

January 7, 2010

MEMORANDUM

To: State Board of Regents
From: William A. Sederburg
SUBJECT: Outreach Report (Biennial Report)

Issue

The trends in college attainment nationally and in Utah are disturbing. With its young population, Utah is poised to lead the nation as an economic powerhouse, but only if this young population is well educated relative to the rest of the nation and the world. Changing demographics in the state call for a concerted effort to help minority populations complete high school, prepare for, attend, and succeed in college. In every area of the state there is room for improvement, but in some counties, the need is particularly acute. All of these challenges require a statewide effort in establishing readiness standards and communicating clear signals to students, parents and our K-12 partners. Additionally, as it is denoted by the literature, we must prevent the "leaking pipeline" by intentional interventions prior to 9th grade. To align with the Regents' goal of increasing participation, and to provide statewide coordination, support, and collaboration among the USHE institutions, the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education created in July 2009 the "Outreach and Access" unit. This unit is under the general supervision of Associate Commissioner Dave Buhler. Melissa Miller Kincart, Assistant Commissioner for Outreach and Access, and her team have oversight of the Utah Scholars Initiative, Regents' and New Century Scholarships, College Access Challenge Grant, and Participation Task Force. Additionally, Melissa has begun to work with program directors at our institutions in an effort to increase communication and collaborations among programs/initiatives that help underserved populations better prepare for and succeed in college.

As a Loan Guarantee Program of the U.S. Department of Education, UHEAA is required to do education outreach. Under the general supervision of Michael Nemelka, Associate Executive Director for Business Development, and the oversight of Stephen Rogers, Manager for Outreach, and his team, UHEAA distributes and provides information and training throughout the state of Utah for students, parents and educators on college access, participation, and financial literacy with a special emphasis on serving under-represented populations.

In collaboration, the Office of the Commissioner and UHEAA, through the following outreach efforts, are striving to help Utah citizens plan, prepare and succeed in college.

Scholarship Update

Regents' Scholarship

The Regents' Scholarship was enacted in 2008 to encourage high school students to complete a rigorous course of study during their four years of high school. State Law requires the Commissioner's Office to submit an annual report to the Legislative Interim Education Committee regarding the program each October. The report written by Carrie F. Beckman, Policy and Special Projects Coordinator, was shared with the Board in the October meeting. However, the final review and appeals process had not yet concluded as result of the statutory requirement that expires this year that allowed students to have until September 1 to complete the requirements. The numbers have been updated since that report.

This 2009 Award Cycle was complete in mid-November. This year 393 students from 23 school districts, and some charter and private high schools, received a Regents' Scholarship Award, in comparison to 195 students in 2008 .

Summary of 2009 High School Regents' Scholarship Applicants			
Total # of Applications	# of Award Recipients	# of Denied Applicants	# of Incomplete Applications*
1021	393	460	168

*Incomplete applications are not reviewed for eligibility.

We have now launched into our third application cycle of the Regents' Scholarship. The on-line application became available on December 1, 2009 for the high school graduating class of 2010. Complete applications, which include the on-line application as well as supplemental documentation, are due (postmarked) February 1, 2010. Priority consideration may be given to students who submit a complete application (postmarked) January 8, 2010.

As of printing this report, we have already received **503** on-line applications which have been successfully downloaded; of those applications, **61** have a complete file. Students must submit official transcripts and Spring semester/term class schedules in order to complete their file. We will begin reviewing applications once we have a complete file. Last year we only had **1021** total applications submitted by the February 1 deadline, so we anticipate an increase in applicants as well as recipients for the 2010 cycle.

New Century Scholarship

The New Century Scholarship was enacted ten years ago to encourage students to accelerate their education by earning an Associate's degree in high school.

Given the communication and projection challenges of late summer, we have made a number of changes to the administration and sustainability of the program.

