

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY**

Statutory Authority: 14 Delaware Code, Section 122(b) (14 **Del.C.** §122(b))

PROPOSED

PUBLIC NOTICE

Education Impact Analysis Pursuant To 14 Del.C. Section 122(d)

1203 Scholarship Incentive Program (ScIP)

A. TYPE OF REGULATORY ACTION REQUIRED

New Regulation

B. SYNOPSIS OF SUBJECT MATTER OF THE REGULATION

The Secretary of Education intends to create 14 **DE Admin. Code** 1203 Scholarship Incentive Program (ScIP). This regulation is being created to provide eligibility criteria for the ScIP and to delineate the process for applying for ScIP scholarships, pursuant to 14 **Del.C.** §3411.

Persons wishing to present their views regarding this matter may do so in writing by the close of business on or before April 7, 2017 to Tina Shockley, Education Associate, Department of Education, Regulatory Review, at 401 Federal Street, Suite 2, Dover, Delaware 19901. A copy of this regulation may be viewed online at the Register of Regulation's website, http://regulations.delaware.gov/services/current_issue.shtml, or obtained at the Department of Education, Finance Office located at the address listed above.

C. IMPACT CRITERIA

1. Will the regulation help improve student achievement as measured against state achievement standards? The regulation helps to improve student achievement as measured against state achievement standards by providing an opportunity for financial aid and future academic achievement.

2. Will the regulation help ensure that all students receive an equitable education? The regulation is intended to help ensure that all students who meet the established criteria will receive equal opportunity for this scholarship.

3. Will the regulation help to ensure that all students' health and safety are adequately protected? The regulation does not address students' health and safety.

4. Will the regulation help to ensure that all students' legal rights are respected? The regulation continues to help ensure that all student's legal rights are respected.

5. Will the regulation preserve the necessary authority and flexibility of decision making at the local board and school level? The regulation does not change the decision making at the local board and school level.

6. Will the regulation place unnecessary reporting or administrative requirements or mandates upon decision makers at the local board and school levels? The regulation does not place any unnecessary reporting or administrative requirements on decision makers.

7. Will the decision making authority and accountability for addressing the subject to be regulated be placed in the same entity? The decision making authority and accountability for addressing the subject to be regulated does not change because of this regulation.

8. Will the regulation be consistent with and not an impediment to the implementation of other state educational policies, in particular to state educational policies addressing achievement in the core academic subjects of mathematics, science, language arts and social studies? The regulation is consistent with and not an impediment to the implementation of other state educational policies.

9. Is there a less burdensome method for addressing the purpose of the regulation? There is not a less burdensome method for addressing the purpose of the regulation.

10. What is the cost to the State and to the local school boards of compliance with the regulation? There is no expected cost to implementing this regulation.

1203 Scholarship Incentive Program (ScIP)

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this regulation is to provide eligibility criteria and to delineate the application process for the Scholarship Incentive Program (ScIP), pursuant to 14 **Del.C.** §3411.

2.0 Definitions

The following words and terms, when used in this regulation, shall have the following meaning unless the context in which they are used clearly indicates otherwise:

"Academic Record" means the applicant's unofficial transcript from high school, college, or graduate school for the most recent academic year.

"Critical Need Area" means classifications where there is a shortage of persons for employment in a particular field. These classifications are posted annually on the Delaware Higher Education Office (DHEO) website and are based on federal and state reporting.

"Delaware Higher Education Office (DHEO)" is the Department of Education's office which administers specific programs related to higher education, including, but not limited to, scholarship and loan programs.

"Direct Educational Expenses" means tuition, mandatory fees, room, board, books, and supplies.

"Expected Family Contribution (EFC)" means a number that is calculated using the financial information an applicant provides on his or her Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to determine an applicant's eligibility for federal student aid.

"Free Application for Federal Student Aid (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 a SciP scholarship.

"Full-Time Student" means an undergraduate student enrolled in 12 or more college credit hours or a graduate student enrolled in 9 or more credit hours.

"Grade Point Average (GPA)" means the number representing the average value of the accumulated final grades earned in courses over time.

"Graduate Student" means a full-time student enrolled in a post-baccalaureate program.

"Regionally Accredited Institution" means an institution of higher education accredited by one of the following regional accreditation organizations: Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC), Higher Learning Commission (HLC), Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE), New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC-CIHE), Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), or WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC).

"Resident of the State" means an applicant who meets the definition of residency as defined in 14 Del.C. §3402(f).

"Semester" means a half-year term in a school or college, typically lasting 15 to 18 weeks.

