

LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Human Resources Division

Special Education Career Ladder  
STEP UP Application Packet

**Introduction**

The Special Education Teacher Education Preparation and Undergraduate Program (STEP UP) is designed for Special Education Trainees, Special Education Assistants and Healthcare Assistants who intend to become Special Education Teachers or other Certificated Related Service position (i.e. Speech and Language Pathologist or Occupational Therapist). STEP UP supports current District paraprofessionals working in the Special Education classroom with mentoring and guidance in regards to certification, credential or license requirements and teacher preparation programs, and financial assistance in the form of educational reimbursements for tuition, textbooks and credential testing fees and preparation courses. The program supports participants at any point of academic progress until a Preliminary Education Specialist credential is earned. Participants then commit to work for LAUSD in the certificated position for two years.

**How to apply**

Interested individuals may apply for the Special Education Teacher Preparation and Undergraduate Program (STEP UP) by submitting a complete Application Packet to the Special Education Career Ladder office.

Applicants must do all of the following to submit a complete application packet:

- Review STEP UP Policy Guide (pg 2-6)
- Complete STEP UP Applicant Information Form (pg 7)
- Submit signed STEP UP Assessment and Agreement Form (pg 8-10)
- Request STEP UP Principal Recommendation Form (Signed by evaluator AND principal)
- Provide Resume
- Include unofficial transcripts for current or most recent educational experience

STEP UP participation is limited and submission of a complete application is not an automatic admission into the program. Complete applications will be reviewed to select candidates of high academic standards and who demonstrate strong potential for professional success as a Special Education teacher or related services personnel.

Complete packets should be submitted via US Postal Service, school mail, faxed, scanned in email or in person by October 16, 2015 to:

Los Angeles Unified School District  
Human Resources Division: STEP UP  
333 S. Beaudry Ave. – 15<sup>th</sup> floor  
Los Angeles, CA 90017  
Fax: (213) 241-8465 | Email: [ladder@lausd.net](mailto:ladder@lausd.net)

If there are any questions in regards to the program or the application, please contact the Special Education Career Ladder office at (213) 241-4571 or email [ladder@lausd.net](mailto:ladder@lausd.net) or visit our website at <http://achieve.lausd.net/STEPUP>.

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**STEP UP**

Steps at which a member is participating are based on the combination of three goals:

- 1) Educational benchmarks based primarily on the number of college/university units
- 2) Review of Instructional Standards Experience (RISE)
- 3) Credential/license requirement

The goals for each step are as described in the following chart:

<b>STEP</b>	<b>Educational Benchmarks</b>	<b>Completion of Review of Instructional Standards Experience (RISE)</b>	<b>Completion of Credential Requirements</b>
<b>5</b>	- Completion of Education Specialist Preliminary Credential	<i>Teaching Performance Assessment (TPA) as required by the Teacher Preparation Program</i>	Reading Instruction Competence Assessment (RICA)
<b>4</b>	- Completion of Baccalaureate degree -Enroll in a Teacher Preparation Program	RISE #4 Delivery of Instruction	Subject matter competence (CSET or waiver letter; must meet NCLB highly qualified requirements)
<b>3</b>	- Completion of 90 semester units	RISE #3 Additional Professional Responsibilities	US Constitution (Commission accepted course or exam)
<b>2</b>	- Completion of 60 semester units -Enroll in a baccalaureate program	RISE #2 Planning and Preparation	Basic Skills Requirement (CBEST or equivalent)
<b>1</b>	- Completion of 30 semester units	RISE #1 Classroom Environment	Individualized Education Specialist Pathway

Participants must complete all three goals of each Step along with teacher/supervisor/principal endorsement in order to move to the next Step. In addition, the goals on all previous Steps must be completed in order to match the current educational benchmark. Participants will have a maximum of

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two years to complete each Step. In addition to the STEP UP Step requirements, participants must also maintain a cumulative GPA of at least 3.00, complete a minimum of 18-24 semester units per year, meet with a STEP UP mentor and receive continued teacher/supervisor/principal endorsement annually to continue in the program.

**Educational Reimbursements**

STEP UP members qualify for partial tuition and textbook reimbursement for courses in which they receive a grade of B or better, while maintaining a cumulative GPA of 3.00. All coursework must be completed at an accredited college or university and must be required for completion of a baccalaureate degree or credential/license. Tuition and textbook reimbursements are based on the type of college/university program enrolled as follows:

Type of enrollment	Per Semester Unit	Maximum Per Term	Maximum Per Year
Community college	\$40	\$480	\$960
4-year college or university	\$200	\$2,400	\$4,800
Textbooks	--	--	\$150

Requests for tuition and textbook reimbursements must be made by submitting the appropriate tuition and/or textbook reimbursement request form along with all required documentation by the submission deadline in the table below.

