



OREGON DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Public Service Building, 255 Capitol Street NE, Salem, Oregon 97310
Phone (503) 947-5600 • Fax (503) 378-5156 • www.ode.state.or.us

To: District and ESD Administrators

RE: Addressing the Speech Language Pathologist shortage through scholarships

Dear Educators:

At this time, the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) is recruiting scholarship candidates from districts and ESDs. Scholarship recipients will enroll in the Oregon cohort of the Speech Language Pathology Masters degree program through Nova Southeastern University (NSEU).

During the 2007 Regular Legislative Session, House Bill 3141, Section 19 (12), was passed by the 74th Oregon Legislative Assembly.

Each biennium, the Department of education may expend up to \$150,000 from the State School Fund for the administration of a program to increase the number of speech-language pathologists and speech-language pathology assistants under sections 21 to 25 of this 2007 Act.

Through HB 3141 funding, ninety-one (91) Oregon educators have already been awarded scholarships for further education in Speech Language Pathology (SLP), a field identified with a severe shortage of professionals. These ninety-one speech language pathologists and speech language pathology assistants are currently working in Oregon school districts and, at the same time, are in professional development programs which will result in appropriate professional certification.

Districts/ESDs from across the state are involved with the SLP and SLPA cohort programs, and many of the districts are located in the rural sections of the state. Even before the cohort members have completed their programs, the members are sharing their newly-honed skills in Oregon schools.

We are anxious to begin an additional Oregon SLP cohort, and invite your district or ESD to apply.

The application deadline is March 1, 2012. The SLP program begins in September 2012.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Nancy J. Latini".

Nancy J. Latini, Ph.D.
Assistant Superintendent
Office of Student Learning & Partnerships

RECRUITING CANDIDATES

For Professional Development Scholarships in Speech Language Pathology Oregon Cohort IV

Purpose of Scholarship Program

The goal is to increase the number of Speech Language Pathologists (SLP) in Oregon schools through scholarship funding for school districts and Education Service Districts (ESD). Scholarship candidates must complete a Speech Language Pathologist graduate degree, earn certification, and agree to work in the district or ESD that sponsored the candidate. These scholarships are being administered by the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) Office of Student Learning & Partnerships.

Background and Advantages of the Oregon Cohort Program

The Oregon Legislature allocated scholarship and mentoring funds to be used by current employees of Oregon districts and ESDs in earning certification as Speech-Language Pathologists through the NSEU Masters degree program. In exchange for scholarship funding, each Oregon cohort member agrees to work for the Oregon school district or ESD that sponsored participation in the SLP Masters degree program.

Eligibility

District/ESD: Scholarship funding is available to school districts and ESDs that identify professional development as a priority, have a high-need for certified special educators, and have documented a shortage of certified SLPs for vacant positions.

Scholarship candidates: Scholarships are available to current employees of school districts and ESDs, persons with an undergraduate degree in Speech Language Pathology or Communication Disorders or persons with pre-requisite credits, and those who want to pursue a graduate degree in Speech Language Pathology.

Application Process

Each scholarship candidate must submit both personal and district/ESD application requirements. The following application documents are required:

- Scholarship candidate: Essay documenting goals, qualifications, and commitment.
- District: Essay documenting need, support of scholarship candidate, and plans for administration of the scholarship and mentoring funds.
- Scholarship candidate: Transcripts for all undergraduate and graduate coursework.

After the scholarship candidate is preliminarily accepted into the Oregon cohort, the candidate will pursue acceptance into the Nova Southeastern University (NSEU) program. Final acceptance into the Oregon cohort is contingent upon acceptance into the NSEU SLP Masters program.

OREGON COHORT APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

All successful candidates must be accepted into both the NSEU SLP Masters program and the Oregon cohort program. See below for eligibility requirements.

Eligibility

Entrance Requirements for the Nova Southeastern University (NSEU) Masters Program in Speech-Language Pathology

- Bachelor's degree in Speech Language Pathology or Communication Disorders, or the equivalent pre-requisite coursework
- Grades of A or B in all SLP/Communication Disorders courses
- Three letters of recommendation
- Essay; see NSEU web site at <http://www.schoolofed.nova.edu/slp/>
- Phone interview

Requirements for Participation in Oregon Cohort IV:

- Commitment to complete the three-year NSEU Masters program in Speech-Language Pathology
- Current employment in an Oregon district or ESD
- Commitment to work as a Speech Language Pathologist in an Oregon district/ESD for a minimum of two years after completion of the NSEU SLP Masters degree program. Successful applicants will be required to submit the signed agreement between the district/ESD and the scholarship recipient.

