

LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Human Resources Division

Paraeducator Career Ladder  
STEP UP and Teach Policy Guide

Name: _____
Cohort: _____
Emp #: _____
Last 4 of SSN: _____

The Supporting Teacher Education Preparation and Undergraduate (STEP UP and Teach) Program is designed for paraeducators who intend to become certificated teachers. Cohorts are designed to meet the district’s needs.

Current cohorts

Cohort	Eligible Paraeducators	Credential Goal	Program Commitment Upon Completion of a Preliminary Credential
Special Education (SPED) 2015-2016 2016-2017  Now accepting applications for 2017-2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Special Education Trainee (Substitutes)</li> <li>• Special Education Assistant (Supervisors)</li> <li>• Health Care Assistant</li> <li>• Speech and Language Pathology Assistant</li> <li>• Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant</li> <li>• Other Instructional Assistant positions with job descriptions serving Special Education Students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any Education Specialist Credential Specialty</li> <li>• Speech and Language Pathology License</li> <li>• Occupational Therapy License</li> </ul>	2 full academic years with LAUSD as a: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Credentialed Special Education Teacher</li> <li>• Speech and Language Pathologist</li> <li>• Occupational Therapist</li> </ul>
Multilingual Multicultural (MM) 2016-2017  Now accepting applications for 2017-2018	Same as SPED, plus Teacher Assistants and Instructional Aides Must be bilingual in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arabic</li> <li>• Armenian</li> <li>• French</li> <li>• Korean</li> <li>• Mandarin</li> <li>• Spanish</li> </ul>	Any teaching credential with a Bilingual Added Authorization	2 full academic years with LAUSD as a credentialed teacher with eligibility for a bilingual authorization; preferably teaching in a bilingual program if a position is available at the time of hire.

STEP UP and Teach supports current District paraeducators working in the classroom with mentoring and guidance in regards to academic advisement, credential/license requirements and the District’s eligibility process for teachers or certificated related services personnel. STEP UP also provides financial assistance in the form of educational reimbursements for tuition and textbooks, and credential expenses including testing fees, preparation courses and materials, Certificate of Clearance for Commission on Teacher Credentialing and foreign transcript evaluation. The program supports participants at any level in their academic progress while attending an accredited institution until a credential/license is obtained. All financial assistance may be accessed as a reimbursement to the employee. The Career Ladder may have methods to cover expense upfront through vouchers or pre-enrollment options for some credential requirements.

Participant’s initials \_\_\_\_\_

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**1. STEP UP and Teach**

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

- 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 Credential Requirements</b>	<b>Completion of Review of Instructional Standards Experience (RISE)</b>
<b>5</b>	- Completion of Preliminary Credential (with bilingual authorization for MM)	Reading Instruction Competence Assessment (RICA)	<i>Teaching Performance Assessment (TPA) as required by the Teacher Preparation Program</i>
<b>4</b>	- Completion of Baccalaureate degree -Enroll in a Teacher Preparation Program	CTC Subject Matter (or Language fluency, MM only) competence (CSET or equivalent)	RISE #4 Delivery of Instruction
<b>3</b>	- Completion of 90 semester units	US Constitution (Commission accepted course or exam)	RISE #3 Additional Professional Responsibilities
<b>2</b>	- Completion of 60 semester units -Enroll in a baccalaureate program	Basic Skills Requirement (CBEST or equivalent)	RISE #2 Planning and Preparation
<b>1</b>	- Completion of 30 semester units	Individualized Mentorship Pathway (IMP)	RISE #1 Classroom Environment

Participants must complete all three goals for each Step in order to move to the next Step. For example, a person beginning the STEP UP and Teach program with a Baccalaureate degree, must also complete the Basic Skills requirement, US Constitution requirement and RISEs 1 through 3 to be considered on Step 4. Participants will have a maximum of two years to move up a Step. In addition to the Step requirements, participants must also maintain a cumulative GPA of at least 3.00, complete a minimum of 18-24 semester units per year (when enrolled in college and applicable to their program), maintain District required attendance standards, meet with a STEP UP mentor, and receive annual principal endorsement to continue in the program. Members must complete a minimum of 1 RISE per year regardless of Step until all 4 RISEs are completed.

**2. 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 and paid for with personal funds and/or a student loan. All coursework must be completed at an accredited college or university and must be required for

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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 Year
Community college	\$40	\$960
4-year college or university	\$200	\$4,800
Textbooks	--	\$1,000

Requests for tuition and textbook reimbursements must be made by submitting the appropriate tuition and/or textbook reimbursement request form. Along with the request form, all required documentation must be submitted within 3 months of course completion.

Any *Review of Instructional Standards Experience* (RISE) required for the STEP UP member to be in good standing, must be approved at least 2 weeks prior to the reimbursement request deadline.

### 3. Financial Assistance for Credential Requirements

STEP UP and Teach members in good standing are eligible for financial assistance to cover the costs of certain credential requirements. Members may pay for these expenses upfront and request a reimbursement based on the allowance table for each item. For some activities, vouchers and/or an enrollment option may be available, so that the member does not have to pay for that item out of pocket. The value of the voucher or enrollment will be deducted from the member's allowance and included when totaling the amount of financial assistance received for payback calculations if necessary.