- Changed the management of the program. The program is now under the direct management of Melissa Miller Kincart, Assistant Commissioner for Outreach and Access, and under the general supervision of Associate Commissioner Dave Buhler, with continued considerable staff support from the Utah Higher Education Assistance Authority (UHEAA). All administrative costs continue to be absorbed by the Board of Regents.
- Immediately implemented the directive of the Executive Appropriations Committee to fully fund the scholarships for the 09-10 (fall/spring semesters) academic year.
- Reached out several times and ways to communicate these messages to higher education institutions, high schools, and over 2,500 students we can identify who are in or preparing for the program with the following messages:

- While scholarship will be fully funded for this academic year, due to state budget constraints, funding it is uncertain for next year—students are encouraged to also pursue other scholarships, grants, and funding options.
- Funding level for the 2010 academic year will be announced in April.
- A new application deadline is in place—January 8, 2010—for returning recipients and for new 2010 graduating high school applicants. This will provide us with the information we need to share with the Legislature on the funding needs and enable us to communicate in April the actual funding level.
- Worked with legislators to make improvements in the program to help its long-term sustainability. Have met twice with Education Interim Committee; Senator John Valentine and Representative Greg Hughes have agreed to sponsor legislation.
- Enclosed is a detailed list of our recent and ongoing communication efforts, as well as a copy of the article that was in the Salt Lake Tribune on January 3, 2009.

Furthermore, we have made a number of internal program changes to be effective in 2010 to help in program management and sustainability. In addition to the application deadline, students must make take 12 credit hours each semester, receive an approved Deferral or Leave of Absence if they do not plan to be enrolled each Fall or Spring semester, and we have instituted deadlines for grades and proof of enrollment submissions in order to maintain eligibility. These policy changes are reflective in policy R604 that was submitted and approved by the Board in the October meeting.

As of printing this report we have received **1114** Renewal Applications and **391** New Student Applications. We expect to receive additional applications throughout the week as the can be postmarked through January 8, 2010.

In addition to aligning management of these programs we have worked diligently to align our information and web presence regarding these programs. See www.utahsbr.edu/scholarships for more information and 2010 applications.

Overall Outreach Endeavors and Impact

Utah Scholars Initiative

The Utah Scholars Initiative was initiated in the 2006-2007 school year with a \$300,000 grant from the U. S. Department of Education and the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE). The Initiative is a business and education partnership in which volunteers go into 8th grade classrooms to share a presentation that encourages students to prepare for their future and by taking a defined core course of study throughout all 4-years of high school. During the first year of implementation, we rolled out the program in eight middle schools and five high schools across the Wasatch Front in Davis, Granite, Jordan, and Park City School Districts. By the end of 2006-2007 school year, the State Scholars presentation had been delivered to nearly **2,400** 8th graders by **20** different business and community leaders.

The program has seen modest growth over the past few years, despite funding uncertainty beyond the grant and leadership changes in the executive team of OCHE. Additionally, it is important to note that the Utah Scholars Core Course of Study was adopted in 2008 as the course criteria for the Regents' Scholarship. Utah Scholars works with partner districts and schools who primarily serve a larger percentage of underserved populations. This is an intentional outreach effort to increase awareness with students and parents about what it takes to be ready and successful for college. The Regents' Scholarship is currently the financial incentive linked to this program, although the scholarship is available to all Utah students who qualify.

For the past few months, Melissa Miller Kincart, Assistant Commissioner for Outreach and Access, as well as Andrea Cox, the Utah Scholars Program coordinator, have worked diligently to build stronger relationships with partner districts and schools. For 2009-2010 we have ten participating districts (Alpine, **Davis, Canyons, Granite, Jordan,**

Ogden, Park City, Provo, Salt Lake, Washington). The bolded districts are those that came on board this year or who requested we increase our capacity to service more schools. This year we are servicing:

- **34** High Schools (Including all schools in Alpine, Park City, Washington, Ogden and Salt Lake Districts and AMES- Early College High School)
- **44** Junior High/Middle Schools

Additionally, this year we have greatly increased our volunteer base business, community and higher education partners. We currently have **130** trained volunteers and approximately **12** are bilingual, which has provided us the opportunity to service some schools with Spanish presentations. Delivery of 8th grade presentations and matching of volunteers for the school year are well under way. As of December 31, 2009 we have:

- Delivered **150** presentations –**132** with Business, Community and Higher Education Volunteers and **18** by OCHE and UHEAA staff.
- Serviced **16** Junior/Middle schools.
- Reached approximately **7000** students.
-

As we look to projections for 2010 we have:

- Scheduled **28** schools.
- Anticipate delivering and additional **336** presentations and reaching **7500** thus totaling approximately **14500** students. In comparison to **230** presentations reaching **9500** in 2008-2009.

