

October 5, 2009

MEMORANDUM

TO: State Board of Regents
FROM: William A. Sederburg
SUBJECT: Proposed Revisions to Policy R609, Regents' Scholarship

Issue

Several changes were made to both the New Century and Regents' Scholarship programs by the 2009 Legislature (SB 104, sponsored by Senator Lyle Hillyard). On May 29, 2009, the Board approved changes to Regent policy (R609) to reflect these changes. However, in preparing changes to policy R604, New Century Scholarship, several amendments were also identified to the Regents' Scholarship policy (R609) that will improve administration of the program and provide greater uniformity. Attached is a copy of the proposed changes in a legislative draft format.

Commissioner's Recommendation

The Commissioner recommends that the Board consider and, if satisfied, approve the proposed revisions to Policy R609, Regents' Scholarships.

William A. Sederburg
Commissioner of Higher Education

WAS/DB
Attachment

R609-1. Purpose: To encourage all Utah high school students to take a rigorous high school curriculum as outlined by the Utah Scholars Initiative that will successfully prepare them for postsecondary education and the demands of the modern workforce; to provide incentives for all Utah high school students to prepare academically and financially for postsecondary education; to motivate high school students to complete meaningful course work through their senior year; and to increase the numbers of Utahns enrolling in Utah colleges and universities.

R609-2. References

- 2.1. Utah Code Ann. §53B-8-108 et seq., Regents' Scholarship Program
- 2.2. Utah Admin. Code §R277-700-7, High School Requirements (Effective for Graduating Students Beginning with the 2010-2011 School Year).

R609-3. Definitions

- 3.1. **"Base Award"**: a one-time scholarship to be awarded to students who complete the Core Course of Study with a cumulative weighted high school GPA of 3.0 or higher and fulfill all other eligibility requirements.
- 3.2. **"Board"**: the Utah State Board of Regents.
- 3.3. **"Core Course of Study"**: the 16.5-credit Utah Scholars' curriculum taken during grades 9-12, which includes:
 - 3.3.1. 4.0 units of English;
 - 3.3.2. 4.0 units of mathematics taken in a progressive manner (at minimum Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, and a senior-year class beyond Algebra II);
 - 3.3.3. 3.5 units of social studies;
 - 3.3.4. 3.0 units of lab-based natural science (one each of Biology, Chemistry, and Physics); and
 - 3.3.5. 2.0 units of the same foreign language, other than English, taken in a progressive manner.
- 3.4. **"Exemplary Academic Achievement Award"**: a renewable scholarship to be awarded to students who complete the Core Course of Study with a cumulative high school GPA of 3.5 or higher, submit a verified ACT score of 26 or higher, and fulfill all other eligibility requirements.
- 3.5. **"Regents' Diploma Endorsement"**: a certificate or transcript notation that may be awarded to students who qualify for the Exemplary Academic Achievement Award of the Regents' Scholarship.
- 3.6. **"Scholarship Review Committee"**: the committee appointed by the Commissioner of Higher Education to review Regents' Scholarship applications and make final decisions regarding awards.

¹ Adopted by the Board of Regents May 30, 2008. Revisions approved by the Board of Regents on May 29, 2009.

- 3.7. **"UESP"**: the Utah Educational Savings Plan.
- 3.8. **"USHE"**: the Utah System of Higher Education, which includes the University of Utah, Utah State University, Weber State University, Southern Utah University, Snow College, Dixie State College of Utah, College of Eastern Utah, Utah Valley University, and Salt Lake Community College.
- 3.9. **"Eligible Institutions"**: the USHE, or at any private, nonprofit institution of higher education in Utah accredited by the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges.

R609-4. Conditions of the Regents' Scholarship Program and Program Terms

4.1. **Base Award**: To qualify for the Regents' Scholarship Base Award, the applicant must satisfy the following criteria:

4.1.1. **Core Course of Study**: The applicant must submit an official high school transcript, and college transcript, if applicable, demonstrating in grades 9-12 completion of the Core Course of Study (information regarding courses satisfying the core requirements can be found online).

