

Financial Aid Resources: An Overview for TEACH Scholars

The TEACH Early Childhood® Wisconsin Scholarship Program provides funding to support those in the early care and education field who wish to complete credit-based coursework. A wide variety of scholarship models are available that make higher education extremely affordable, however, there are some limitations.

This means students may need to cover educational costs if they wish to complete more credits than TEACH can support or courses outside the scope of eligible courses. We certainly agree that having advanced education in early childhood is valuable, and we know those who work in our field are becoming more educated. It's also important to note program and educational eligibilities are set by Wisconsin Department of Children and Families.

If you are interested in taking courses or seeking a credential/degree outside of TEACH's scope, you still have options!

Federal Student Aid

WWW.STUDENTAID.GOV provides a wide variety of resources related to financial aid.

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) Form tab provides information about how to complete the form. Completing this form is the first step in accessing financial aid, including grants, scholarships, and loans (including a video explanation). Colleges/universities may require students to complete the FAFSA form before or in conjunction with applying for local scholarships. Completing the FAFSA form does not require you to accept any student loans, but it is the first step to receiving your financial aid package.

Types of Aid

There are two types of aid we want to share with you: scholarships and grants. These aid types are 'gifts' and typically do not need to be repaid.

Scholarships: In addition to the TEACH Early Childhood Wisconsin Scholarship Program, community organizations and higher education foundations provide local scholarships to a wide range of students meeting scholarship-specific guidelines. [The College Board website](#) not only provides information about entrance and placement exams but also provides valuable information about scholarships and a personalized scholarship matching tool. And, don't forget to check your school's financial aid office on their website to find out if there are scholarships you can apply for through the school.

Tips for the scholarship application process:

- Be yourself! Not every scholarship requires applicants to have a 4.0 grade point average! There are many scholarships available that seek specific kinds of students. These scholarships support students with specific career goals, life experiences, or skills.
- Make time in your schedule. It can be overwhelming to get lots of information and emails from these scholarship sites but try to set aside time to read through the scholarships they have matched to you as often as possible.
- Read instructions carefully! You will want to do this way ahead of time – before scholarship applications are due to ensure your application meets the requirements.

- Proofread all applications and/or essays carefully and ask for help from the best writers you know.

Grants

There are two types of federal grants that you should be aware of: Pell Grants and the Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grants.

Pell Grants are awarded to undergraduate students with exceptional financial need and who haven't yet earned a bachelor's or postgraduate degree. Award amounts can change yearly so you must complete the FAFSA each year.

The federal TEACH Grant – not to be associated with the TEACH Early Childhood Wisconsin Scholarship program (yes, this can be confusing!) – provides funds to students who are completing coursework towards a career in teaching. This grant requires recipients to serve as a full-time teacher for four elementary or secondary school years at a school or educational service agency that serves low-income students, in addition to other requirements.

Questions?

As you complete your credit-based educational journey, be sure to seek out and be aware of the wide variety of financial supports that are available to you beyond student loans and as always, feel free to reach out to your TEACH Early Childhood Scholarship Counselor and/or a Career Development Counselor at Wisconsin Early Childhood Association. We are here to be resources and support for you.