The program growth and sustainability has been made possible the past two years by U. S. Department of Education's College Access Challenge Grant. Monies from this grant have also made possible Utah Scholars publications, posters, in English and Spanish, and a new website which allows students who receive the presentation to submit an online participant commitment form. These communications we launched in October and delivered to all partner schools in December.

UHEAA

During FY2009, UHEAA's Outreach team provided training and materials to 13,320 Utahns, consisting of middle school and high school counselors, public education and higher education administrators and teachers, and students and their parents. Listed below is a description of these outreach activities and the number of students, parents and educators served.

UtahFutures.org

In cooperation with K-12 education, higher education, and the Department of Workforce Services, UHEAA provides UtahFutures.org, which replaces UtahMentor as the primary online tool for public education and higher education students. UHEAA Outreach develops and maintains the website, provides content for the site, and provides training to high school and middle school students as well as counselors and educators about how to use UtahFutures.org.

- Number of users per month: **30,000**

National Training for Counselors and Mentors and other Counselor/Educator Training

Training specifically geared towards counselors, mentors, K-12 educators, and postsecondary educators included events such as National Training for Counselors and Mentors (NT4CM), which places emphasis on sharing information on financial aid and scholarship resources, demonstrations and training on how to use college information systems such as UtahFutures and more.

- Number of events in FY2009: **33**
- Educators trained: **2,562**

Financial Aid Nights/College Fairs

UHEAA's Outreach team also participates in back-to-school nights, financial aid nights, college fairs, and career fairs. These involve distributing materials about college preparation and paying for college, as well as answering the specific questions of students and parents.

- Number of events in FY2009: **20**
- Students and parents assisted: **3,660**

FAFSA Completion Events

UHEAA conducts FAFSA completion events and FAFSA Nights. The FAFSA is the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, a federal form required to determine eligibility for Pell Grants, student loans, and other types of aid. These events involve personalized help filling out the FAFSA and are targeted towards populations traditionally underrepresented in higher education.

- Number of events in FY2009: **5**
- Students and parents mentored: **175**

Financial Literacy Training/College Access and Prep

Another primary aspect of UHEAA's Outreach work is financial literacy, college access, and college preparation training. These events focus on UtahFutures as a tool to help students plan and prepare for post-secondary education. These events are held in high school and middle school computer labs, and provide a hands-on demonstration for the students of how to use the website as well as providing incentives to do so.

- Number of events in FY2009: **42**
- Students mentored: **6,923**

Commissioner's Recommendation

This is an information item only; no formal action by the Board is required. However, the Board is encouraged to read and take note of the information in this memorandum, and note that further follow-up will be handled by the Commissioner's Office as part of the Board's Participation strategic objective.

William A. Sederburg, Commissioner

WAS/MMK
Attachments

New Century Scholarship Communications and Outreach Efforts

Utah State Board of Regents September 2009 –January 2010

- August 21 Letter sent to **1500** + new and continuing participants confirming the 75% award amount for the 2009-10 academic year as well as communicating funding uncertainty for 2010-11.
- September 4 Letter to current **1700** + NC recipients, **1089** junior and high school counselors and school personnel, and **51** higher education financial aid, scholarship and NC advisors confirming 75% award amount for the 2009-10 academic year as well as communicating funding uncertainty for 2010-11 and financial preparedness suggestions.
- September 19 Presentation and Q & A at the Early College High School Conference to **30** faculty, staff and administrators.
- September 22 Training on UtahFuture.org with a presentation on statewide scholarships for **20** secondary counselors in Central Utah held at Snow College.
- October 9 Letter to each legislator with recipient update, administrative changes including introduction of January application deadline.
- October 21 Application deadline presented at Education Interim Committee.
- October 22 Interview on *KSL Doug Wright Show* regarding possible program sustainability options and a discussion of the January application deadline.
- October 27-28 Letter sent to **1806** NC current recipients, **1089** junior and high school counselors and school personnel, and **51** higher education financial aid, scholarship and NC advisors outlining the new application deadline and process--in addition to including financial preparedness suggestions.
- Website updated with new information and forms.
 - Similar content was e-mailed to **1126** current recipients whom have valid e-mail addresses.
 - E-mail sent to Chief Academic and Student Services Officers at the USHE institutions as well as the Utah Council (Approximately **50** college and university recruiters) asking them to assist us in relaying the deadline information to all prospective students and high school counselors in their service area.
 - Letter posted on USOE School Counselor List serve. Approximately **857** + subscribe to this list.
- October 28 Conference for **25** college and university personnel who work in some capacity to administer and advise NC recipients and potential applicants.
- October 29-30 Training on UtahFuture.org with a presentation on statewide scholarships for **84** secondary counselors in Southern Utah held at Dixie State College and Southern Utah University.
- November 3-4 Training on UtahFuture.org with a presentation on statewide scholarships for **88** secondary counselors in Northern Utah held at Utah State University.
- November 11 Presentation and Q & A with **60** + directors at the Concurrent Enrollment Quarterly Training.
- November 13 E-mail from USOE to School Counselors List serve. Approximately **857** + subscribe to this list.

