

March 23, 2016

MEMORANDUM

TO: State Board of Regents

FROM: David L. Buhler

SUBJECT: New Century and Regents' Scholarship Award Amounts for 2016-17 College Academic Year

Issue

The Regents' Scholarship has seen a 17% increase in applications from last year. To support that increase in applications and to replace one-time funding, the Utah State Board of Regents has requested \$8.8 million from the legislature in new, on-going dollars to fully fund the Regents' Scholarship program. The 2016 legislature appropriated \$8.8 million (one-time), which is sufficient to fully fund the New Century and Regents' Scholarships.

Background

The Utah State Board of Regents administers two scholarship programs: the New Century and Regents' Scholarships. The Board of Regents is authorized to set the award amounts for both scholarships based on legislative appropriation and number of qualified applicants. Since 2010, the Commissioner's Office, on behalf of the Board of Regents, has also been required by law to advise scholarship applicants and potential applicants that the level of awards are subject to legislative appropriation and may be reduced and vary from year to year.

The New Century Scholarship was established by the Utah Legislature in 1999 to encourage students to accelerate their education by earning an associate degree from an institution within the Utah System of Higher Education while still in high school. The scholarship requires at least a 3.0 cumulative college GPA and at least a 3.5 cumulative high school GPA. The New Century Scholarship award amount may vary based on legislative funding; the maximum amount a student may receive is \$1,250 per semester, renewable each semester during the students' first four semesters at college.

The Utah Legislature created the Regents' Scholarship in 2008 to encourage Utah high school students to prepare for college academically and financially by taking a challenging college preparatory course of study during grades 9-12 while also saving for college. We support continued investment in these students who have worked hard during high school to be college ready.

The Regents' Scholarship has three levels of awards:

1. The Base Award: This scholarship provides a one-time payment of up to \$1,000 for students who complete the college preparatory course of study, meet a minimum cumulative high school GPA of 3.0, earn minimum grades on each of the courses required for scholarship eligibility, and take the ACT.

2. The Exemplary Achievement Award: Students qualify for the Exemplary Achievement Award by having no grade lower than a "B" in the classes required for scholarship eligibility, earn at least a 3.5 cumulative high school GPA, and reach a composite ACT score of 26. The amounts of the Exemplary Award vary based on legislative funding; the maximum amount a student may receive is \$1,250 per semester, renewable each semester during the students' first four semesters at college. Students who earn the Exemplary Award are also given the Base Award.

3. The Regents' Scholarship Utah Educational Savings Plan (UESP) Supplemental Award: This award is granted if a student has met the minimum requirements of the Base Award and if they have contributed to a UESP account each year during ages 14-17. The award provides a \$100 match per year for each \$100 the student contributed to their own UESP account for a maximum supplemental award of \$400.

Commissioner's Recommendation

The Commissioner recommends, pursuant to Utah Code Annotated 53B-8-108(8)(b), the Board approve the following amounts for the New Century and Regents' Scholarships for the college academic year 2016-17:

- New Century Scholarship: \$1,250 per semester (100% of full amount)
- Regents' Base Award: \$1,000 one-time (100% of full amount)
- Regents' Exemplary Award: \$1,250 per semester (100% of full amount)
- Regents' UESP Savings Match Up to \$400 one-time (100% of full amount)

David L. Buhler
Commissioner of Higher Education

DLB/CB