4.1.2. **GPA and Weighted Courses**: The applicant must demonstrate completion of the Core Course of Study with a cumulative ~~weighted~~ high school GPA of at least 3.0, with no individual core course grade lower than a "C." The grade earned in any course designated on the student's high school transcript as Advanced Placement (AP) or concurrent enrollment shall be weighted according to the Scholarship Review Committee's standard procedures.

4.1.3. **College Course Work**: The Regents' Scholarship Review Committee reserves the right to apply a 3:1 ratio in relation to college course work. If a student enrolls in and completes a college course worth 3 or more college credits, this may be counted as 1 full unit towards the scholarship requirements, however; the student then is evaluated on the college grade earned.

4.1.4. **ACT Score**: The applicant must submit at least one verified ACT score.

4.1.5. **Utah High School Graduation**: The applicant must have graduated from a Utah high school.

4.1.5.1. Applicants applying from accredited Utah private high schools must satisfy all applicable requirements for a private high school diploma.

4.1.5.2. Home-schooled students are not eligible for the scholarship.

4.1.6. **No Criminal Record**: The applicant must attest to the lack of a criminal record with the exception of a misdemeanor traffic citation.

4.1.7. **Proof of U.S. Citizenship**: The applicant must attest to being a U.S. citizen or a noncitizen who is eligible to receive federal financial aid.

4.2. **Exemplary Academic Achievement Award**: To qualify for the Regents' Scholarship Exemplary Academic Achievement Award, the applicant must satisfy all requirements for the Base Award, and additionally:

4.2.1. Required GPA: The applicant must have a cumulative weighted high school GPA of at least 3.5, with no individual core course grade lower than a "B."

4.2.2. Required ACT Score: The applicant must submit a verified composite ACT score of at least 26.

4.2.3. Maintain Reasonable Progress toward Degree Completion: In order to received and renew the Exemplary Academic Achievement Award, the student must maintain reasonable progress toward degree completion by achieving a 3.0 GPA each semester and enrolling full-time (12 credit hours) each semester. If the student fails to maintain a 3.0 GPA or fails to enroll full-time, the scholarship may be revoked.

4.2.3.1. Each semester, the recipient must submit to the Scholarship Review Committee a official transcript verifying his/her grades to demonstrate that he/she is meeting the required GPA and is making reasonable progress toward the completion of a degree. These documents must be submitted by the following dates:

4.2.3.1.1. Proof of enrollment for Fall Semester and proof of completion of the previous semester must be submitted by September 30.

4.2.3.1.2. Proof of enrollment for Spring Semester and proof of completion of the previous semester must be submitted by February 15.

4.2.3.1.3. Proof of enrollment for Summer Semester and proof of completion of the previous semester must be submitted by June 30.

4.2.3.1.4. Proof of enrollment if you are attending Brigham Young University during Winter Semester and proof of completion of the previous semester must be submitted by February 15.

4.2.3.1.5. Proof of enrollment if you are attending Brigham Young University during Spring Semester and proof of completion of the previous semester must be submitted by May 30.

4.2.3.1.6. Proof of enrollment if you are attending Brigham Young University during Summer Semester and proof of completion of the previous semester must be submitted by July 30.

4.2.3.2. If a student earns less than a 3.0 GPA in any single semester, the student must earn a 3.0 GPA or better the following semester to maintain eligibility for the scholarship.

4.2.3.3. A student will not be required to enroll full-time if the student can complete his/her degree program with fewer credits.

4.3. Eligible Institutions: Both the Base Award and the Exemplary Academic Achievement Award may be used at any public college or university within the USHE, or at any private, nonprofit institution of higher education in Utah accredited by the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges.

