

136A.127 ACHIEVE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM.

Subdivision 1. **Establishment.** The achieve scholarship program is established to provide scholarships to eligible students within the limits of appropriations for the program.

Subd. 2. **Definition; qualifying program.** For the purposes of this section, a "qualifying program" means a rigorous secondary school program of study for Minnesota high school graduates recognized by the Secretary of Education for the purposes of determining eligibility for the federal Academic Competitiveness Grant Program under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended on August 14, 2008. If a qualifying program includes a foreign language requirement, the foreign language requirement is waived for a student whose first language is not English and who attains English language proficiency.

Subd. 3. **Documentation of qualifying programs.** The student shall request a transcript from the high school. The high school shall provide a transcript to the Office of Higher Education or to the eligible institution in which the student is enrolling, documenting the qualifying program. If the transcript is not sufficient to document a qualifying program, the student may be required to submit further documentation that the office deems sufficient.

Subd. 4. **Student eligibility.** To be eligible to receive a scholarship under this section, in addition to the requirements listed under section 136A.121, a student must:

- (1) submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA);
- (2) complete a qualifying program in a high school or in a home-school setting under section 120A.22, graduate from a Minnesota high school, and graduate with an unweighted grade point average of 2.5 or higher;
- (3) qualify for a federal Pell Grant or state grant under section 136A.121;
- (4) be a United States citizen or eligible noncitizen, as defined in section 484 of the Higher Education Act, United States Code, title 20, sections 1091 et seq., as amended, and Code of Federal Regulations, title 34, section 668.33;
- (5) meet satisfactory academic progress as defined under section 136A.101, subdivision 10;
- (6) be a Minnesota resident, as defined in section 136A.101, subdivision 8; and
- (7) enroll full-time in a degree, diploma, or certificate program during the academic year immediately following high school graduation at an eligible institution as defined under section 136A.101, subdivision 4.

Subd. 5. **Administration.** The achieve scholarship program shall be administered by the Minnesota Office of Higher Education. The director shall develop forms and procedures necessary to administer the program.

Subd. 6. **Application.** A student must complete and submit an application for the achieve scholarship.

Subd. 7. **Deadline.** The deadline for the office to accept applications for achieve scholarships is the same as that used for the state grant in section 136A.121, subdivision 13.

Subd. 8. [Repealed, 2009 c 95 art 2 s 46]

Subd. 9. **Scholarship awards.** The amount of the scholarship is equal to the maximum assigned student responsibility for a four-year program, as defined in section 136A.121,

subdivision 5, minus the assigned family responsibility as defined in section 136A.101, subdivision 5a, multiplied by 0.50. The minimum scholarship is \$1,200 per academic year based on the institution's academic calendar and the student's continued eligibility. The scholarship may be used to pay for qualifying expenses at eligible institutions.

Subd. 9b. **Additional award for online course completion.** An eligible student who has completed at least one online course while in high school or in a home-school setting under section 120A.22 may receive an additional award of up to \$150 to be used in conjunction with the award in subdivision 9. The additional award is available to new applicants for terms of enrollment beginning on or after July 1, 2009. The online course must be offered by a provider certified by the Minnesota Department of Education under section 124D.095 or by an eligible postsecondary institution as defined under section 136A.101, subdivision 4. If the official high school transcript is not sufficient to document the completion of the online course, the student may be required to submit further documentation as required by the office.

Subd. 10. **Qualifying expenses.** Qualifying expenses are components included under the cost of attendance used for federal student financial aid programs, as defined in section 472 of the Higher Education Act, United States Code, title 20, sections 1091 et seq., as amended.

Subd. 10a. **Student investment.** A student investment is required in an amount equal to the remainder of the assigned student responsibility as defined in section 136A.121, subdivision 5, after deducting the achieve scholarship.

Subd. 11. **Eligible institutions.** The achieve scholarship may only be used to pay qualifying expenses at an eligible institution as defined under section 136A.101, subdivision 4.

Subd. 12. [Repealed, 2009 c 95 art 2 s 46]

Subd. 13. [Repealed, 2009 c 95 art 2 s 46]

Subd. 14. **Evaluation report.** By January 15 of each odd-numbered year, the Office of Higher Education shall submit a report, to the committees of the legislature with jurisdiction over higher education finance and policy, regarding the program, including, at a minimum, the following information:

- (1) the demographics of individuals participating in the program;
 - (2) the number of scholarship recipients who persisted at a postsecondary institution for a second year;
 - (3) the high schools attended by the program participants;
 - (4) the postsecondary institutions attended by the program participants;
 - (5) the academic performance of the students after enrolling in a postsecondary institution;
- and
- (6) other information as determined by the director.

History: 2007 c 144 art 2 s 24; 2008 c 277 art 1 s 12; 2008 c 298 s 6; 2009 c 95 art 2 s 15-20; 2009 c 101 art 2 s 109; 2010 c 364 s 10,11