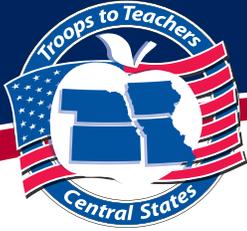


TROOPS TO TEACHERS



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BRANSTAD, REYNOLDS ANNOUNCE REMOVAL OF BARRIERS FOR VETERANS, MILITARY SPOUSES WHO WANT TO TEACH IN IOWA

OVERVIEW

Gov. Terry Branstad and Lt. Gov. Kim Reynolds announced a new effort to eliminate licensing barriers for qualified veterans and military spouses who want to teach in Iowa. The Iowa Board of Educational Examiners has created a new military exchange license for veterans and military spouses who have teaching credentials but face new licensure requirements when they move to Iowa. Military families move every few years for employment, and spouses who are teachers must relicense and meet new requirements with each move to a new state.

The new license ties in with the Branstad-Reynolds administration's Home Base Iowa Initiative to recruit veterans to Iowa. The announcement came on the same day as the Iowa House Veterans Affairs Subcommittee passed House Study Bill 616, an Act relating to professional and occupational licensure of veterans and the spouses of veterans.

"This was the right thing to do. These are standout citizens who are defending our freedoms or are supporting family members who are defending our freedoms," said Branstad. "I'm pleased the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners has removed this barrier that causes military families to seek a new licensure in the state of Iowa."

About 70 percent of out-of-state residents who apply for teaching licenses in Iowa must take additional coursework to meet the state's licensure standards.

"The Home Base Iowa Act that Governor Branstad and I have proposed would direct all licensing boards to take action similar to what the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners has done," said Reynolds. "We know members of the military and their spouses will bring a wide array of

skills and knowledge to Iowa. Continued action like this will ensure our service members and their spouses are able to land the career that meets their qualifications."

The new military exchange license enables veterans and military spouses to teach up to three years without taking any additional college courses. The license also is offered at a reduced cost of \$85 instead of \$210.

The military exchange license is a three-year license. After three years, the license can be converted to a one-year license, giving license-holders full authority to teach while they take the required classes. Once the requirements are met, the license can be converted to a regular Iowa teaching license.



What is needed to be eligible?

Eligible applicants must have completed a teacher preparation program through a college or university and must have been a licensed teacher in another state. Teachers who completed an alternative teacher preparation program outside of a college or university and are not eligible for full licensure will be granted substitute licenses.



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MEET MR. TOBIAS, TROOPS TO TEACHERS HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER



In 1987, he began 20 years of service in the United States Air Force. Serving provided an opportunity to live in or visit Germany, Turkey, France, Luxembourg, and Canada, not to mention 29 of the 50 states in the USA. After retiring as a Master Sergeant in 2007, he decided it was time to go back to school. Four years later, he graduated from the University of Central Missouri in 2012 with a Bachelor of Science in Middle School Education. His certifications include; Middle and High School Social Studies, as well as Middle School Language Arts.

What is your military background?

So it was natural that I would also serve. But for me, it was not just for tradition. I was wondering in life, bouncing from job to job and did not have an actual career focus until I met my wife. She clearly explained to me that if we were ever going to get married, I would need to get a "real" job. I signed up on Christmas Eve of 1986 to enter into the Air Force the following spring. I have served at Lackland AFB, Texas, Grissom AFB Indiana, Zweibrucken and Spangdahlem Air Bases in Germany, Incirlik Air Base Turkey, and finally Whiteman AFB here in Missouri. My specific career field or job was as an Inventory Management Specialist. I managed warehouses and supplies. However in the military, you will not have just one job. Along with managing warehouses, forecasting, and evaluating expenditures on over \$80 million dollars worth of supplies, I had the opportunity to work with and manage up to 30 people, work with heavy equipment, be a part of history by helping to close a base in Europe, close a missile wing in the U.S., be a part of Operation Desert Storm, Operation Enduring Freedom, and to help my air force brothers and sisters have successful deployments and return home safely.

Why did you go into teaching?