4.4. Enrollment at More than One Institution: The award may be used at more than one eligible institution within the same semester.

4.5. Student Transfer: A scholarship may be transferred to a different eligible institution upon request of the student.

4.6. Relationship to Regents' Awards: For a student who graduates prior to or during the 2009-10 school year, and ~~A student who~~ qualifies for the Base Award and the New Century Scholarship may be awarded the Base Award and a UESP Supplemental Award in addition to a New Century Scholarship. A

student who qualifies for the Exemplary Academic Achievement Award and the New Century Scholarship will only be eligible to receive one of these two-year scholarships. For a student who graduates from high school in or after 2009-2010 may not receive the New Century Scholarship and a Regents' Scholarship Base Award or the UESP Supplemental Award.

4.7. "P" Grades not Accepted: A student may not include a pass/fail grade from a course to fulfill any scholarship qualification or renewal requirements, including course or GPA requirements.

R609-5. Application Procedures

5.1. **Application Deadline:** Students must submit a scholarship application to the Scholarship Review Committee no later than February 1 of the year that they graduate from high school. A priority deadline may be established each year. Students who meet the priority deadline may be given first priority or consideration for the scholarship.

5.2. **Required Documentation:** Scholarship awards may be denied ~~revoked~~ if all documentation is not submitted, if any documentation demonstrates that the applicant did not satisfactorily fulfill all course and GPA requirements, or if any information, including the attestation of criminal record or citizenship status, proves to be falsified. Required documents that must be submitted with a scholarship application include:

5.2.1. the official application;

5.2.2. an official high school paper or electronic transcript, official college transcript(s) when applicable, and any other miscellaneous transcripts demonstrating all completed courses and GPA. A final transcript showing the last semester of coursework will be requested if the student is found conditionally approved, meaning that the student appears to be on track to receive the scholarship;

5.2.3. verified ACT scores; and

5.2.4. a class schedule demonstrating the courses the student is enrolled in for the remaining school year. Simply submitting a high school transcript does not satisfy this requirement. The class schedule must contain the following information: the student's name, the school the student attends, courses the student will take for the remaining year with the number of credits each course is worth indicated.

5.2.4.1. ~~the student's name,~~

5.2.4.2. ~~the school the student attends,~~

5.2.4.3. ~~courses the student will take for the remaining year with the number of credits each course is worth indicated.~~

5.3. **Incomplete Documentation:** Applications or other submissions that have missing information or missing documents are considered incomplete, will not be considered.

R609-6. Amount of Awards and Distribution of Award Funds

6.1. **Funding Constraints of Awards:** The Board may limit or reduce the Base Award and/or the Exemplary Academic Achievement Award, as well as the total number of scholarships and supplemental awards granted, depending on the annual legislative appropriations and the number of qualified applicants.

6.2. Amount of Awards

6.2.1. **Base Award:** The Base Award of up to \$1,000 may be adjusted annually by the Board in an amount up to the average percentage tuition increase approved by the Board for USHE institutions.

6.2.2. Exemplary Academic Achievement Award

6.2.2.1. For a student who graduates from high school in the 2009-10 school year,

6.2.2.1.1. If used at a USHE institution, the award is equal in value up to 75 percent of the tuition costs at the selected institution; or

6.2.2.1.2. If used at a private, nonprofit institution of higher education in Utah accredited by the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges, the award is equal in value up to 75 percent of the tuition costs at the selected institution, not to exceed 75 percent of the average tuition costs of the USHE institutions.

6.2.2.2. For a student who graduates from high school in or after the 2010-11 school year, the total award is up to \$5,000, allocated semester-by-semester throughout whichever of the following time periods is the shortest:

6.2.2.2.1. Two years of full-time equivalent enrollment;

6.2.2.2.2. 65 credit hours; or

6.2.2.2.3. Until the student meets the requirements for a baccalaureate degree.

6.3. Distribution of Award Funds

6.3.1. **Tuition Documentation:** The award recipient must submit to the Scholarship Review Committee a copy of the college class schedule verifying that the student is enrolled full-time (12 or more credits) the number of hours enrolled at an eligible institution. Documentation must include the student's name, institution they are attending and the number of credits in which the student is enrolled. The Scholarship Review Committee will calculate the amount of the award based on the published tuition costs at the enrolled institution(s).

