

March 20, 2019

MEMORANDUM

TO: State Board of Regents

FROM: David L. Buhler

SUBJECT: New Century and Regents' Scholarship Award Amounts for 2019-2020 College Academic Year

Issue

The Board of Regents administers the New Century and Regents' Scholarships and is authorized to set annually the award amounts for both scholarships based on legislative appropriation and the number of qualified applicants. Since 2010, the Commissioner's Office has advised scholarship applicants and potential applicants that the level of awards are subject to legislative funding and may vary from year to year.

During the 2019 legislative session, Utah's lawmakers chose to preserve the New Century and Regents' Scholarship programs and their ongoing funding. Based on the participation rates in these programs and funds available through legislative appropriation, the Office of the Commissioner is recommending award levels (found below) for approval by the Board.

Background

The New Century Scholarship encourages 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 Regents' Scholarship encourages 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. In 2017, the Board amended the Regents' Scholarship to include supplemental awards for scholarship award recipients for whom affordability is a barrier to accessing college. During the 2019 legislative session, the Legislature made additional changes to the Regents' and New Century Scholarship programs, which will go into effect starting with the 2020 high school graduating class. The Commissioner's office will propose a policy addressing the 2019 legislative amendments to the Board at a future meeting. Because of changes to the Regents' Scholarship program, there are different award structures depending on the year in which students apply.

For the graduating class of 2018 and prior, the Regents' Scholarship structure has had 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 in each of the courses required for scholarship eligibility, and take the ACT.
2. The Exemplary Achievement Award: In addition to the Base Award, Students will qualify for the Exemplary Achievement Award by having no grade lower than a "B" in the classes required for scholarship eligibility, earning at least a 3.5 cumulative high school GPA, and achieving 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.
3. The Regents' Scholarship my529 Supplemental Award: Students earn this award if they have the minimum requirements of the Base Award and if they have contributed to a my529 account for which they are listed as the beneficiary 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.

Awards for the 2019 high school class are structured as follows:

1. The Scholarship Award: This award is granted to all students who complete the college preparatory course of study, meet a minimum cumulative high school GPA of 3.3 and a minimum ACT composite score of a 22.
2. The my529 supplemental award: This award is granted if a student has met the minimum requirements to qualify for the scholarship and if they have contributed to a my529 account for which they are listed as the beneficiary each year during ages 14-16. 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 \$300.
3. The Supplemental Award: This award is granted to students who demonstrate an economic barrier to covering college costs as defined in R609B. The institutions at which the students attend are responsible for evaluating the students expected family contribution and state and federal aid they are receiving to determine if the student has remaining need to cover the basic college cost. The supplemental award shall not be used to exceed the recipient's remaining cost for tuition, fees, books, required course materials and housing after all other financial aid is considered. Students who qualify for this award can continue to receive funds subject to meeting eligibility requirements for up to 4 semesters.

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 2019-2020:

For eligible students in the 2018 and prior graduating class cohorts:

- 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' my529 award up to \$400 one-time (100% of full amount)

For eligible students in the 2019 graduating class cohort:

- New Century Scholarship: \$1,250 per semester (100% of full amount)
- Regents' Scholarship Award: \$2,000 one-time
- Regents' my529 award up to \$300 one-time (100% of full amount)
- Regents' Supplemental Award: The Board will block-grant remaining funds to the institutions based on eligible student enrollment. The institution may then award the supplemental amount to each recipient not to exceed cost for tuition, fees, books, required course materials and housing. The institution shall determine the award amount based on state and federal aid the recipient is already receiving and the expected family contribution. The supplemental award shall not be used to exceed the recipient's remaining cost for tuition, fees, books, required course materials and housing after all other financial aid is considered.

David L. Buhler
Commissioner of Higher Education

DLB/CFB