

MONTANA BOARD OF REGENTS OF HIGHER EDUCATION
Policy and Procedures Manual

SUBJECT: STUDENT AFFAIRS
Policy 501.4 – Montana STEM Scholarship Program
Adopted: May 22, 2015

Board Policy:

A. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Montana STEM Scholarship Program is to provide an incentive for Montana high school students to prepare for, enter into, and complete degrees in postsecondary fields related to science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and health care, with the goal of increasing the number of STEM degree recipients participating in Montana's workforce. The STEM scholarship program was created by XXXXXXX, Montana Code Annotated. (MCA)

B. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

A student is eligible to receive a Montana STEM Scholarship providing the student:

1. Is a Montana resident who graduated from a Montana accredited high school with a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.25;
2. Is eligible for in-state tuition pursuant to the board's policies;
3. Has completed a rigorous college preparation program, including 4 years of mathematics and 3 years of science;
4. Enrolls in and completes at least 15 credits each semester, and maintains a 3.0 cumulative GPA at an eligible Montana postsecondary institution;
5. Begins utilizing the scholarship in the fall semester immediately following the student's graduation from high school;
6. Is seeking the student's first certificate, or 2-year or 4-year degree;
7. Has declared a STEM or health care major as the student's intended course of study;
8. Meets the federal Title IV selective service registration requirements;
9. Has not defaulted on a Title IV or state of Montana educational loan or owes a refund to a federal Title IV or state of Montana student financial aid program;
10. Is not incarcerated. A student may receive a Montana STEM scholarship upon release if the student meets all other eligibility requirements.

C. AWARD AMOUNTS

1. An applicant who meets the requirements of [section B] will receive \$1,000 for the first academic year the student is enrolled at an eligible postsecondary institution.
2. An applicant who meets the requirements of this subsection will receive \$2,000 for the student's second academic year. To be eligible for the STEM scholarship in the student's second academic year, the student must:
 - a. have completed at least 30 credit hours in the first academic year;
 - b. have maintained a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0;
 - c. enroll in and complete 15 credits each semester at an eligible postsecondary institution;
 - d. continue to pursue a STEM or healthcare major
3. Initial scholarship award determinations are not subject to appeal however recipients may appeal termination or non-renewal of their awards to the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE) based on extenuating circumstances. The Commissioner's decision will be final.

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D. ELIGIBLE INSTITUTIONS

Recipients of the Montana STEM Scholarship may utilize the award at any of the following eligible postsecondary institutions:

1. A campus of the MUS, as defined in § 20-25-201;
2. A Montana community college, defined and organized as provided in § 20-15-101;
3. A two-year, accredited tribal community college located in the state of Montana or a four-year accredited tribal college located in the state of Montana; or
4. A private, not-for-profit college, under the following conditions: if donations to the Program from private sources are designated for a Montana private nonprofit private educational institution, as defined in § 15-30-163(3)(b), the scholarship may be used at the designated institution, subject to the same award, eligibility and renewal requirements as for recipients attending eligible postsecondary institutions.
5. A STEM Scholarship is transferable between eligible institutions upon proper transfer notification to OCHE, and continued adherence to all eligibility requirements.

E. Authorization to Distribute Funds

1. Except for funds donated from private sources, the obligation for funding the Montana STEM Scholarship Program is an obligation of the State. The Board of Regents is not required to provide a scholarship to an eligible student without a line item appropriation to the Board for this purpose.
2. If the appropriation is insufficient to fully fund the Montana STEM Scholarship Program, qualified recipients seeking renewal of their scholarships will have priority for available funds. OCHE will develop policies to further determine priority of funds.
3. If the line item appropriation is insufficient to fully fund the Montana STEM Scholarship Program, the number of scholarships will be reduced, but individual award amounts will remain unchanged (i.e. the award amount will remain \$1,000 or \$2,000 as defined in [section C]).
4. Funds from a scholarship must be used toward the cost of attendance at a qualifying postsecondary institution and may not be used to pay for remedial or college-preparatory course work. Each Montana STEM Scholarship will be distributed directly to the postsecondary institution for payment toward the recipient's cost of attendance.

F. Administration

1. The Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE) is charged with the administration of the Montana STEM Scholarship Program.
2. OCHE will develop appropriate procedures that enable the Montana STEM Scholarship Program to be administered in accordance with MCA and Board policy.

History:

New policy (Minimum Course Grades) approved by the Board of Regents May 20, 2005 (Item 126-105-R0305).