

PROFESSIONALS as TEACHERS

KANSAS CITY KANSAS FELLOWS TEACHING PROGRAM

www.kckps.org/teach/fellows

What teachers are needed?

Middle school and high school math and science are the content areas with the most openings each school year. Many urban districts around the nation are experiencing teacher shortages in these areas because individuals with backgrounds in these areas generally choose to work in industry instead of education. Our goal is to attract accomplished professionals with demonstrated experience and/or competency in math and the sciences (earth science, biology, chemistry, physics). We also accept applicants for English and Limited Spanish, Business and Speech/Drama through this program.

How will I learn how to teach? What kind of support will I receive?

There is a mandatory 7 week Summer Institute that starts in May. The Fellows will teach summer school classes under the guidance of a mentor. They will also attend classes from Pittsburg State University in the Kansas City, KS area. The tentative summer schedule is from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. KCK has a mentoring program which pairs an experienced teacher with all beginning teachers for their first year of teaching. Fellows will have the additional support of having this mentor for the entire two year period of the program. In addition, KCK provides ongoing staff development opportunities for all teachers through early release half-day sessions every Wednesday afternoon that focus on topics ranging from classroom management techniques to instructional preparation. Fellows will continue taking their education coursework in the Kansas City area over their first two years of teaching. Most of the courses are open only to the Fellows so they will have the support of the classmates in your cohort during your graduate program.

What is the length of a workday, or an example of a routine day?

The duty day of our high schools is 7:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. and middle school is 7:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. There are other out of class commitments such as faculty and committee meetings, before and after school supervision, grading, lesson planning, etc. Fellows graduate classes are expected to be approximately 2 nights per week for a total of 6 credit hours per semester during the school year. Classes will also be required the summer after the first year of teaching. Classes will be based more on practical classroom skills than educational theory. KCK Public Schools provide early release each Wednesday afternoon to provide staff development opportunities to all teachers in the district.

What if I have no experience teaching?

The KCK Fellows program is designed for individuals without an education background. It is a highly selective program that is looking for accomplished individuals with content expertise who can demonstrate leadership and achievement. Applicants should have a bachelor's degree with a major in the field they want to teach with a minimum undergraduate GPA of 2.75. Applicants are disqualified if they have more than 9 hours from the School of Education at an accredited college or university.

Where will I teach?

Fellows teach in the middle schools and high schools in the Kansas City, Kansas School District. Location and grade determinations are based on qualifications of the Fellow and the needs of the district. Preferences are taken into account, but placement is driven by school district need.

How long is this commitment?

Specifically, the program requires a two-year commitment that includes a regular teaching salary, intensive training, and on-going support. A program requirement is enrollment in an accelerated, two-year certification/masters degree program through Pittsburg State University. The district will pay for the tuition of each fellow who signs a contract for 2 additional years; this would equate to a four year commitment. We hope your commitment to teaching in Kansas City, Kansas is lifelong!

What is the application and selection process?

Step 1: Applicants may apply on-line from October 1, 2007 until March 1, 2008. An application includes a completed application form, a resume, a 1-page personal statement explaining why you want to be in the program, and one copy of college transcripts of **all** colleges attended. Pittsburg State will review the transcripts to determine state deficiencies of the subject courses.

Step 2: Selected candidates are invited to participate in Interview Day consisting of a ten-minute sample teaching exercise, a writing exercise, and an individual interview. Interviews will take place in December – March 2008.

Step 3: Applicants who exhibit exceptional performance at Interview Day will enter the district/university approval stage for the final decision on their application. At this stage, reference and district background checks are conducted. The school district is the hiring body and makes all final hiring decisions. Applicants should be notified on or around May 15, 2008 of their selection status.

Step 4: Once an applicant is approved by both the district and the university, the district will notify applicants of acceptance and send them matriculation materials preparing them for the Summer Institute, which starts in May.

When is the application cut-off date?

Per Tyrone M. Bates, Jr. M.S.,Ed. with the Kansas City Kansas Public School U.S.D. # 500 on May 1, 2009 stated that the application window has closed for this recruitment season and will re-open September 1, 2009.

Will I receive a teaching certificate?

Individuals will receive a restricted teaching license during the 2-year program. After completion and passing all required tests, they will apply for the initial Kansas license, called a "Conditional Teaching License." Each license requires an application and \$36 fee to be submitted by the Fellow.

