

## **T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® ARKANSAS Release Time Q & A**

**What is release time?** Release time is paid time off from the program that is given to scholars receiving certain T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood scholarships. The scholar should be paid at their normal rate of pay. The paid release time can be used to attend class, study, and attend to personal needs that cannot be done because of work or class.

**How much release time is allocated to each scholarship recipient?** The amount of release time a scholarship recipient is eligible for depends on which scholarship option they have chosen. For most scholarships, each recipient will be given one hour of release time for each credit hour taken in a semester; up to a maximum 6 hours for every week of the semester. The maximum amount of hours that can be claimed in one semester are 96 (6 hours of release time X 16 weeks in a semester = 96).

**How will my child care employer get reimbursed for release time?** Each center receives a Form C, after the recipient returns their signed contract indicating that they have accepted the scholarship. The Form C allows for a director and scholar to track release time throughout the semester. Both the teacher and the director are required to sign as to the accuracy of the claim. Form C may be submitted at the end of each month or at the end of the semester. Centers will be reimbursed for 100% of the claimed hours (up to a maximum of 96 per semester) at a rate of \$15.00 per hour. This reimbursement is generally made to the center to help cover the costs of substitutes or floaters who are helping cover classrooms while teachers take their release time.

**Who benefits from release time?** Both the program and the scholar benefit from release time. Teachers are able to use release time to attend class, study, complete assignments, or attend to personal needs that they otherwise would not be able because of work and school. The center gets a teacher who is bringing new, creative ideas to the class and is more focused on their job responsibilities because they have been allowed to have some time to focus on their other responsibilities.

**What if a director is not able to give the complete amount of release time as required by the scholarship contract?** If a center is supporting scholarship recipients there are a number of creative options that can be explored to provide release time. These include: allowing the teacher to come in late or leave early during the week, pay them for lunch breaks (where by they are not responsible for a group of children at this time), pay them for holidays that they would not regularly get paid, add time to their annual or personal leave, and as a last resort you can limit the number of credit hours you will support each semester.

**Who can I contact for more information about release time and reimbursements?** You are welcome to contact the scholarship recipient's counselor or anyone else in the T.E.A.C.H. office to assist you with your questions. Our office is open from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday.

### **T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® ARKANSAS**

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