New Century Scholarship Communications and Outreach Efforts

Utah State Board of Regents September 2009 – January 2010

- November 17-18 Training on UtahFuture.org with a presentation on statewide scholarships for **138** secondary counselors in Utah County held at Utah Valley University.
- November 12 Letters sent to **180** students who have filed a NEW or RENEWAL Application confirming receipt.
- November 19 Letter to **881** high school seniors identified by our institutions as potential NC applicants.
- November 19 Tribune Article *New Rules for New Century Scholarship* which included the new application deadline information.
- December 9 E-mail from USOE to School Counselors List serve. Approximately **857** + subscribe to this list.
- December 9 Letters sent to **395** students who have filed a NEW or RENEWAL Application confirming receipt.
- December 10 Flyer sent to **352** high school counselors and districts reminding them of the deadline.
- December 11 Dave Buhler sent letter to all state legislators giving them a progress report on the New Century Scholarship, advising them of the deadline, and asking for their help in communicating with their constituents.
- December 11 Training on UtahFuture.org with a presentation on statewide scholarships for **48** secondary counselors in Granite District.
- December 11 Letters sent to **1312** non-responding current recipients.
- December 14 E-mail to **795** non-responding current recipients whom have valid e-mail addresses.
- December 15-16 Training on UtahFuture.org with a presentation on statewide on scholarships for **29** secondary counselors in Northern Utah held at Weber State University.
- December 17 Press release regarding scholarship deadlines.
- December 23 Letters sent to **1072** non-responding currents recipients.
- December 29 E-mail to **572** non-responding current recipients whom have valid e-mail addresses.
- January 3 Tribune Article *Deadlines near for Utah scholarships.*
- January 4 E-mail from USOE to School Counselors List serve. Approximately **857** + subscribe to this list.

Ongoing Outreach Efforts

- Website updates
- Communication posts on Twitter and facebook
- Approximately **10** presentations at requested scholarship and financial aid evenings, district and school meetings
- Phone and e-mail correspondence with constituents

December 11, 2009

Dear Legislator:

At the recommendation of the Education Interim Committee at their most recent meeting, I am happy to provide you with an update on the changes we have made in the administration of the New Century Scholarship program since this past summer. I also want to ask your assistance in sharing some important information to any constituents you may be aware of who are planning to apply for (or renew) this scholarship in the next year.

In the past several months, we have:

- **Changed the management of the program.** The program is now under the direct management of Melissa Miller Kincart, Assistant Commissioner for Participation and Outreach, and under my general supervision, with continued considerable staff support from the Utah Higher Education Assistance Authority (UHEAA). All administrative costs continued to be absorbed by the Board of Regents.
- **Immediately implemented the directive of the Executive Appropriations Committee** to fully fund the scholarships for the current academic year.
- **Reached out several times and ways to communicate these messages** to higher education institutions, high schools, and over 2,500 students we can identify who are in or preparing for the program
 - While scholarship is fully funded this year, due to state budget constraints funding it is uncertain for next year—students are encouraged to also pursue other scholarships, grants, and funding options.
 - Funding level for the 2010 academic year will be announced in April.
 - A new application deadline is in place—January 8—for returning scholars and for new applicants. This will provide us with the information we need to share with the Legislature on the funding needs and enable us to communicate in April the actual funding level.
- **Worked with legislators to make improvements** in the program to help its long-term sustainability. Have met twice with Education Interim Committee and Senator John Valentine and Representative Greg Hughes have agreed to sponsor legislation.