I decided to become a teacher many years ago while in the Air Force. I was selected to become a trainer that taught other units to understand material management processes. I also had numerous opportunities to work with elementary students on career days and with volunteer opportunities with Habitat for Humanity and other non-profit agencies. I also have a strong desire to help others to learn. Realizing the effects of being a very poor or inattentive student in my early education, as well as seeing other children having those same difficulties, I thought I might be able to help students to learn of their potential far earlier than I ever did. My success in teaching will be judged by how many of my students become lifelong learners, just for the sake of learning. In other words, I may never know if I achieve that definition of success. But I will know some success, by observing that light bulb brighten in my students. That "aha" moment of, "I get it".

What advice could you give to other troops considering going into teaching?

My advice is to first volunteer in classrooms. It provides an opportunity to see what it is like. Some enter into this profession with a misunderstanding that we work 8-3 on weekdays, summers and holidays off, and the students want to be enlightened by our knowledge. When in reality, you may have to work 50 or more hours a week, you spend your summers and holidays trying to improve your lessons or attend professional development to improve your own education, and not all of your students will desire your enlightenment. However, this is a career that you cannot weigh the positives and negatives as we do in risk management. Not everything is cut and dry. Sometimes the benefit of achieving that "aha" or "I get it" moment far exceeds the expense required or expended to get there. I have yet to wonder if I made the right choice, I am proud to be a teacher and very proud to be able to teach in Calhoun. My students are very challenging at times but I enjoy being here, teaching History and Coaching Basketball, Volleyball, and even helping with summer recreation league softball.

Teaching can be very challenging, rewarding, heart-warming, frustrating, nerve racking, hilarious, heart wrenching, prayerful, joyous, exciting, and any other descriptive emotional context imaginable. Teaching demands people that care and are willing to place their student first, even when we (the teachers) feel we are giving all and getting nothing in return, because when the students succeed, we succeed.

STATE TEACHER JOB VACANCY SITES

Looking for a new job? These are some links that may prove useful for finding certified and substitute teaching jobs. For a more complete listing go to our website:

TROOPSTOTEACHERS.MO.GOV

IA: <http://www.iowaeducationjobs.com/>

KS: <http://www.kansasteachingjobs.com/>

MO: <http://www.moteachingjobs.com/>

NE: <http://www.nebraskaeducationjobs.com/>

MISSOURI/KANSAS/ NEBRASKA/IOWA

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UNSATISFACTORY PROGRESS, CONDUCT & ATTENDANCE

The law requires that educational assistance benefits to Veterans and other eligible persons be discontinued when the student ceases to make satisfactory progress toward completion of his or her training objective. Benefits can be resumed if the student reenrolls in the same educational institution and in the same program. In other cases, benefits cannot be resumed unless VA finds that the cause of the unsatisfactory attendance, conduct or progress has been removed and the program of education or training to be pursued by the student is suitable to his or her aptitudes, interests, and abilities.

Both accredited and non-accredited schools are required by law to have and to enforce standards of progress and conduct in order for their programs to be approved for VA benefits. Only non-accredited schools are required by federal law to have attendance standards. These standards should be stated plainly in the school's catalog or bulletin.

A school's policy and regulations for standards of progress, conduct and attendance must define:

- The school's grading system
- The minimum satisfactory grade level
- Conditions for interruption of training due to unsatisfactory grades or progress
- A description of any probationary period
- Conditions for a student's reentrance/ readmission following dismissal/suspension for unsatisfactory progress
- Conditions for dismissal due to unsatisfactory conduct
- The school's attendance policy

All schools are required to maintain an academic record for each student which includes, for a veteran or eligible person, the credit allowed toward the student's current program due to previous training and experience. The record must also show the results of each enrollment period, to include the unit courses or subjects undertaken and the final result (e.g., grade, passed, failed, withdrawn, test results). The record must be cumulative and document the progress being made toward completion of the program. For those institutions that use a narrative grading system and/or unspecified academic terms, as opposed to the traditional grading system and specified terms, the academic record must contain sufficient information to permit the recipient of a transcript to make an informed evaluation of the student's educational experience. For those institutions not operating on a term basis, the record must show the student's proficiency at the various stages in the training program.

School officials are responsible for enforcing their established standards of progress. This will require that the school specify intervals between enrollment and graduation (i.e., completion) when each student's progress will be evaluated. Each such evaluation must compare the student's progress with clearly defined progress standards.

