

Chapter 250-84 WAC
COLLEGE BOUND SCHOLARSHIP RULES

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WAC

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WAC 250-84-010 Purpose. The college bound scholarship as authorized by chapter 28B.118 RCW is designed to inspire and encourage Washington middle school students from low-income families to dream big and aspire to continuing their education beyond high school. The early commitment of state funding of tuition (at public rates), required fees, and five hundred dollars intended to apply towards books and materials may alleviate some of the financial barriers preventing students from considering college as a future possibility.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 28B.118.060. WSR 20-12-051, § 250-84-010, filed 5/29/20, effective 6/29/20. Statutory Authority: RCW 28B.76.670. WSR 10-17-080, § 250-84-010, filed 8/16/10, effective 9/16/10.]

WAC 250-84-020 Definitions. "Agency" means student achievement council, a Washington state agency, as established under chapter 28B.77 RCW.

"C average" means a 2.0 grade point average on a 4.0 scale.

"FAFSA" means Free Application for Federal Student Aid.

"High school graduation" means students must graduate from a public high school, private high school approved under chapter 28A.195 RCW, or approved home school program under chapter 28A.200 RCW requirements to earn a high school diploma as defined in the current year's chapter 180-51 WAC.

"Legal guardian" means the person appointed by the court to take legal action on behalf of and be responsible for a minor.

"Median family income" means the median income for Washington state, adjusted by family size and reported annually in the federal register and used that year for the administration of the Washington college grant program.

"Office" means the office of student financial assistance, created by RCW 28B.77.090 within the direction of the student achievement council.

"OSPI" means office of superintendent of public instruction.

"Program" means the college bound scholarship program.

"Tuition and fees" means tuition, building, operating, service and activity fees as are used for purposes of determining the Washington college grant award.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 28B.118.060. WSR 20-12-051, § 250-84-020, filed 5/29/20, effective 6/29/20. Statutory Authority: RCW 28B.76.670. WSR 10-17-080, § 250-84-020, filed 8/16/10, effective 9/16/10.]

WAC 250-84-030 Eligible applicant. (1) Washington students may apply who are:

(a) Enrolled in the seventh or eighth grade, or in ninth grade (under limited circumstances defined in RCW 28B.118.010), in a public school, private school as approved by chapter 28A.195 RCW or home school as defined by chapter 28A.200 RCW; and

(b) Meet the income eligibility as defined in subsection (2) of this section.

A student in the ninth grade is eligible to sign up for the program, if that student qualifies for free or reduced-price lunches and was previously ineligible during the seventh or eighth grade while a student in Washington.

(2) Seventh, eighth, or ninth (if previously ineligible as defined above) grade students are eligible to apply if one of these requirements are met:

(a) Family income falls within the monthly or annual standards set by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) for eligibility for participation in the free or reduced price lunch program (FRPL); or

(b) The student's family receives temporary assistance for needy families (TANF) benefits; or

(c) Student is a foster youth.

To determine eligibility in unusual circumstances, or for assistance in defining household size, foster youth status, and other criteria, the office will consult with district or school staff who oversee FRPL, other agencies as needed, students and families as needed, and will refer to the USDA FRPL guidelines.

If a student qualifies in the application year, the information is not required to be updated throughout the middle and high school years. However, income will be verified using the information from the FAFSA or an alternative application provided by the office upon college enrollment. See WAC 250-84-060, eligibility for receipt of scholarship.

(3) Eligible applications are considered complete when:

(a) The signed pledge and signature page has been received by the office by the deadline, as determined by the office.

(i) Students who are dependents and meet requirements outlined in RCW 28B.118.010 are automatically enrolled in partnership with the department of children, youth, and families.

(ii) The deadline for the initial application is June 30th of the student's eighth grade year, and students who qualify to apply in the ninth grade year have until June 30th of their ninth grade year to begin an application. Students have until August 31st at the end of their eighth grade or ninth grade, for those eligible to apply during ninth grade, to complete their application.

(iii) Exceptions to the deadline will be made on a case-by-case basis by the office.

(iv) A special exception to the deadlines in (a)(ii) of this subsection is made for students required to sign a pledge to establish eligibility during eighth or ninth grade in the 2019-20 school year, during which a statewide school closure was ordered under the state of emergency declared in response to the coronavirus pandemic. For these students only, the deadline to begin an application will be extended until November 30, 2020, and students have until that date to complete their application.

(b) All sections of the application including eligibility are filled and the pledge is signed.

(c) The pledge must include the following criteria:

(i) Graduate from high school with at least a C average or as referenced in RCW 28B.118.010.

(ii) No felony convictions.

(d) The section of the application that indicates eligibility must be completed.

(e) The pledge must be signed by a parent or legal guardian to attest the information is true and accurate.

The office shall establish a process through which the office may work with a school counselor or administrator to witness a student's pledge if the parent or guardian's signature is not obtained after multiple, documented unsuccessful attempts. These attempts will be documented in the student's file.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 28B.118.060. WSR 20-12-051, § 250-84-030, filed 5/29/20, effective 6/29/20. Statutory Authority: RCW 28B.76.670. WSR 10-17-080, § 250-84-030, filed 8/16/10, effective 9/16/10.]

