

October 5, 2009

MEMORANDUM

TO: State Board of Regents
FROM: William A. Sederburg
SUBJECT: Report to Legislature on the Regents' Scholarship

Issue

The Regents' Scholarship program 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 Legislature's Interim Education Committee regarding the Regents' Scholarship program. The report, prepared by Carrie Beckman, will be distributed by legislative staff to Committee members prior to their meeting on October 21. The report shows that in its second year, 350 students qualified for a Regents' Scholarship, compared to 195 last year, an increase of 79%, with more than two-thirds qualifying for the Exemplary Award (as of September 30, 2009). A copy of the report is attached.

Commissioner's Recommendation

This is an information item, no action needed.

William A. Sederburg, Commissioner

WAS/DB
Attachment

Overview

Created by the Utah Legislature in 2008 (SB 180 by Senator Lyle Hillyard, amended in 2009 by SB 104, also by Senator Hillyard), the Regents' Scholarship encourages Utah high school students to prepare for college academically and financially by taking a core course of study, based on the nationally recognized State Scholars Initiative, and saving for college. The scholarship is a tiered award system comprised of a Base Award, Exemplary Academic Achievement Award, and a Utah Educational Savings Plan Supplemental Award. This scholarship awards Utah high school graduates who complete the Utah Scholars Core Course of Study during grades 9-12.

The Base Award is a one-time payment of up to \$1,000 for students who complete a core course of study, meet a minimum GPA, individual grade, and ACT requirements. The Exemplary Academic Achievement Award is for up to 75% of tuition for higher ACT and GPA and may be renewed for a second year. The Utah Educational Savings Plan (UESP) Supplemental Award is available for students that contribute to a UESP account (a maximum of \$100 per year for four years for each \$100 contributed to their account).

Originally, the Regents' Scholarship program received a legislative appropriation of \$400,000 ongoing and \$500,000 one-time money. During the 2009 Legislative Session, the budget was increased to \$1.9 million in ongoing funds, when the Legislature approved a reallocation within the Board of Regents budget from the UCOPE financial aid program. Award amounts for the Exemplary Award for the college academic year of 2009-2010 (fall and spring semesters) were set at 75% of tuition; however, due to uncertainties of future funding, students were and are being notified that the Exemplary Award amount for the 2010-2011 academic year may be less than 75% tuition.

In the first two years of the program, we have noticed that high schools have begun to re-evaluate some of their course offerings. For example, Davis School

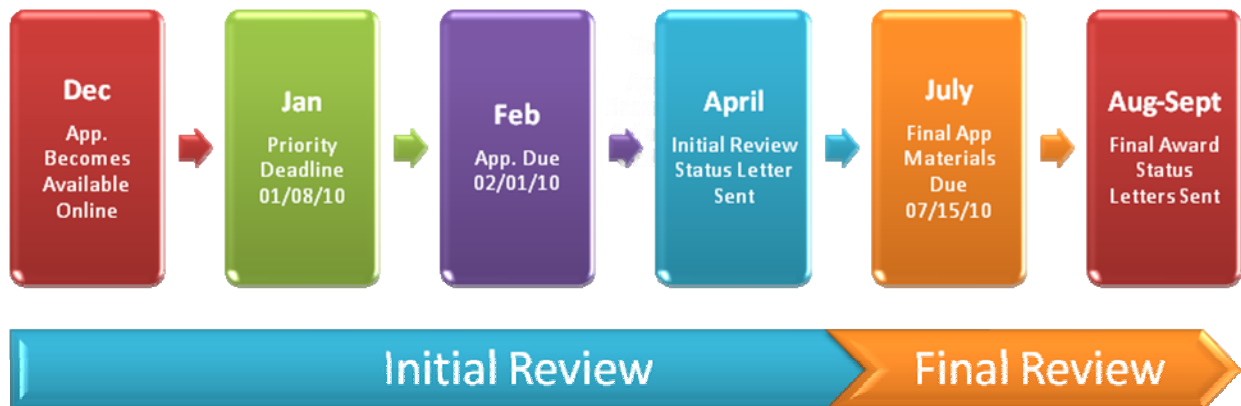
District now offers limited sections of biology in the 9th grade and Gunnison High School now offers additional foreign language courses, all of which will help their students qualify for the scholarship.

Administration of the Scholarship

Administering the Regents' Scholarship is time intensive and is subsidized by the Board of Regents. The Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education has partnered with the Utah Higher Education Assistance Authority (UHEAA) to carry out the administration of the scholarship. Currently there are three FTE administrating the program, including overseeing the review process, policies, school relations and educational outreach, paid out of the scholarship appropriation. In addition, there are 45 UHEAA employees dedicating a portion of their time to the scholarship operations, not charged to the scholarship program. This ranges from customer service representatives, application reviewers, document processing, and system development and maintenance.

We are in the process of creating an on-line application to make applying easier and also reducing administrative staff time. The on-line application will be available by December 1, 2009.

Time Line of Review for the high school graduating class of 2010



Scholarship Awards

In 2008, 887 students applied for the scholarship. 672 were on time and filed during the correct year. Of the 672 applications considered, 195 students were approved for a Regents' Scholarship award with 21 Students receiving the UESP supplemental award.

2008 Regents' Scholarship Awards by School District

District	Base Only	Exemplary + Base
Alpine	7	19
Box Elder	1	0
Davis	4	10
Delta	0	1
Early College High Schools	2	2
Emery	0	1
Grand	1	1
Granite	12	12
Independent/Private	4	2
Jordan	14	32
Murray	1	0
Nebo	1	2
Park City	4	5
Provo	3	8
Salt Lake	8	14
South Summit	1	0
Tooele	3	1
Wasatch	1	0
Washington	6	4
Weber	6	2
Totals	79	116

In 2009, 1,021 students applied for the scholarship. Although the final review process has not concluded (due to a statutory requirement that expires this year that allows students to have until September 1 to meet the requirements), 350 students have qualified for a Regents' Scholarship award, including 37 who have also received the UESP supplemental award (as of September 30, 2009).

**2009 Regents' Scholarship Awards
by School District as of 09/30/09***

District	Base Only	Exemplary + Base
Alpine	11	41
Beaver	0	1
Box Elder	1	8
Cache	1	10
Charter	1	2
Davis	10	25
Duchesne	0	1
Emery	0	2
Granite	15	20
Iron	2	1
Jordan	25	41
Logan	1	2
Millard	1	0
Morgan	0	4
Murray	0	1
Nebo	4	18
Ogden	0	1
Park City	5	0
Private	4	5
Provo	2	14
Salt Lake	17	20
Toole	0	4
Wasatch	1	2
Washington	6	11
Weber	3	6
Total	110	240

*The awards information is as of September 30, 2009, and do not represent final award numbers.

The Future

The Commissioner's Office looks forward to continuing to work closely with the Legislature as the program matures. We believe it is meeting its goal of encouraging students to take more rigorous courses during their entire four years of high school. As interest in the program grows in high schools throughout the state, appropriation increases will be needed. Alternatively, the amount of the Exemplary Award will need to be reduced or re-thought entirely. The early application deadline helps the Commissioner's Office project the number of applicants for any given year; however, it is difficult to determine what percentage of the applicants will ultimately qualify and for which tier of the award.