6.3.2. **Award Payable to Institution:** The award will be made payable to the institution. The institution may pay over to the recipient any excess award funds not required for tuition payments. Award funds may be used for any qualifying higher education expense, including tuition, fees, books, supplies, equipment required for course instruction, or housing.

6.3.3. **Added Hours after Award Payment:** At the discretion of the Scholarship Review Committee and depending on funding, the student may be awarded up to 75 percent of the tuition costs of any hours added in the semester after the initial award has been made. The recipient must submit to the USHE a copy of the tuition invoice or class schedule verifying the added hours before a supplemental award is made.

6.3.4. Credit Hours Dropped after Award Payment: If a student drops credit hours which were included in calculating the award amount, either the subsequent semester award will be reduced accordingly, or the student shall repay the excess award amount to the USHE. If a recipient fails to complete a minimum of 12 credit hours, the scholarship may be revoked (see [4.2.34.2.3](#))—unless the student needs fewer than 12 credit hours for completion of a degree.

6.4. UESP Supplemental Award to Encourage College Savings: Subject to available funding, a student who qualifies for the Base Award is eligible to receive up to an additional \$400 in state funds to be added to the total scholarship award.

6.4.1. For each year the student is 14, 15, 16, or 17 years of age that the student had an active UESP account, the Board may contribute, subject to available funding, \$100 (i.e., up to \$400 total for all four years) to the student's award if at least \$100 was deposited into the account.

6.4.2. If no contributions are made to a student's account during a given year, the matching amount will likewise be \$0.

6.4.3. If contributions total more than \$100 in a given year, the matching amount will cap at \$100 for that year.

6.4.4. Matching funds apply only to contributions, not to transfers, earnings, or interest.

R609-7. Time Constraints and Continuing Eligibility

7.1. Scholarships Initiated Within 12 Months of High School Graduation: The award recipient must enroll full-time at an eligible institution of higher education within 12 months of the recipient's high school graduation unless the recipient seeks and obtains an approved deferral or leave of absence from the Board.

7.2. Time Limitation: A Regents' Scholarship recipient must use the award in its entirety within five years after his/her high school graduation date.

7.3. Deferral or Leave of Absence

7.3.1. An approved deferral or leave of absence will not extend the time limits of the scholarship. The scholarship may only be used for academic terms which begin within five years after the recipient's high school graduation date.

7.3.2. Deferrals or leaves of absence may be granted, at the discretion of the Scholarship Review Committee, for military service, humanitarian/religious service, documented medical reasons, and other exigent reasons.

7.4. No Guarantee of Degree Completion: Neither a Base Award nor an Exemplary Academic Achievement Award guarantees that the recipient will complete his or her associate's or baccalaureate program within the recipient's scholarship eligibility period.

R609-8. Scholarship Determinations and Appeals

8.1. Scholarship Determinations: Submission of a scholarship application does not guarantee a scholarship award. Individual scholarship applications will be reviewed, and award decisions made, at the discretion of a Scholarship Review Committee, based on available funding, applicant pool, and applicants'

completion of scholarship criteria. Each applicant will receive a letter informing the applicant of the decision on his/her application, whether the decision is a scholarship award or denial of scholarship.

8.2. Appeals: Applicants may appeal a denial of the scholarship by submitting a written appeal to the USHE within 30 days of receipt of the decision letter. Appeals will be reviewed and decided by an appeals committee appointed by the Commissioner of Higher Education. A list of required documents for an appeal is listed on the Regents' Scholarship Appeal Form.