WAC 250-84-040 Program promotion to eligible students. The role of the office, OSPI and school districts related to notification to students, families, and school personnel about the college bound scholarship is defined under chapter 28B.118 RCW.

(1) The office shall work collaboratively with statewide partners to support students and their families in signing up for the college bound scholarship and pursue college after high school. These partners could include, but are not limited to, K-12 staff, professional associations, and college access programs.

(2) The office will provide the official program language and requirements to students, families, and these partners by creating publications for, and communicating with, students, families, and stakeholders as needed.

(a) The office will communicate with college bound students as may be additionally required in RCW 28B.118.040.

(b) The office shall develop and distribute information regarding the scholarship and materials to support sign-up, in partnership with OSPI, districts, and other nonprofit organizations and agencies, to all schools with students enrolled in seventh, eighth, or ninth grade.

(3) The role of OSPI is to notify elementary, middle, and junior high schools about the college bound scholarship program using methods in place for communicating with schools and school districts.

OSPI will encourage schools and districts to target communications to eligible students to the greatest extent possible.

(4) The role of each school district is to notify students, parents, teachers, school counselors, and principals about the Washington college bound scholarship program through existing channels.

Methods may include, but are not limited to, personalized letters, digital media as available, integrating the application into student conferences, or holding sign-up events.

Notification methods may also include, but are not limited to, regular school district and building communications, online scholarship bulletins and announcements, notices posted on school walls and bulletin boards, information available in each counselor's office, and school or district scholarship information sessions.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 28B.118.060. WSR 20-12-051, § 250-84-040, filed 5/29/20, effective 6/29/20. Statutory Authority: RCW 28B.76.670. WSR 10-17-080, § 250-84-040, filed 8/16/10, effective 9/16/10.]

WAC 250-84-050 Tracking of scholars. The office and OSPI will develop tracking procedures to ensure continued eligibility and to determine compliance for awarding of college bound scholarships (RCW 28B.118.020 and 28B.118.040).

(1) The office shall:

(a) Develop and implement a student application, selection, and notification process for scholarships.

(b) Collect authorization to release information from the student and parent(s)/legal guardian(s).

(c) Develop application tools annually.

(d) Notify applicants of missing information as soon as possible.

(e) Notify applicants of their status of complete application as soon as possible.

(f) Treat applications confidentially and hold in a secure environment.

(g) Provide complete applicants information regarding disbursement of the scholarship and contact information for the office.

(h) Require applicants to update their address and other contact information with the office.

(2) OSPI will work with the office to develop student tracking procedures.

The office and OSPI will share data regarding the progress of college bound scholarship students such as current school, grade level, grade point average, and expected graduation date on at least an annual basis through high school graduation, following agency protocols for data exchange and security.

(3) The board will track complete applicants and monitor progress toward graduation to determine compliance for awarding of scholarships.

(4) The board will share data and authorized student information from the application for program sign-up efforts and to provide support services to students who have already applied.

(a) The office will share information with schools and approved college access providers who will provide services to college bound scholarship students to support their academic success, if the proper release of information has been provided by the student and parent(s)/legal guardian(s).

(b) Aggregate data will be provided periodically and as requested to schools, districts, and partners to improve sign-up efforts.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 28B.118.060. WSR 20-12-051, § 250-84-050, filed 5/29/20, effective 6/29/20. Statutory Authority: RCW 28B.76.670. WSR 10-17-080, § 250-84-050, filed 8/16/10, effective 9/16/10.]

WAC 250-84-060 Eligibility for receipt of college bound scholarships. To be eligible to receive the annual scholarship disbursement, college bound scholarship students who have met the requirements outlined in WAC 250-84-030, must:

(1) Graduate from a Washington high school with at least a C average or receive home-based instruction or meet other requirements as noted under chapter 28A.200 RCW or RCW 28B.50.536.

(a) Students receiving home-based instruction may be asked to submit additional documentation confirming students meet the C average requirement.

(b) For a student who does not meet the C average requirement, and who completes fewer than two quarters in the running start pro-

gram, under chapter 28A.600 RCW, the student's first quarter of running start course grades must be excluded from the student's overall grade point average for purposes of determining their eligibility to receive the scholarship.

(2) Have no felony convictions. The office shall work with other appropriate organizations and agencies to confirm eligibility.

(3) File a FAFSA or an alternative application provided by the office.

(4) Be accepted to an institution participating in the Washington college grant program within the state of Washington (requirements outlined in WAC 250-21-026).

(5) Enroll no later than the fall term (as defined by the institution) one academic year following high school graduation.

For example, students graduating by August 2019 have until fall 2020 to begin using the scholarship.

(a) Students who graduate early will be assumed to follow the time frame of their senior year cohort. However, if they enroll early, the four-year scholarship will need to be used within five years of their initial enrollment date.