#### 3.1 Allowance

Vouchers, course enrollment values and reimbursement totals will be combined when considering maximum amounts received. Participants in good standing may receive reimbursements up to the maximum allowances as follows:

Credential Requirement	Maximum Allowance
Test Fees (i.e. CBEST, CSET, RICA, US Constitution)	\$600 (annually)
Test Preparation or Materials (i.e. Enrollment fees or test specific study guides)	\$1000 (annually)
Certificate of Clearance	\$52.50 (once per member)
Foreign Transcript Evaluations	\$600 (once per member)

#### 3.2 Fee Vouchers and Course Enrollment

When possible, the Career Ladder will work with vendors to cover costs of credential requirements up front through test vouchers or an enrollment process.

##### 3.2.1 Test Vouchers

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Currently, test vouchers are offered for the CBEST, CSET or RICA tests. To request a voucher, submit a completed Test Voucher Request form (HR 4318) at least 3 weeks prior to the registration deadline. The Career Ladder is not responsible for nor guarantees the availability of any required tests and is not responsible for any registration deadlines or late fees incurred. Test vouchers will only cover regular registration fees. Any late or emergency fees must be covered by the member.

3.2.2 Course Enrollment

The Career Ladder has contracted with select test preparation vendors and is able to enroll STEP UP members in their courses at no upfront cost to the STEP UP member. Available test preparation courses will be posted on the STEP UP and Teach website. STEP UP and Teach members will submit a completed Preparation Course Enrollment Request form (HR 4319) at least 2 weeks prior to the start of the course to be enrolled. A verification of enrollment will be sent, if approved. Space in some courses may be limited; requests will be processed on a first-come, first-served basis. The cost of the course will be deducted from the STEP UP member's allowance regardless of attendance/participation in the course. It is the member's responsibility to properly withdraw or cancel participation prior to the start of the course with the Career Ladder office in order to determine if the value of the class may be "refunded" to the member's available allowance.

3.3 Credentialing Reimbursements

STEP UP and Teach members may pay for costs upfront and request a reimbursement afterwards. The allowance for vouchers and enrollments are combined with any reimbursements requested when determining the amount of allowance available. 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. Test preparation materials (i.e. study guides) must be test specific and state the name of the test in the description. To request reimbursements, STEP UP and Teach members must submit a completed Credential Requirement Reimbursement Request form (HR 4317) along with proof of payment and verification of completion (i.e. test scores, course completion certificate, etc.). Reimbursement requests must be submitted within 3 months of the purchase or completion of the course/test. Passage of an examination is not required for a reimbursement.

**4. 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 member's classroom experiences in order to develop the tools and confidence needed to become an effective teacher. RISEs are for the growth and development of the member as a teacher and not an evaluation of job performance, and not to be used as such.

There are four RISEs, each having one or more Focus Element or Teaching Standards based on the Teaching and Learning Framework. With the guidance of a credentialed classroom teacher, STEP UP participants follow each RISE's 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

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STEP UP and Teach member perform the activity or review the final product to determine the level of effectiveness.

RISEs are designed to build effective teaching skills as the member progresses through 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, members should receive a letter of approval within two weeks (except during holidays and unassigned times). Incomplete and ineffective RISEs will be returned 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.

#### **5. Mentoring and Hiring Assistance**

STEP UP Mentors will meet with members to create an Individualized Mentorship Pathway (IMP) to obtain a teaching credential. STEP UP and Teach member progress will be monitored and updated annually. Members at Steps 4 and 5 will receive hiring assistance in the form of individual guidance through the recruitment and selection eligibility process. STEP UP and Teach members 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 and Teach participation is not a guarantee of eligibility nor a guarantee or offer of a teaching position with LAUSD.

#### **6. Responsibilities of the Member**

The minimum requirements to maintain good standing as a STEP UP and Teach member are:

1. Be employed as a paraprofessional in a qualifying job classification 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 Credential.
2. Multilingual and Multicultural Cohort Members Only:  
Acceptance to STEP UP and Teach is conditional until demonstration of language fluency through passage of the appropriate CSET Language subtest. It is required within the first six months of acceptance to the program. A voucher will be issued for the CSET Language exam; however, passage of the exam will be required to receive any other financial assistance from the program.
3. Maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.00.
4. Complete a minimum of 18-24 semester units in an academic year with a grade of B or better, if enrolled and feasible for the academic program.
5. Satisfy the requirements to advance to the next Step in the program as described in the STEP UP and Teach policy guide within two years of meeting current Step requirements.
6. Receive annual principal endorsement and ninety-six percent attendance rate.

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7. Obtain the selected credential or license within a reasonable amount of time as determined by the member's status upon entering the program and the Individualized Mentorship Pathway planned with a STEP UP mentor.
8. Upon completion of a preliminary credential, work for LAUSD in a full-time certificated position for two full academic years or repay the funds to LAUSD.

**7. STEP UP and Teach Commitment**

Upon completion of a preliminary credential, STEP UP and Teach members who receive reimbursement are required to serve LAUSD students as a certificated employee for two full academic 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 and value of services received throughout the program.

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**STEP UP and Teach Commitment and Agreement**

STEP UP and Teach members who receive reimbursement are required to serve LAUSD students as a probationary and/or permanent certificated employee for two full academic years. Those participants who do not meet the annual requirements of the program, goal credential 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.

**STEP UP Member Agreement**

I have read and understand the policies and requirements of the Supporting Teacher Education Preparation and Undergraduate Program (STEP UP and Teach). I agree to abide by the policy guide in order to receive the benefits as a member of STEP UP and Teach. I also understand that if I do not for any reason fulfill my responsibilities to remain an active member, 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 full academic years, upon completion of a preliminary credential, 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

School mail or US mail entire document to:



Los Angeles Unified School District  
Human Resources Division: Career Ladder  
STEP UP and Teach Program  
333 S. Beaudry Avenue, 15<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Los Angeles, CA 90017

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