When a student has failed to maintain prescribed standards of progress, VA must be informed promptly so that benefit payments can be discontinued in accordance with the law. The termination date assigned by the school will be the last day of the term or other evaluation period in which the student's progress became unsatisfactory. Schools that provide a period of academic probation may not continue to certify a veteran or eligible person (who remains in a probationary status) for an indefinite period of time. It is reasonable to expect that an institution will report a termination due to unsatisfactory progress if a student remains on academic probation beyond 2 terms, quarters, or semesters.

CLICK HERE FOR SCHOOL CERTIFYING OFFICIAL TRAINING & INFORMATION RESOURCES

or go to: http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/school_training_resources.asp



APPROVAL OF ON-THE-JOB TRAINING PROGRAMS

VA can pay benefits for On-the-Job training (OJT) to eligible people if the training facility and program meet certain requirements. The main requirements are listed below.

PROGRAM

- The OJT program provides all the job skills and related training the trainee needs to be fully qualified for the job.
- It's reasonably certain that the job for which the person is being trained will be available after the trainee completes the program.
- The job customarily requires between 6 months and 2 years of full-time OJT.
- The length of the OJT isn't longer than customarily required in the community.
- Progression and promotion to the next higher level depends on the skills learned through OJT training and not just on such factors as length of service and normal turnover.

WAGES

- Wages paid to VA trainees in this program are at least equal to the wages paid to non-VA trainees at a similar level of training.
- The beginning wage must take previous training and experience into account.
- The beginning wage is at least 50% of the wage for a fully trained employee.
- By the last month of OJT, the wage must be at least 85% of the wage for a fully trained employee. (Government OJT programs don't have to meet this 85% requirement.)
- Upon completion of OJT, the wage should be at least equal to the wage for a fully trained employee.

Contact us: VA Website 1-800-827-1000

TRAINING FACILITY

The training facility must:

Have adequate space, equipment, instructional material, and instructors to provide satisfactory training.

- Keep adequate records showing progress
- Make all records available to VA and the State Approving Agency at their request.
- Grant credit to each trainee for previous training or experience (including experience in the military) and reduce or shorten the length of the total training appropriately.
- Give a copy of the signed training agreement, program outline, and wage scale to the trainee, VA, and the State Approving Agency
- Comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (no discrimination based on race, color, or national origin.)

NOTE: These requirements are in 38 CFR (Code of Federal Regulations,) section 21.4262 and Title 38 U.S. Code, section 3677. For more information, call toll-free 888-442-4551 (888 GI BILL 1) or visit our website at GI Bill Website

THE MISSOURI STATE APPROVING AGENCY DIRECTORY

Features all schools and colleges approved for the GI Bill. Request a copy by calling **877.530.2765**

The Department of Elementary & Secondary Education

We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities. Inquiries related to Department programs and to the location of services, activities, and facilities that are accessible by persons with disabilities may be directed to:

**Jefferson State Office Building,
Civil Rights Compliance
(Title VI/Title IX/504/ADA/Age Act)
205 Jefferson Street
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0480
p: 573.526.4757
or Relay Missouri p: 800.735.2966.**

A dedicated toll-free hotline is now available **FOR SCHOOL CERTIFYING OFFICIALS (SCOS) ONLY.**

Toll-free hotline number 1 (855) 225.1159

The hotline is available from 7:00 am to 5:00 pm, Central Time. SCOs must provide the school's facility code and be listed as a designated VA school certifying official to receive assistance through the dedicated hotline.

TO FIND OUT IF YOU ARE ELIGIBLE FOR VETERANS EDUCATION AND TRAINING BENEFITS, OR TO SEE HOW MUCH YOUR ENTITLEMENT IS, CALL 888.442.4551.



SHARE THIS NEWSLETTER This newsletter is being e-mailed to one Certifying Official at each school. Please share this newsletter with all other Certifying Officials, the Bursar's or Comptroller's Office, Financial Aid Office and other interested individuals at your school/business. It is extremely important that the information in this newsletter receives the widest dissemination in order that veterans receive the GI Bill and other educational benefits to which they are entitled.

KANSAS

GOVERNOR'S AWARD RECOGNIZES TOP PERFORMING SCHOOLS



TOPEKA – Forty-two Kansas elementary schools, 10 middle/junior high schools and 18 high schools were recently recognized as part of the seventh annual Governor's Achievement Awards, honoring top performing schools in the state. The school must have been among the top 5 percent of schools in both reading and mathematics on the state assessments at its respective level and met one additional measure. For elementary schools and middle/junior high schools that measure is attendance and high schools the measure is graduation rate.

