

Office of Teaching and Learning

Steve Carter Education Program

Purpose: The Steve Carter Education Program provides \$1,500 vouchers to families of eligible K-12 public school students per school year. The digital vouchers can be used to purchase high-quality literacy and math tutoring. The program is part of the Louisiana Tutoring Initiative and is named after the late Baton Rouge State Representative Steve Carter. Established in R.S. 17:4032.1 through Act 415 of the 2021 Legislative Session, the program was expanded through Act 649 of the 2024 Legislative Session.

Student Eligibility: The Steve Carter Education Program is for eligible public and public charter school students in grades K-12. Students in grades K-3 are eligible if they scored below proficient on the beginning of year screener in either literacy or math. 4th-12th grade students are eligible if they scored below mastery on the ELA or mathematics state assessment administered in the previous school year. For K-3 Math, a student's eligibility can also be determined by the classroom teacher if the student is exhibiting academic difficulties. A participating student may receive tutoring services in both reading and mathematics, but the total for all services shall not exceed one thousand five hundred dollars. LEAs are required to inform parents/guardians if their child qualifies for the Steve Carter Education Program and an explanation of what the program provides.

Tutoring Requirements: Once student registration opens, families will utilize the online portal at www.louisianatutoringinitiative.com to choose from the approved list of tutoring providers. In some cases, a child's school system may be a tutoring provider. Tutoring appointments are scheduled between the parent/guardian and tutor and may take place at a mutually agreed upon location that may be a physical or virtual location. Tutors will be available online for virtual tutoring if there are no in-person tutors available in the local area. The program will have several multi-lingual tutors available to accommodate any student who does not speak English as a primary language. The program provides a \$1,500 digital voucher per student per year. The voucher is automatically uploaded into the student's account through the user portal. As tutoring sessions are scheduled, the voucher funds will decrease until extinguished. Any expenses above the limit established shall be the responsibility of the student's parent or legal guardian.

Tutor Qualifications: This program connects families with high-quality tutors who have been approved through the Louisiana Department of Education. Tutoring services shall be provided by a person who is trained in English language arts or mathematics and who meets one of the following criteria:

1. holds a valid teaching certificate in elementary education, reading, or mathematics or holds an associate or baccalaureate degree.
2. is employed as a paraprofessional by a public school governing authority.
3. is a student pursuing a degree at a postsecondary education institution.

A person providing tutoring services in reading shall have successfully completed an LDOE-approved science of reading training.

Parent Reporting: No later than September 13th of each year, or as soon as practicable if a student's reading or mathematics deficiency is identified after this date, each LEA shall notify the parent or legal guardian of each student who is eligible to participate in the program, regarding the process for applying for the program and other information provided by the LDOE.

Materials: Program money may be used for any of the following eligible purposes that are designed to improve literacy, reading, or mathematics skills:

1. Books for home use, chosen from a list developed by the LDOE, including electronic or digital books and subscriptions to online book clubs; however, such costs shall not exceed two hundred fifty dollars per school year.
2. Instructional materials and curriculum, including but not limited to online materials reviewed in accordance with R.S. 17:351.1 that have been determined to fully align with state academic content standards.

Funding Guidance: Families will access funds through the tutoring portal.

LDOE Reporting: On a yearly basis, the LDOE provides the legislature with the [Steve Carter Legislative Report](#). The 2024 report provides a comprehensive overview of the total number of students serviced since the inception of the program, the number of students enrolled in the program in each public school, and a list of approved providers. Subsequent reports will also include the performance of each provider. This information that was not available in the 2024 report since 2023-2024 was the first full year of implementation.