

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Statutory Authority: 14 Delaware Code, Sections 122(b)(8), 181(15), 183, 3402(c), 3402(h), and 3438
(14 **Del.C.** §§122(b)(8), 181(15), 183, 3402(c), 3402(h), & 3438)
14 **DE Admin. Code** 1216

FINAL

ORDER

1216 Educator Support Scholarship Program

I. SUMMARY OF THE EVIDENCE AND INFORMATION SUBMITTED

Pursuant to 14 **Del.C.** §§ 122(b)(8), 181(15), 183, 3402(c), 3402(h), and 3438, the Delaware Department of Education ("Department"), through the Delaware Higher Education Office ("DHEO"), proposes to amend 14 **DE Admin. Code** 1216 Educator Support Scholarship Program. The Educator Support Scholarship Program is a student financial assistance for higher education program that is administered by DHEO. The proposed amendments are to add subsections 3.1.1.1, which provides that an applicant who is enrolled in an undergraduate program of study must be enrolled full-time, and 3.1.1.2, which provides that an applicant is enrolled in a graduate program of study must be enrolled part- or full-time. Pursuant to 14 **Del.C.** §3402(h), awards are intended for full-time study; however, DHEO has the discretion to make prorated awards to applicants who are enrolled less than full-time. Many of the applicants for the Educator Support Scholarship Program who are enrolled in a graduate program of student are working full-time in Delaware schools and, as a result, are not enrolled full-time in their programs of study. The proposed amendments are consistent with 14 **Del.C.** §3402(h) and will allow both full-time and part-time graduate-level students to be eligible for an award through the Educator Support Scholarship Program.

Notice of the proposed regulation was published in the *Register of Regulations* on July 1, 2023. The Department did not receive any written submittals concerning the proposed regulation.

II. FINDINGS OF FACTS

The Department finds that the proposed regulation is necessary to implement 14 **Del.C.** Ch. 34 and the Educator Support Scholarship, which is a student financial assistance program that DHEO administers. The Department further finds that the proposed amendments are intended to allow full- and part-time students to be eligible for an award under the program and that they are consistent with DHEO's statutory authority.

III. DECISION TO AMEND THE REGULATION

For the foregoing reasons, the Department concludes that it is appropriate to amend 14 **DE Admin. Code** 1216 Educator Support Scholarship Program subject to the State Board of Education's approval. On August 10, 2023, the State Board of Education approved amending 14 **DE Admin. Code** 1216 Educator Support Scholarship Program. Therefore, pursuant to 14 **Del.C.** §§ 122(b)(8), 181(15), 183, 3402(c), and 3438, 14 **DE Admin. Code** 1216 Educator Support Scholarship Program, attached hereto as Exhibit A, is hereby amended.

IV. TEXT AND CITATION

The text of 14 **DE Admin. Code** 1216 Educator Support Scholarship Program amended hereby shall be in the form attached hereto as Exhibit A and said regulation shall be cited as 14 **DE Admin. Code** 1216 Educator Support Scholarship Program in the *Administrative Code of Regulations* for the Department.

V. EFFECTIVE DATE OF ORDER

The effective date of this Order shall be ten days from the date this Order is published in the *Register of Regulations*.

IT IS SO ORDERED the 10th day of August, 2023.

Department of Education

Mark A. Holodick, Ed.D., Secretary of Education

Approved this 10th day of August, 2023.

State Board of Education

/s/ Shawn Brittingham, President

/s/ Rev. Provey Powell, Jr.

***Please note: Electronic signatures ("/s/") were accepted pursuant to 6 Del.C. §12A-107(d).**

1216 Educator Support Scholarship Program

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this regulation is to provide the eligibility criteria, application requirements, and award process for the Educator Support Scholarship Program pursuant to 14 **Del.C.** §3438.

2.0 Definitions

The following words and terms, when used in this regulation, shall have the following meaning:

"Area of Need" means 1 of the specific areas of need in which there is a shortage of teachers or specialists in Delaware as determined by the DHEO pursuant to 14 **Del.C.** §3438(b).

"Award" means a scholarship awarded under the Educator Support Scholarship Program.

"Delaware Higher Education Office" or **"DHEO"** means the Department of Education's office which administers specific programs related to higher education, including, ~~but not limited to,~~ student financial assistance programs.