Application

Each scholarship candidate must submit all requirements for Oregon Cohort IV in one package by the deadline, in order to be considered as a viable candidate for the cohort.

Each essay must address the required topics with clearly-labeled headings. See the tables on the last page of this packet for details. Each essay must not exceed four pages, single-sided and double-spaced.

Application Checklist

Essay: Scholarship candidate
Essay: District administrator
Unofficial Transcripts

Submission Deadline

Applications must be postmarked by March 1, 2012. Electronic submissions will not be accepted.

Mailing Address

Send all application requirements in one packet to Catherine Heaton, Oregon Department of Education, 255 Capitol St NE, Salem, Oregon, 97310.

OREGON SPEECH LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY COHORT IV

Frequently Asked Questions

What is this opportunity?

This is an opportunity for an employee of an Oregon school district or ESD to obtain a Masters degree in Speech Language Pathology through the distance program offered in Oregon by Nova Southeastern University (NSEU). This program is designed for individuals who are working full-time. The Oregon Department of Education will provide scholarship and mentoring funds to partially cover the costs of the program.

Who is eligible to apply?

An Oregon school district or ESD may apply for a scholarship on behalf of a current employee. Each scholarship is awarded to a district or ESD on behalf of a scholarship candidate. An individual must have the support of his/her district, in order to apply.

What are the advantages of participating in Oregon Cohort IV?

The advantages for cohort members include the following:

- The opportunity to participate in a specially designed distance program that combines face-to-face workshops held in Oregon with distance course work
- Scholarship funds through the Oregon Department of Education
- Support from fellow students through a cohort model
- Participation in a program that is designed for educators who are working while earning their degree

What are the scholarship opportunities?

Scholarships are available, on a competitive basis, to qualified applicants who are accepted to both the Oregon cohort and to the Nova Southeastern University program.

When does the Masters program begin?

The program begins in September 2012.

What is the length of the Masters program?

While employed full-time, the student will complete the program in three years.

What is the deadline for applications?

Applications are due to the Oregon Department of Education by March 1, 2012. Applications will be due to Nova Southeastern University thereafter.

Where can I locate Oregon Cohort IV application materials?

This packet includes all materials you will need to apply.

Who can answer my questions?

Send your questions to Catherine Heaton at catherine.heaton@state.or.us or call her at 503-947-5714.

Applicant Essay Requirements

Note: The scholarship applicant must address each required element.

Required element	Description
Contact Information	Candidate: Name, School District or ESD, email address, work phone number, home or cell number
Goals	Describe your goals related to enrollment in the Oregon cohort of the NSEU program.
Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe your qualifications for participation in the Oregon cohort of the NSEU program. If you will need pre-requisite courses for eligibility, describe the courses needed and your plans to complete the needed coursework prior to or along with the NSEU program.
Commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe your commitment to complete the three- year program. Describe your commitment to continue employment in your school district or ESD for a minimum of two years after graduation.
Support	Describe the support you have from your school district or ESD. What kinds of mentoring will the district provide during your participation in the program?
Impact	Describe the anticipated impact on your students.
Reports	Describe your willingness to complete reports for ODE to use in assessing the effectiveness of the scholarship program.

District/ESD Essay Requirements

Note: The applicant's district/ESD administrator must address each required element.

Required element	Description
Contact Information	Candidate's Supervisor: Name, School District or ESD, email address, work phone number
Statement of Need	Describe the need that will be met through the provision of the scholarship. Document the need by describing SLP retention and recruitment concerns and providing district/ESD data.
Financial support	Describe the plans for scholarship distribution and additional district financial support, if applicable.
District support	Describe the district's support of the applicant's quality and professionalism.
Administration	Describe plans for administering the grant. For example, how will you handle the circumstance of withdrawal from the program, or insufficient progress, or poor performance in the program?
District need	Describe the potential for hiring the individual after program completion and certification. Describe the potential for long-term retention of the applicant.
Impact on district	Describe the anticipated impact on students, including the numbers of students who will benefit.
Mentoring	Describe how the scholarship recipient will be supported and mentored throughout the three-year program.
Monitoring	Describe how progress will be monitored, including who will be responsible.