Term	Courses <u>completed</u> and textbooks purchased in the following calendar months	Submission Deadline
Summer	June, July, August	September 30
Fall	September, October, November	December 31
Winter	December, January, February	March 31
Spring	March, April, May	June 30

Any Review of Instructional Standards Experience (RISE) required for the STEP UP Step must be approved at least 2 weeks prior to the reimbursement request deadline.

**Credential Testing Reimbursements**

STEP UP participants in good standing are eligible for fee waivers and/or reimbursements for preparation courses and examination fees that are required in order to meet state credential requirements; specifically, for the California Basic Skills Exam (CBEST) to meet the basic skills requirement, the California Subject Exam for Teachers (CSET) to meet the subject matter competency requirement, and the Reading Instruction Competence Assessment (RICA) to meet the reading instruction requirement.

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Fee waivers

Participants may request to sign up for a STEP UP approved preparation course by completing the attendance request form and providing a “refundable deposit” by the posting registration deadline for the course. In order to refund the deposit, the participant must attend all sessions of the preparation course and submit a certificate of completion within 3 months. If a registered participant needs to cancel, then the STEP UP office must be notified at least two business days prior to the start of the preparation course in order to be reimbursed the deposit. Participants who do not attend or properly cancel will not receive a refund of their deposit, may not be eligible for future STEP UP fee waivers or reimbursements, and may be dropped from the program and asked to reimburse all funds received, including but not limited to tuition reimbursements.

Upon completion of the preparation course, these participants may then request a fee waiver for the subsequent test fees by submitting the test fee waiver request along with the certificate of completion for the course. Once participants receive the score report, it must be submitted to the STEP UP office within 6 months to verify completion of the test; passage of the test is not required. Those participants that do not complete the testing administration or cancel accordingly to the testing companies procedures will be responsible for paying back the Los Angeles Unified School District for the fee. This payback may be in the form of payroll deduction if the participant does not make proper arrangements in a timely fashion. Those who do not complete the testing administration or properly cancel may not be eligible for future STEP UP fee waivers or reimbursements and may be dropped from the program and asked to reimburse all funds received, including but not limited to tuition reimbursements. Reimbursements are available for enrollment costs for preparation courses and test fees, if fee waivers have not already been received. Preparation courses must be administered by a formal preparation program; verify with the STEP UP office that the course will qualify for reimbursement prior to enrollment. Receipt of payment and course completion verification must be submitted with the reimbursement request form for preparation course.

Testing Reimbursements

STEP UP participants are eligible for reimbursements for examinations that are required in order to meet state credential requirements. Receipt of payment and score reports must be submitted with the reimbursement request for test fees. Passage of the examination itself is not required for reimbursements; request of score reports is for verification of completion of the examination. Reimbursement requests must be submitted on the appropriate request form with all required documentation within 6 months of the completion of the preparation course or testing administration.

Credential Testing Fee Waiver and/or Reimbursements Schedule

Fee waiver values and reimbursement totals will be combined when considering maximum amounts received. Participants in good standing may receive reimbursements according to the following:

<b>STEP UP Step</b>	<b>Test</b>	<b>Preparation Course</b>	<b>Test Fees Maximum</b>
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		<b>Maximum</b>	
Steps 1-5	CBEST	\$155 (1 course)	\$150 (1 computer and 1 paper-based or 3 paper-based)
Steps 3-5	CSET	\$960 (3 courses; 1 per required subtest)	\$594 (2 complete batteries or 6 subtests)
Steps 4-5	RICA	\$199 (1 course)	\$171 (1 test)

**Review of Instructional Standards Experience (RISE)**

STEP UP Review of Instructional Standards Experiences (RISEs) are based on the Teaching and Learning Framework. RISEs are activities designed to provide participants with an opportunity to identify effective teaching practices and develop their teaching skills under the direction of classroom teachers. Completing a RISE helps focus and structure the participant’s classroom experiences in order to develop the tools and confidence needed to become an effective special education teacher. RISEs are for the growth and development of the participant as a teacher and not an evaluation of job performance, and not to be used as such.

There are four RISEs and each has one or more Focus Element or Teaching Standard based on the Teaching and Learning Frameworks. With the guidance of a credentialed classroom teacher, STEP UP participants follow each RISEs guidelines to determine an appropriate activity to conduct to demonstrate effective practice of the designated Focus Element(s). Once a written description of activity is agreed upon, the teacher will observe the STEP UP participant perform the activity or review the final product to determine the level of effectiveness.