"Free Application for Federal Student Aid" or **"FAFSA"** means the data supplied in connection with the federal government's application for federal financial aid which DHEO uses to determine an applicant's eligibility for an Award.

"Student Account Access Site" means the webpage on the DHEO's website where students can access scholarship opportunities.

3.0 Eligibility

3.1 In order to be eligible for an Award under the Educator Support Scholarship Program, an applicant shall meet the requirements of subsections 3.1.1 through 3.1.3.

3.1.1 The applicant shall be enrolled in an undergraduate or graduate program of study leading to a career as a teacher or specialist in an Area of Need.

3.1.1.1 Applicants who are enrolled in an undergraduate program of study shall be enrolled full-time. For the purpose of subsection 3.1.1.1, full-time means the minimum college credit hours for full-time status as an undergraduate student as required by the applicant's college or university. Generally, this is a minimum of 12 credit hours per term.

3.1.1.2 Applicants who are enrolled in a graduate program of study shall be enrolled full-time or part-time.

3.1.1.2.1 For the purpose of subsection 3.1.1.2, full-time means the minimum college credit hours for full-time status as a graduate student as required by the applicant's college or university. Generally, this is a minimum of 9 credit hours.

3.1.1.2.2 For the purpose of subsection 3.1.1.2, part-time means the minimum college credit hours for part-time status as a graduate student as required by the applicant's college or university. Generally, this is less than 9 credit hours.

3.1.2 The applicant shall meet the definition of residency as defined in 14 **Del.C.** §3402(f).

3.1.3 The applicant shall be enrolled at a college or university that is located in Delaware and is accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education.

4.0 Application Requirements

4.1 The application acceptance and submission period for the Educator Support Scholarship Program shall be posted on the DHEO's website by December 1 of each calendar year.

4.1.1 Applications shall not be accepted outside of the posted application acceptance period under any circumstances.

4.1.2 Incomplete applications shall not be accepted or processed.

4.2 In order for an application to be considered complete, an applicant shall fulfill all of the requirements in subsections 4.2.1 and 4.2.2.

4.2.1 The applicant shall complete an online application through the Student Account Access Site by the last date of the application acceptance period.

- 4.2.1.1 Applicants may update their enrollment information on the Student Account Access Site through the last date of the application acceptance period.
- 4.2.1.2 A first time applicant must establish an account and provide the applicant's valid email address and permanent mailing address before being permitted to submit the information required in subsection 4.2 of this regulation.
- 4.2.2 The applicant shall complete the FAFSA for the school year in which the scholarship is sought by the application deadline.

5.0 Awards

- 5.1 DHEO determines the amount of scholarships to be awarded annually. Contingent upon funding appropriated for the Educator Support Scholarship Program and based on the size of the applicant pool, at least 1 applicant in each Area of Need will be awarded a scholarship annually.
- 5.2 To determine an applicant's financial need for the purpose of the Educator Support Scholarship, DHEO will consider the applicant's EFC; the expense of attending the applicant's college or university; and the applicant's eligibility for Pell grants and other federal, state, or private grant assistance. For the purpose of this regulation, EFC means the Expected Family Contribution, which is the number that is calculated using the financial information an applicant provides on the applicant's Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to determine the applicant's eligibility for federal student aid.
- 5.3 An Award shall be used for, and not in excess of, tuition, mandatory fees, room, board, books, and other direct and indirect educational expenses.
- 5.4 An Award is renewable for up to 3 additional years.
- 5.5 To be eligible to renew an Award, a student shall update the student's enrollment information on the Student Account Access Site; continue to be enrolled in a program of study leading to a career as a teacher or specialist in an Area of Need; maintain satisfactory academic progress by successfully completing coursework according to the standards of the college or university in which the student is enrolled; and continue to be eligible receive financial aid.
- 5.6 A student shall not receive more than 4 annual Awards.

6.0 Award Payment

- 6.1 Award payments shall be disbursed directly to the student's college or university only.
- 6.2 If a student withdraws from school or otherwise does not qualify for full payment at the end of the add/drop period for a semester, DHEO will apply the refund policies set forth in 14 **Del.C.** §3402(k). For the purpose of this regulation, semester means a half-year term in a school or college, typically lasting 15 to 18 weeks.

26 DE Reg. 1057 (06/01/23)

27 DE Reg. 165 (09/01/23) (Final)