

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Consent Item
February 25, 2015

SUBJECT: Approval of New Rule 6A-20.0281, Florida Incentive Scholarship Program

PROPOSED BOARD ACTION

For Approval

AUTHORITY FOR STATE BOARD ACTION

Section 1009.893, Florida Statutes

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The proposed rule provides a working title, provides program definitions, outlines requirements for student initial and renewal eligibility, provides clarification for an award amount, provides clarification for eligible postsecondary institutions and institutional duties and clarifies the time frame for students to receive funding.

Supporting Documentation Included: Proposed Rule 6A-20.0281, Florida Incentive Scholarship Program

Facilitator: Linda Champion, Deputy Commissioner, Finance and Operations

6A-20.0281 Florida Incentive Scholarship Program

(1) The Florida National Merit Scholar Incentive Program shall be referred to as the Florida Incentive Scholarship Program.

(2) A Scholar is defined as a National Merit[®] Finalist who receives a National Merit[®] \$2500 Scholarship, a Corporate-sponsored Merit Scholarship[®], a College-sponsored Merit Scholarship[®] or an Institutional award provided to 2014 National Merit[®] Finalists who did not receive one of the other three scholarships associated with the National Merit[®] Scholarship program; or, a National Achievement[®] Finalist who receives a National Achievement \$2500 Scholarship[®] or a Corporate-sponsored Achievement Scholarship[®].

(3) General eligibility requirements. To receive a Florida Incentive Scholarship Program award, a student shall meet requirements set in s. 1009.893, Florida Statutes (F.S.), and:

(a) Earn a standard diploma from a Florida high school or its equivalent pursuant to s. 1003.4281, s. 1003.4282, or s. 1003.435, F.S., or complete a home education program according to s. 1002.41, F.S. The student who earns a high school diploma from a non-Florida high school may be eligible if the student is living with a parent who is on military or public service assignment outside of the State of Florida, pursuant to s. 1009.893(4)(b)2., F.S.;

(b) Not have previously received a recognized baccalaureate degree;

(c) Be initially enrolled in the 2014-15 academic year or later at an eligible Florida postsecondary institution in a baccalaureate degree program for the fall term immediately following high school graduation;

(d) Be enrolled at an eligible Florida postsecondary institution for a minimum of twelve (12) credit hours per term or the equivalent in quarter hours; and

(e) Meet the qualifications of a Scholar as defined in subsection (2) of this rule.

(4) Eligible institutions are public state universities, Florida colleges and independent institutions that offer baccalaureate degree programs and are regionally accredited. Regional accreditors are identified by the United States Department of Education.

(5) Award amounts. An eligible student who attends a Florida public postsecondary institution will receive an award equal to the on-campus institutional cost of attendance as reported by the Board of Governors of the State University System, less the sum of the student's Bright Futures Scholarship and the National Merit[®] Scholarship or National Achievement[®] Scholarship. An eligible student who attends a Florida independent postsecondary institution will receive an award equal to the highest on-campus institutional cost of attendance as reported by the

Board of Governors of the State University System, less the sum of the student's Bright Futures Scholarship and the National Merit® Scholarship or National Achievement® Scholarship.

(6) Renewal requirements. Eligibility for renewal is determined at the end of the second semester, third quarter or the equivalent of each academic year. To receive a Florida Incentive Scholarship Program renewal award, a student shall meet both the grade point average and credit hour requirements set in s. 1009.893(6), F.S. The student is no longer eligible to continue to receive the scholarship if these requirements are not met.

(a) The cumulative grade point average shall be calculated by the institution where the student is enrolled as degree-seeking. This cumulative grade point average is the student's institutional cumulative grade point average. The cumulative grade point average shall be computed to two (2) decimals and shall not be rounded.

(b) The student must earn all credits for the hours in which he or she is enrolled each term as of the institution's regular drop/add period. If a student fails to earn the required hours during any term within the academic year, the student will not meet the hour requirement to renew the scholarship.

(c) Eligibility criteria for a reinstated award shall be determined if the student did not receive scholarship funding for the last academic year during which he or she was eligible after receiving initial funding. The student must submit Form FFAA-3, Florida Financial Aid Reinstatement/Restoration Application, as incorporated by reference in Rule 6A-20.027, F.A.C., by May 30 of the year the student is seeking funding.

(7) Appeals. For the purpose of eligibility, in accordance with s. 1009.40(1)(b)4., F.S., a student who does not earn the required renewal grade point average or the hours for renewed status may still be renewed if granted an exception from the academic requirements. A student must submit an institution appeal at the institution where the student did not meet the renewal requirements for renewed status and provide documentation as required by the institution within thirty (30) days of the ineligibility notice or institutional deadline, whichever is later.

(8) Institutional responsibilities.

(a) Participating postsecondary institutions shall comply with Rules 6A-20.002 and 6A-20.0021, F.A.C.; and

(b) Verify, prior to disbursement each term, each recipient's graduation from a Florida high school, or the equivalent, Florida residency, degree-seeking status, National Merit® or National Achievement® status, and receipt of a qualifying award as defined in subsection (2) of this rule.

Rulemaking Authority 1001.02(1), 1009.893(12), FS. Law Implemented 1009.40, 1009.893, FS. History-New