RISEs are designed to build effective teaching skills as the STEP UP participant progresses throughout the program, requiring that they be completed sequentially. A RISE may only be submitted after the previous RISE has been approved.

There is no set time frame for a single RISE to be completed. A typical RISE should take about a month from initial planning of an activity in collaboration with the classroom teacher to the reflection on the performance of the activity and approval signature of the school site administrator. Once completed RISEs are submitted to the STEP UP office for final review, participants should receive a letter of approval within two weeks (except during holidays and unassigned times). Incomplete and ineffective RISEs will be returned to the participant for revisions.

To qualify for financial assistance for the appropriate Step and remain in good standing, RISEs must be approved at least two weeks prior to reimbursement submission deadlines or annual progress meetings.

**Mentoring and Hiring Assistance**

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STEP UP Mentors will meet with participants to create an Individualized Education Specialist Pathway (IESP) to obtain a teaching credential. Participant progress will be monitored and updated annually. Participants at Steps 4 and 5 will receive hiring assistance in the form of individual guidance through the recruitment and selection process. STEP UP participants still need to successfully complete the certificated full-time pre-employment eligibility process in order to accept an offer of a full-time contracted position with the district. STEP UP participation is not a guarantee of eligibility nor a guarantee or offer of a teaching position with LAUSD.

**Responsibilities of the Participant**

The minimum requirements to maintain good standing as a participant are:

1. Be employed as a Special Education Trainee, Special Education Assistant or Health Care Assistant (or Speech Language Pathology Assistant or School Occupational Therapy Assistant for Related Services) with the Los Angeles Unified School District and remain employed as such or as a provisional or intern teacher until completing the requirements of a California Preliminary Education Specialist Credential.
2. Maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.00.
3. Complete a minimum of 18-24 semester units in an academic year with a grade of B or better.
4. Satisfy the requirements to advance to the next Step in the program as described in the STEP UP policy guide within two years of meeting current Step requirements.
5. Receive annual teacher/supervisor/principal endorsement and ninety-six percent attendance rate.
6. Obtain the selected credential or licenses within a reasonable amount of time as determined by the participant's status upon entering the program and the Individualized Education Specialist Pathway planned with a STEP UP mentor.
7. Upon receipt of a credential or license, work for LAUSD as a full-time probationary and/or permanent Special Education Teacher one year for each year of financial support in the STEP UP program or repay the funds to LAUSD.

**STEP UP Commitment**

STEP UP participants who receive reimbursement are required to serve LAUSD Special Education students as a probationary and/or permanent certificated employee for two years. Those participants who do not meet the annual requirements of the program or do not complete the commitment of work for any reason will be required to pay the District back for all financial assistance received throughout the program.

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STEP UP Applicant Information

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Middle Initial: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Contact Phone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Last 4 of SSN: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Employment History**

LAUSD Employee #: \_\_\_\_\_ Job Class: \_\_\_\_\_ Years as paraprofessional: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Work Site: \_\_\_\_\_ Type of Assignment: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Principal: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Site Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_  
*(If not principal)*

**Academic Status**

Most recent college attended: \_\_\_\_\_ Currently enrolled   
 Not currently attending   
 Level: Freshman  Sophomore  Junior  Senior  Credential Candidate   
 Total Units Completed: \_\_\_\_\_ GPA: \_\_\_\_\_ Anticipated Completion Date : \_\_\_\_\_  
 Major/Credential: \_\_\_\_\_ Minor: \_\_\_\_\_  
 If you have already completed a baccalaureate degree:  
 University : \_\_\_\_\_ Date Conferred: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Major: \_\_\_\_\_ GPA: \_\_\_\_\_

**Credential/License Pathway**

If you have not completed a baccalaureate degree and/or credential/license program, please indicate which schools or programs you wish to attend for each level:  
 Community College: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Baccalaureate Degree: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Credential/License Program: \_\_\_\_\_

**Teacher Credentialing Test Status**

	Have not taken	Attempted, but not passed	Passed 1 section	Passed 2 sections	Passed all sections	Waiver or equivalent
CBEST	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CSET	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Subject/Subtest: _____						
RICA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A

**Credential/License Goal**

Select the Education Specialist Specialty Area you wish to pursue:

<input type="checkbox"/> Mild/Moderate Disabilities	<input type="checkbox"/> Visual Impairments
<input type="checkbox"/> Moderate/Severe Disabilities	<input type="checkbox"/> Physical and Health Impairments
<input type="checkbox"/> Deaf and Hard of Hearing	<input type="checkbox"/> Early Childhood Special Education
<input type="checkbox"/> Speech and Language Pathology	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupational Therapist



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STEP UP Assessment and Agreement Form

Please review the STEP UP Policy Guide for information about the program. The STEP UP Policy Assessment is designed to check for understanding of the programs rules and expectations. Performance on the assessment may be taken into consideration for final participation. The completed assessment must be submitted as part of the STEP UP Application Packet.

