



South Central Oklahoma Rural Education
— **COLLABORATIVE** —
Growing Local Educators

PACT - Financial Assistance Program

Policy, Application Process, and Participant Agreement

Effective: July 1, 2026

One of SCORE Collaborative's central commitments is to remove the financial barriers that keep capable people from completing the coursework and certification required to become Oklahoma teachers. This document describes the financial assistance available to PACT participants, how to apply for it, and the academic expectations that come with receiving it.

1. Purpose

The PACT Financial Assistance Program helps active PACT participants pay for the approved coursework, materials, and certification examinations that lead to full Oklahoma teacher certification. Assistance is a shared community investment: it is funded by SCORE's donors and grant partners, and it is awarded with the expectation that each participant will progress steadily toward certification and continue serving students in Southern Oklahoma.

2. Eligibility

To be considered for financial assistance, an applicant must meet all of the following:

- Be an active, enrolled PACT participant in good standing with SCORE;
- Be serving as a para-professional, teacher of record, or be formally on track to do so, in a participating Southern Oklahoma K-12 school district;
- Be enrolled in, or registered for, SCORE-approved coursework or a certification examination that counts toward Oklahoma teacher certification or the required degree;
- Have applied for federal student aid for the current year by completing the FAFSA and applying for the Pell Grant, and have either been found ineligible for Pell or had any Pell award applied to eligible costs before requesting SCORE assistance for those costs;
- Submit a complete application, including required documentation, by the posted deadline for the term; and
- Be current on the academic and reporting expectations described in Sections 4 and 8 of this document.

Good to know

Eligibility does not guarantee an award. Assistance is awarded as funds allow and is prioritized by need, readiness, and progress toward certification.

3. What Assistance Can Cover

Subject to available funds, assistance may be applied toward:

Eligible Cost	Notes
Tuition and Mandatory Fees	For SCORE-approved courses at Murray State College or another approved institution.
Required Textbooks and Course Materials	Required, not optional, materials tied to a funded course.
Certification Examination Fees	Oklahoma educator exams, including OGET, OSAT, and OPTE registration fees.
Approved Related Costs	Limited, pre-approved costs such as required testing-site travel, considered case by case.

Award limits. SCORE sets a maximum award per term of **\$3,000** and per academic year of **\$6,000** per participant. These limits are reviewed annually by the SCORE board.

A safety net, not a first source. SCORE assistance is a last-resort safety net; it is not a primary source of funding. It is applied only after a participant has pursued the federal aid and other aid for which they qualify. Before requesting SCORE help with tuition and fees, a participant must complete the current-year FAFSA and apply for the Pell Grant. SCORE then covers only the gap that remains after Pell, scholarships, and employer tuition assistance are applied.

Costs federal aid does not cover. Some eligible costs, such as certification examination fees, are typically not covered by Pell. These remain eligible for SCORE assistance without a Pell determination; applicants must still disclose any other aid that applies to them.

Apply for Pell first

Completing the FAFSA and applying for the Pell Grant is a condition of assistance for tuition and fees. Attach your FAFSA confirmation and your Pell result, either an award letter or an ineligibility notice, with your application. Participants who receive SCORE assistance reapply for federal aid each year.

4. Academic Expectations

Participants who receive SCORE financial assistance are expected to earn a grade of C or better in every course funded by SCORE.

This standard reflects two realities:

- Oklahoma certification and degree programs require passing grades for a course to count toward completion; a grade below C generally does not move a participant closer to certification; and
- SCORE's funds are a shared community investment. Holding a consistent, reasonable standard protects that investment and keeps assistance available for the whole cohort.

Satisfactory academic progress

To remain in good standing for financial assistance, a participant is expected to:

- Earn a grade of C or better in each SCORE-funded course;
- Complete funded courses; an unresolved Incomplete is treated the same as a grade below C until it is resolved; and
- Submit an official grade report for each funded course within fifteen (15) days of the close of the term.

Section 8 describes what happens, and the support that is offered, when a participant earns a grade below C, receives an Incomplete, or withdraws from a funded course.

5. How to Apply

The application process has six steps:

1. **Confirm eligibility.** Review Section 2 and confirm you meet each requirement.
2. **Complete the application.** Fill out the Financial Assistance Application in Part B of this document, including the course and cost tables.
3. **Gather documentation.** Attach the items listed below.
4. **Submit by the deadline.** Send the completed application and documentation to the PACT Program Director by the posted term deadline.
5. **Review and award.** SCORE reviews the application and notifies you of the decision and award amount (Section 6).
6. **Sign the agreement.** If awarded, sign the Participant Agreement in Part C before funds are disbursed.

Documentation to attach

- Proof of enrollment or registration for the term (course schedule or registration confirmation);
- An itemized cost estimate from the institution (tuition, fees, and required materials) or an exam registration cost;
- Proof that you completed the current-year FAFSA, and your Pell Grant result (award letter or ineligibility notice), when you are requesting help with tuition and fees;
- Documentation of any other aid awarded for the same costs (if applicable); and
- Most recent grade report, if you have received SCORE assistance in a prior term.

6. Review and Award

SCORE reviews complete applications and considers financial need, readiness for the coursework, progress toward certification, and available funds. Incomplete applications cannot be reviewed until they are complete.

You will receive a written award notification stating the amount approved, the costs it covers, and any conditions. An award is specific to the term and the courses listed; it does not carry over automatically to future terms.