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Are certified teachers eligible for the program?

Certified teachers are NOT eligible for the program. The program is designed to bring people into the teaching profession who do not have previous teaching experience. Candidates can have no more than 9 hours of education course work. Certified teachers may check for teaching vacancies on the district job vacancy page.

Who is financially responsible for the cost of the university coursework?

Fellows are responsible for the cost of the university tuition, books, and instructional materials fees. This certification/master's degree program through Pittsburg State University is 33 hours. Financial responsibilities are outlined below. This is not meant to be a comprehensive listing – rather, it is intended to help with preliminary budgeting and decision-making concerns. Each credit hour is \$210 as of September 1, 2007. Tuition is subject to change at the discretion of the Pittsburg State University. Summer – 9 hours of university tuition plus books, and materials fees for summer institute School Year 1, Summer after School Year 1, and School Year 2 – 6 hours per semester of university tuition + books, and fees

Fellows may opt for a program where KCKPS pays for the tuition, but the teaching commitment is for 4 years instead of 2. Funding for this part of the program is still under consideration. Fellows are also responsible for testing fees and licensure application fees. Fellows may qualify for student loan forgiveness for those having specific kinds of NDSL, Perkins, and Stafford loans. Visit www.studentaid.ed.gov to determine eligibility. Fellows may contact the financial aid office at Pittsburg State University 620-235-4240 to inquire about financial aid.

Are the certification programs tailored to each individual's needs and background?

There are core classes that all the Fellows will take. If the applicant has deficiencies in the content area, Fellows may be required to take courses above and beyond the scope of the certification/masters degree program. These deficiencies may be pre-requisites for required coursework or needed to meet State requirements for degree/certification completion. Deficient courses may be taken through Pittsburg State University (PSU) or if PSU permits, through an area community college or another university. These deficiencies must be completed to remain in good standing. *Fellows are financially responsible for all certification/masters program and deficiency course tuition.*

Will I be the only Instructional Fellow at my school?

When possible we try to pair at least 2 Fellows in the same school. Specific placement occurs after selection, usually in the summer, meaning Fellows only know general placement information (i.e. high school science) when selected. However, with 147 current fellows teaching in the district, there are fellows in every secondary school.

What sort of parental interaction can I expect?

Research shows that positive relationships between students, teachers, and parents result in increased student achievement. KCK has an active Family Advocate System. Parental involvement strategies are covered during the summer institute and ongoing support model.

How much will I be paid?

During the Summer Institute, Fellows will receive up to \$1500 as a pre-tax stipend, paid in 3 installments. Beginning in the fall, Fellows will receive a first year teacher's salary (\$37,350 for 2007-2008). Salaries are negotiated each summer for the coming school year. Fellows who enter the district with 15 or more hours beyond a Bachelor's degree (graduate level) may be eligible for a higher salary. The district rewards teachers as they continue education with incremental salary increases as they earn hours toward their Master's degree.

What kind of benefits will I receive as a teacher in the Kansas City Kansas School District?

Fellows are eligible for full individual health insurance coverage in September or October of the school year. Fellows will also become a part of the Kansas Public Employees Retirement System. In addition, Fellows may purchase group dental and vision plans through payroll deduction. Note: Health benefits are not covered during Summer Institute. Information about temporary insurance coverage for the first summer can be found at www.kansascityunited.com (not on our website).

How many Fellows will be chosen?

The number chosen will be based on district need, but we anticipate placing 25 Fellows for next school year.

I am interested in the program, but I need a job now. What could I do while I am waiting to see if I am accepted?

Substitute teaching is an option. It would help you understand the needs of students in an urban school district and help you know if teaching is right for you. Emergency substitute teachers holding a bachelor's degree may substitute an unlimited number of days during the school year. To begin the process to become an emergency substitute teacher in our school district, complete an employment application and submit it as directed with 2 official copies of your transcripts. Your employment application will be prescreened. If it meets prescreening requirements, you will be called for an interview to be an emergency substitute teacher. If recommended for employment, district employment paperwork will need to be completed (including health form with TB test, background check, and fingerprinting). You will be provided with an emergency substitute application to be sent to the state department with your \$36 application fee. A substitute teacher orientation will be provided prior to entering the classroom. For questions regarding the emergency substitute teaching process, contact Sheffer Wynn at 913-279-2260.

I have additional questions about the Fellow's program. Who should I contact?

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