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Last* *First* *Middle*

Employee Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Site: \_\_\_\_\_

- 1) Who is able to participant in STEP UP?
  - a. LAUSD Special Education Trainees, Special Education Assistants, and Healthcare Assistants wanting to become Special Education Teachers or other Certificated Related Service
  - b. Any LAUSD employee who wants to become a teacher
  - c. Teacher Assistants who want to become Special Education Teachers
  - d. LAUSD Paraprofessionals who want to become elementary teachers
  - e. All of the above
  
- 2) Which of the following is NOT offered by the STEP UP program?
  - a. College Tuition Reimbursement
  - b. College Coursework
  - c. Mentoring and Hiring Assistance
  - d. Credential Test Fee Reimbursement
  - e. None of the above
  
- 3) STEP UP provides reimbursement for:
  - a. College tuition
  - b. CSET Preparation
  - c. Textbooks
  - d. CBEST test fees
  - e. All of the above
  
- 4) STEP UP participants may study at any accredited college or university.
  - a. True
  - b. False
  
- 5) STEP UP participants who received tuition reimbursement for three years, must work for LAUSD in the certificated position for two years or pay back the amount of the support received.
  - a. True
  - b. False





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- 6) A participant must submit and receive approval for each Review of Instructional Standards Experience (RISE) individually before submitting the next RISE.
  - a. True
  - b. False
  
- 7) A STEP UP participant beginning the program having already completed 90 units in college, only needs to complete RISE 3 to be considered a Step 4 participant.
  - a. True
  - b. False
  
- 8) In order to receive any financial assistance (tuition reimbursement, textbook stipends, or credential test fees or preparation course reimbursements), I must....
  - a. Submit the reimbursement request form by the submission deadline
  - b. Complete the Review of Instructional Standards Experience (RISE) required for my step at least two weeks prior to the submission deadline
  - c. Attach the required documentation to the request form
  - d. All of the above
  - e. None of the above
  
- 9) Which of the following items is NOT eligible for reimbursement through STEP UP?
  - a. Tuition for general education courses at a community college that will transfer for a baccalaureate degree
  - b. Tuition for courses for a baccalaureate degree at a university
  - c. Tutoring for the CBEST test from a colleague at my work site
  - d. District Subject Matter Preparation course for the CSET test
  - e. Textbooks purchased through the internet
  
- 10) STEP UP participants in good standing will...
  - a. Maintain a minimum GPA of 3.00
  - b. Complete a minimum of 18-24 semester units per academic year
  - c. Receive endorsement from their site administrator annually
  - d. Meet with a STEP UP Mentor annually and progress through the STEP UP steps in a timely fashion
  - e. All of the above
  
- 11) STEP UP participants must successfully complete the certificated employment eligibility process in order to accept a full-time contracted position.
  - a. True
  - b. False



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- 12) STEP UP participants should wait to pass all required subtests of the CSET to submit for a lump sum reimbursement.
- a. True
  - b. False
- 13) In order to receive test fee reimbursement, the test scores must be submitted to show that the test was passed.
- a. True
  - b. False
- 14) A STEP UP participant has completed 60 units in college, Review of Instructional Standards Experience #1 and passed the CBEST test. Which Step would they be on?
- a. Step 1
  - b. Step 2
  - c. Step 3
  - d. Step 4
  - e. Step 5
- 15) A STEP UP participant is enrolled in a teacher preparation program and completed all 4 Review of Instructional Standards Experiences (RISE), but still working on passage of one more sections of the CSET. Which Step would they be on?
- a. Step 1
  - b. Step 2
  - c. Step 3
  - d. Step 4
  - e. Step 5

**STEP UP Participant Agreement**

I have read and understand the policies and requirements of the Special Education Teacher Education Preparation and Undergraduate Program (STEP UP) in order to receive the benefits that I will receive as a participant. I also understand that if I do not for any reason fulfill my responsibilities to remain an active participant, complete the requirements for my designated credential or license in a timely fashion or complete the commitment to work with LAUSD as a Certificated full-time contracted employee for two years, I will be required to repay the amount of financial assistance received through this program to the Los Angeles Unified School District.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