(b) Students will be considered to have enrolled upon earning credit(s) for the term or receiving the first scholarship disbursement, whichever comes first.

(6) Have an annual family income at or below the percentage of the state's median family income stated in RCW 28B.118.010(5) as determined by the income reported on the FAFSA or an alternative application provided by the office and verified by the institution the student is attending.

(7) Receive the college bound scholarship for no more than four academic years within a five-year period.

(a) The four-year scholarship may be used during any terms within the five-year period, even if enrollment is not continuous.

(b) The scholarship must be used within five academic years of August of the high school graduation year.

For example, students who graduate from high school in 2019-20 must begin college enrollment by fall 2021, and have through summer of 2025 to receive the scholarship.

(c) The total college bound award is limited to twelve quarters, eight semesters or equivalent, prorated for part-time enrollment within the five-year period. In the event of a school closure, refer to WAC 250-21-011.

(d) If students do not meet the income requirement in any year within the five-year period, they may still receive the scholarship for any year(s) they do meet the income requirement. Receipt of the four-year scholarship does not have to be continuous.

(8) Comply with the other eligibility criteria to receive the college bound scholarship as outlined for the Washington college grant program in WAC 250-21-011 including, but not limited to, requirements related to residency, undergraduate student status, academic program eligibility including the theology prohibition, enrollment level, satisfactory academic progress, and repayments.

The requirements for Washington college grant that do NOT apply to college bound scholarships are the equivalent of five-year limitation for Washington college grant under WAC 250-21-011(9) since the college bound scholarship is a four-year award.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 28B.118.060. WSR 20-12-051, § 250-84-060, filed 5/29/20, effective 6/29/20. Statutory Authority: RCW 28B.76.670. WSR 10-17-080, § 250-84-060, filed 8/16/10, effective 9/16/10.]

WAC 250-84-070 Scholarship award. (1) The college bound scholarship is intended to combine with the Washington college grant program and other state aid, as determined by the office, to ensure eligible students have the opportunity to receive sufficient state financial aid to meet the cost of full tuition (at public rates), required fees, plus five hundred dollars for books each year.

(2) The value of each college bound scholarship shall be determined by the office annually based on the amount of tuition and fees at public colleges and universities (as used for Washington college grant purposes) plus five hundred dollars, less the amount of Washington college grant and any other state aid the student is awarded.

College bound scholarship awards will be prorated for part-time attendance as outlined in WAC 250-21-041(4).

Sector college bound scholarship award amounts (such as public research, regional and two-year, and private career and private four-year) shall follow base award amounts determined for the Washington college grant program.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 28B.118.060. WSR 20-12-051, § 250-84-070, filed 5/29/20, effective 6/29/20. Statutory Authority: RCW 28B.76.670. WSR 10-17-080, § 250-84-070, filed 8/16/10, effective 9/16/10.]

WAC 250-84-080 Requests for review and student complaints. Requests for review of agency decisions regarding application eligibility for initial sign-up and pledge requirements under WAC 250-84-030 should be directed to the office in writing within thirty days after notification of the agency decision. Student complaints regarding scholarship eligibility and awards under WAC 250-84-060 and 250-84-070 shall follow the process outlined under WAC 250-21-091 for Washington college grant purposes.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 28B.118.060. WSR 20-12-051, § 250-84-080, filed 5/29/20, effective 6/29/20. Statutory Authority: RCW 28B.76.670. WSR 10-17-080, § 250-84-080, filed 8/16/10, effective 9/16/10.]

WAC 250-84-090 Grant disbursement to institutions. (1) Cash requests and reimbursements will follow procedures similar to Washington college grant.

(2) A student-by-student fund reconciliation must be completed by the institution at the time payments are reported using the office's established process and no later than the end of each term.

(a) Record level reports must be filed with the office as requested.

(b) A final student-by-student reconciliation must be filed with the office at the end of each academic year.

(3) Recalculations as a result of awards in excess of tuition charges shall follow the tolerance outlined in Washington college grant rules or guidance.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 28B.118.060. WSR 20-12-051, § 250-84-090, filed 5/29/20, effective 6/29/20. Statutory Authority: RCW 28B.76.670. WSR 10-17-080, § 250-84-090, filed 8/16/10, effective 9/16/10.]

WAC 250-84-100 Program administration and audits. (1) The staff of the office under the direction of the executive director will manage the administrative functions relative to college bound scholarship.

(2) The office will review institutional administrative compliance as outlined in WAC 250-21-061.

Any student who has obtained a college bound scholarship through means of willfully false statement or failure to reveal any material fact affecting eligibility will be subject to applicable civil or criminal penalties and repayment similar to processes and procedures outlined in WAC 250-21-051.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 28B.118.060. WSR 20-12-051, § 250-84-100, filed 5/29/20, effective 6/29/20. Statutory Authority: RCW 28B.76.670. WSR 10-17-080, § 250-84-100, filed 8/16/10, effective 9/16/10.]