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

"Undergraduate Student" means a full-time student at a regionally accredited college or university who has not yet earned a bachelor's or equivalent degree.

3.0 Application Acceptance and Submission Period

3.1 The application acceptance and submission period for the SciP scholarship shall be posted on the DHEO's website by December 1 each calendar year.

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

3.1.2 Incomplete applications shall not be accepted or processed.

3.2 In order for an application to be considered complete, an applicant must:

3.2.1 Complete the FAFSA for the school year in which the scholarship is sought by the state deadline for Delaware that is posted online at FAFSA.ed.gov.

3.2.2 Submit the applicant's Academic Record to DHEO by mail, fax, or email by the last date of the application acceptance period.

3.2.2.1 Notwithstanding subsection 3.2.2 of this regulation, and unless notified otherwise by DHEO, an applicant who is currently enrolled as a senior in a Delaware public or charter school is not required to submit his or her Academic Record to DHEO by mail, fax, or email.

3.2.3 Submit the applicant's major and the name of the regionally accredited college or university in which the applicant will be enrolled for the school year in which the scholarship is sought through the Student Account Access Site by the last date of the application acceptance period.

3.2.3.1 Applicants may update their enrollment information on the Student Account Access Site through the last date of the application acceptance period.

- 3.2.3.2 A first time applicant must establish an account and provide his or her valid email address and permanent mailing address before being permitted to submit the information required in subsection 3.2.3 of this regulation.

4.0 **Eligibility**

- 4.1 Applicants must meet the following requirements to be eligible for the SciP:
- 4.1.1 Be a Resident of the State; and
- 4.1.2 Be a Full-Time Student enrolled in:
- 4.1.2.1 an undergraduate degree program at a regionally accredited college or university in Delaware; or
- 4.1.2.2 an undergraduate degree program at a regionally accredited college or university outside of Delaware that is not offered by a publicly assisted college or university in Delaware; or
- 4.1.2.3 a graduate or professional education degree program at a regionally accredited college or university outside of Delaware that is not offered by a publicly assisted college or university in Delaware and in pursuit of a degree that is deemed in the best interest of the State.
- 4.1.2.3.1 For the purpose of subsection 4.1.2.3 of this regulation, an applicant who is in pursuit of a degree in either a Critical Need Area or for an occupation or industry in which there is a labor shortage as determined by DHEO based on current Delaware Department of Labor projections is in pursuit of a degree that is deemed in the best interest of the State.

5.0 **Awards**

- 5.1 DHEO determines the number and amount of scholarships to be awarded annually. The number and amount of awards each year will vary and is based on and subject to DHEO receiving funds appropriated for the SciP.
- 5.1.1 If DHEO receives funds appropriated for the SciP, DHEO may allocate up to 80% of the total amount of funds received for awards for eligible Undergraduate Students and up to 20% of the total amount of funds received for awards for eligible Graduate Students provided that DHEO receives applications from both Undergraduate and Graduate Students in a given year.
- 5.2 DHEO shall award scholarships on the basis of financial need and academic merit.
- 5.2.1 To determine an applicant's financial need, DHEO will consider:
- 5.2.1.1 the applicant's EFC;
- 5.2.1.2 the expense of attending the college or university in which the applicant is enrolled; and
- 5.2.1.3 the applicant's eligibility for Pell grants and other federal, state, or private grant assistance.
- 5.2.2 To determine an applicant's academic merit, DHEO will consider the applicant's GPA.
- 5.2.2.1 For an applicant who is currently enrolled in high school, the applicant must have an unweighted, cumulative GPA of 2.5 or higher.
- 5.2.2.2 For an applicant who is currently enrolled as an Undergraduate Student or Graduate Student, the applicant must have a cumulative GPA of 2.5 or higher.
- 5.2.2.3 Notwithstanding subsection 5.2.2 of this regulation, for an applicant who is currently enrolled as a Graduate Student in a degree program in which pass or fail grading is the only option and a GPA is not calculated, the applicant must have passing grades in his or her courses from the previous school year.
- 5.3 An award shall be used for, and not in excess of, Direct Educational Expenses.
- 5.4 An award shall not be renewable. Students must submit a new application each school year.
- 5.5 No student may receive more than 5 annual scholarships for either undergraduate or graduate study.

6.0 **Award Payment**

- 6.1 DHEO shall contact a recipient's college or university to verify the recipient's academic, financial, and enrollment status each Semester prior to the scholarship funds being disbursed.
- 6.2 All payments shall be disbursed directly to the eligible recipient's college or university only.
- 6.3 If a recipient 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 policy set forth in 14 Del.C. §3402(k).