration:** A document that a student receives from the institution that confirms that the student is officially registered and includes information about the classes for which the individual has registered, number of credit hours, and the dates of the classes. Some institutions utilize online processes for registration. A printed or electronic copy of the online registration confirmation is acceptable.

**Proof of Coursework Completion:** A document that a student receives from the institution that confirms that the student completed the coursework for which funds were received. This will typically be a grade report/transcript. Some institutions utilize online systems for course completion/grade information. A printed or electronic copy of the online grade/transcript is acceptable.

**Proof of Program Completion:** A document that a student receives from the institution that confirms that the student completed the graduate program. An official transcript from the institution is required.

**Resident Student:** An applicant who is enrolled in an eligible state-funded institution and who meets the criteria detailed in [Neb. Rev. Stat. § 85-502](#) will be considered a resident student. If the applicant is enrolled in an eligible Nebraska private college or university, s/he will be considered eligible for EETP if s/he would be deemed a resident student if enrolled in a state-funded institution. [Neb. Rev. Stat. § 85-502](#) also provides specific information about State postsecondary educational institution residence requirements.

**Shortage Area:** A secular field of teaching for which there is a designated teacher shortage, as determined by the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) at the time the borrower first receives funds pursuant to the program. A listing of the current shortage areas in Nebraska can be found on the [Nebraska Teacher Shortage](#) web page.

**Teaching Endorsement:** Teaching areas covered by teaching endorsements found in [92 NAC 24](#) excluding Religious Education.

**Very Sparse School District:** A local system that meets the criteria in [Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-1003](#). NDE determines the systems that meet these criteria on an annual basis.

*“This guidance document is advisory in nature but is binding on an agency until amended by such agency. A guidance document does not include internal procedural documents that only affect the internal operations of the agency and does not impose additional requirements or penalties on regulated parties or include confidential information or rules and regulations made in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act. If you believe that this guidance document imposes additional requirements or penalties on regulated parties, you may request a review of the document. For comments regarding this document contact [nde.guidance@nebraska.gov](mailto:nde.guidance@nebraska.gov)”*