7. Disbursement of Funds

- **Tuition and fees** are paid by SCORE directly to the institution whenever possible.
- **Textbooks, materials, and exam fees** are reimbursed to the participant upon submission of an itemized receipt, or paid directly to the vendor when arrangements allow.
- **Continued disbursement** in any future term is contingent on the participant meeting the academic and reporting expectations in Sections 4 and 8.

8. When Expectations Are Not Met

SCORE's first response to a struggling participant is support, not penalty. The steps below are designed to help participants get back on track while protecting the program's shared funds.

First course below C

If a participant earns a grade below C in a funded course for the first time:

- The participant meets with the PACT Program Director to develop a written Academic Success Plan;
- Assistance continues on a probationary basis for the next term, conditioned on following the plan; and
- The participant either retakes the course at their own expense, *or*, at SCORE's discretion, may have the retake supported once the success plan is met.

Continued shortfall

If a participant earns a grade below C in a second funded course, or does not follow the Academic Success Plan:

- Financial assistance is suspended; and
- The participant may reapply after completing one term of satisfactory progress (C or better) at their own expense.

Incompletes

An Incomplete is treated as a grade below C until it is resolved. The participant should notify the PACT Program Director and provide a plan and date for resolving it. Assistance for a course that remains Incomplete may be paused until the grade is finalized.

Withdrawals

- A participant must notify the PACT Program Director before withdrawing from any funded course.
- **Approved withdrawals** for documented hardship, such as a medical or family emergency, do not count against the participant.

- **Unapproved withdrawals** may require the participant to repay the assistance applied to that course.

Repayment

SCORE may request repayment of assistance for a course that the participant fails to complete, withdraws from without approval, or for which the participant earns a grade below C after probation.

SCORE will work with the participant on a reasonable arrangement and will consider documented hardship.

Appeals and hardship

A participant facing documented hardship, an unusual circumstance, or a disputed decision may submit a written appeal to the SCORE Executive Director within thirty (30) days. Appeals are reviewed case by case, with the goal of keeping the participant on a path to certification.

9. Participant Responsibilities (Summary)

- Apply by the posted deadline and keep your information current;
- Use assistance only for the approved costs in your award;
- Complete the FAFSA and apply for the Pell Grant before requesting help with tuition and fees, and reapply each year;
- Earn a grade of C or better in each funded course;
- Submit an official grade report within fifteen (15) days of the term's close;
- Notify the PACT Program Director before withdrawing from a funded course; and
- Disclose other aid that applies to the same costs.

Questions? Contact the PACT Program Director or Eric L. Ward, Ed.D., Founder and Executive Director, at eric@scorecollaborative.org or 580-319-0359.

Part B: Financial Assistance Application

Complete every section. Attach the documentation listed in Section 5. Submit to the PACT Program Director by the posted term deadline.

Participant Information

Full name	
Email	
Phone	
Mailing Address	
District / School	
Current Role	
PACT start date	

Program and Certification Goal

Institution	
Program / Degree	
Certification Area(s)	
Expected Completion	
Academic Term Applied For?	

Courses or Examinations for Which You Are Requesting Assistance

Course or exam	Credit hours	Institution	Term

Estimated Costs

Cost category	Total cost	Amount requested
Tuition and fees		
Required textbooks and materials		
Certification exam fee(s)		
Approved related cost (pre-approved)		
Total		

Federal Student Aid (Pell)

SCORE assistance for tuition and fees applies only after you have pursued Pell funding. Complete this section and attach your FAFSA confirmation and Pell result.

Did you complete the current-year FAFSA?	☐ Yes ☐ No
Were you determined eligible for a Pell Grant?	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Pending
Pell amount applied to these costs (if any)	
If not eligible, attach the ineligibility notice. Date of notice:	

Other Aid for These Costs

Source (Pell, scholarship, employer, other)	Status	Amount

Statement of Need

Briefly describe how this assistance supports your progress toward certification. Attach a separate page if needed.

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Applicant Certification

I certify that the information in this application is accurate and complete. I have read the PACT Financial Assistance Program policy, including the academic expectations in Section 4, and I agree to its terms.

Applicant signature: _____

Date: _____

Part C: Participant Agreement and Academic Expectations

Sign this agreement after you receive an award and before funds are disbursed.

I, _____ (participant), am receiving financial assistance from SCORE Collaborative for the term and costs stated in my award notification. I understand and agree to the following:

1. I will use the assistance only for the approved costs listed in my award.
2. I have completed the current-year FAFSA and applied for the Pell Grant, and I will reapply each year that I receive SCORE assistance for tuition and fees. **I understand that SCORE assistance is a last-resort safety net that applies only after Pell and other aid.**
3. I will earn a grade of **C or better** in each course funded by SCORE.
4. I will complete each funded course; I understand that an unresolved Incomplete is treated as a grade below C until it is resolved.
5. I will submit an official grade report for each funded course within fifteen (15) days of the close of the term.
6. I will notify the PACT Program Director before withdrawing from any funded course.
7. I understand that a grade below C, an unapproved withdrawal, or a course I do not complete may place my assistance on probation, suspend it, or require repayment, as described in Section 8.
8. I understand that continued assistance in future terms depends on meeting these expectations and on available funds, and is not guaranteed.
9. I will disclose other aid that applies to the same costs.

SCORE's commitment

SCORE commits to support participants who are working in good faith toward certification. If you are struggling, contact the PACT Program Director early; the first response is an Academic Success Plan, not a penalty.

Participant

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Printed name: _____

SCORE Collaborative

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Name and title: _____

For SCORE Office Use

Date received	
Award amount	
Covers	
Conditions	
Approved by	