"The Governor's Achievement Award is a significant recognition for Kansas schools," said Kansas Education Commissioner Dr. Diane DeBacker. "The accomplishment recognizes a school's high expectations and the ability of the school staff to assist students in achieving to those expectations."

Schools receiving this award are at the following link: <http://www.ksde.org/Home/QuickLinks/NewsRoom/tabid/586/aid/16/Default.aspx>

More information about educator preparation in Kansas can found at www.ksde.org

NEBRASKA

EDUCATION BILL WORKS TO IMPROVE NEBRASKA SCHOOLS THROUGH READING AND A SCHOOL GRADING SYSTEM

School children's success and school accountability are among the key features of the Working to Improve Nebraska Schools Act, which was the subject of an Education Committee hearing.

Legislative Bill 952, would institute four major changes aimed at improving student success and school accountability, including an end to social promotion after third grade for students who have not passed, the creation of a school grading system, the creation of an alternative teacher certification process and the establishment of a school recognition program for successful schools. The bill also would require principal approval for the transfer of teachers to other schools.

Social promotion was an important part of the conversation Tuesday. Under the bill, if students failed to be proficient on state and local reading assessments at grade three, they would be held in that grade until they reach proficiency. Schools would be expected to provide intensive summer programs and supplemental reading education programs to try to keep students on the right track without having to be held back. According to Sen. Scott Lautenbaugh, the bill's sponsor, students could only be held back for a maximum of two years.

The bill also calls for setting up a system to grade the quality and progress of individual schools across the state. Schools would be ranked A through F. Schools would receive grades based on a combination of student achievement scores on standardized tests, student learning gains measured in the statewide assessment and learning gains of the students scoring in the lowest 25th percentile in reading and mathematics on the statewide assessment.



More information about educator preparation in Nebraska can found at www.education.ne.gov/tcert

MISSOURI

NUMBER OF MISSOURI STUDENTS TAKING ADVANCED PLACEMENT® EXAMS DOUBLES



A new report (<http://apreport.collegeboard.org/>) from the College Board shows that more than twice as many Missouri students took Advanced Placement (AP®) exams in 2013 than in 2003. The number of low-income students taking the exams increased tenfold, jumping from 129 in 2003 to 1,575 in 2013.

The number of Missouri high school graduates who scored 3+ on the AP® tests more than doubled, increasing from 2,766 in 2003 to 5,767 in 2013. In fact, more graduates scored 3+ in 2013 than the total number of graduates who took the exams (4,256) in 2003.

SEVERAL PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN MISSOURI MADE THE AP® HONOR ROLL:

- Francis Howell School District R-III
- Kirkwood School District R-VII
- McDonald County School District R-I
- Rockwood R-VI School District
- Wentzville School District R-IV

While Missouri doubled the number of graduates who scored 3+ on the exams over ten years, it still ranked low nationally in students who passed. The national average of 2013 graduates who scored 3+ was just over 20 percent; Missouri came in at 9.5 percent, ahead of only four other states.

"The increase in students taking the exams and succeeding shows that we're moving the right direction toward preparing our students for college and career," said Sharon Helwig, Assistant Education Commissioner in the Office of College and Career Readiness. "Every student should have the opportunity to take an AP® class."

The AP® program allows students who are planning their postsecondary education to develop college-level knowledge and skills and earn college credit. In Missouri, students can earn at least three college credits for each AP® score of three or higher. At an average of nearly \$270 per credit hour, that can equal significant savings for students and their families. AP® students who score 3+ are also more likely to earn higher GPAs in college and graduate from college within five years.

Missouri schools can learn more about implementing AP® programs by contacting the College Board.

Ensuring that all Missouri students graduate college and career ready is the top goal of the Top 10 by 20 initiative, which is aimed at placing student achievement in Missouri among the top 10 performing states in education by 2020.

More information about educator preparation in Missouri can found at dese.mo.gov/eq/ep/.

IOWA

Iowa recently announced new military exchange licenses designed to help eliminate teacher licensure barriers for military spouses and recent veterans. The new license, offered at a reduced cost of \$85 from \$210, enables spouses and veterans to teach up to three years without taking any additional college courses.

For more information check out the article on page one or contact your Troops to Teachers representative.



More information about educator preparation in Iowa can found at <http://educateiowa.gov/>