Enclosed is a detailed list of our recent and on-going communication efforts. Our website is updated regularly with information; it can be accessed at <http://www.utahsbr.edu/scholarships/>. Also enclosed is a flier going out this week to every high school and college/university. We remain concerned that the word gets out that students need to apply by January 8 (even though new students have longer than that to complete their requirements). If you are aware of students who are working toward the scholarship, please let them know of this new application deadline.

As always, please feel free to contact me if you have suggestions or concerns (801-321-7162, email dbuhler@utahsbr.edu).

Sincerely,



David L. Buhler
Associate Commissioner for Public Affairs

Important Information Regarding Changes to the New Century Scholarship Program

ATTENTION high school counselors and other high school personnel working with the graduating class of 2010:

Please note that all high school seniors in the ***class of 2010*** working towards the New Century Scholarship **MUST** submit an application by **January 8, 2010**.

Late applications will not be accepted or reviewed.

2010 high school graduates still have until September 1, 2010 to earn an Associate Degree. The following documentation **MUST** be submitted by **October 15, 2010** to verify a student's eligibility:

- Official high school transcript showing the high school graduation date.
- Official college transcript showing the Associate Degree posted.
- Proof of U.S. citizenship (see website for approved documents).
- Proof of full-time enrollment at an eligible institution or a deferral application (see website for more information).

A printable application is available at www.utahsbr.edu/scholarships.
(Click on "New Century Scholarship" then click on "Application Form NEW")

Mail the New Century Application to:

Utah System of Higher Education
New Century Scholarship Program
P O Box 145116
Salt Lake City, UT 84114-5116



www.utahsbr.edu/scholarships

The Salt Lake Tribune

http://www.sltrib.com

Deadlines near for Utah scholarships

New Century » Applications should be postmarked by Jan. 8

By Brian Maffly
The Salt Lake Tribune

Salt Lake Tribune

Updated:01/03/2010 09:13:05 AM MST

The Salt Lake Tribune

http://www.sltrib.com

For the first time, Utah students seeking a New Century Scholarship, either a new one or a renewal, must submit an application by a Jan. 8 deadline.

And college-bound high school seniors seeking a Regents scholarship should also get their applications in by Jan. 8, or risk leaving \$1,000 on the table if the Legislature decides against fully funding the state's two main merit-based aid programs. The Regents program has a final deadline of Feb. 1.

The reason for the new deadlines is to give higher education officials a clear picture of the programs' funding needs before the Legislature convenes later this month.

But officials are worried that some college-bound students are not getting their papers ready and may miss out on a great subsidy.

"Like most scholarships, the New Century and Regents scholarship programs require a significant amount of information-gathering before an application is fully completed," Commissioner of Higher Education William Sederburg said. "The holiday break is an excellent time for students to complete admissions and scholarship applications for next year."

New Century provides a two-year scholarship that covers up to 75 percent of tuition for high school graduates who complete an associate's degree by the September after graduation. They also need a cumulative 3.0 GPA.

Surging popularity and declining state revenues have left this program precariously underfunded, so the Board of Regents wants to present lawmakers with precise numbers of those qualifying for New Century and Regents scholarships, said David Buhler, an associate commissioner of higher education.

Gov. Gary Herbert has recommended releasing \$4 million to bolster financial aid programs, but there is no guarantee the Legislature will comply, especially if revenue projections continue to erode.

This session lawmakers are expected to tinker with New Century to make it harder to qualify and possibly prohibit using the money to attend private schools.

Changes already in place for this year are designed to keep students on pace toward graduating. For example, New Century scholars must now enroll and complete 12 credit hours a semester. They must also be continuously enrolled and submit proof of completion after each semester, or risk having to pay back the scholarship.

bmaffly@sltrib.com

Looming deadline: Jan. 8

New Century Scholarship

Covers first two years of college, up to 75 percent of tuition, for high school graduates who obtain an associate's degree with a cumulative 3.0 GPA.

Regents Scholarship

Provides \$1,000 for high school graduates who complete a tough college-preparatory curriculum with a 3.0 GPA.

Both scholarships can be used at Utah colleges and universities, including the private Westminster College and Brigham Young University. See <http://utahsbr.edu/scholarships/>