

(b) The SEA shall establish the selection criteria and procedures to ensure that it selects scholars—

(1) Who are eligible students under the criteria provided in § 654.40;

(2) Who have demonstrated outstanding academic achievement and show promise of continued achievement;

(3) In a manner that ensures an equitable geographic distribution of awards within the State; and

(4) Without regard to—

(i) Whether the secondary school each scholar attends is within or outside the scholar's State of legal residence;

(ii) Whether the institution of higher education each scholar plans to attend is public or private or is within or outside the scholar's State of legal residence;

(iii) Race, color, national origin, sex, religion, disability, or economic background; and

(iv) The scholar's educational expenses or financial need.

(Approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 1840-0612)

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1070d-33, 1070d-35 to 1070d-37)

Subpart F—How Does a Scholar Receive Scholarship Payments?

§ 654.50 How does an SEA disburse scholarship funds?

(a) Except as provided in paragraph (b) of this section, the SEA shall disburse \$1,500 for each year of study for a maximum of four years of study to each scholar who—

(1) Is selected in accordance with the criteria established under § 654.41; and

(2) Meets the requirements for continuing eligibility under § 654.51.

(b)(1) The SEA shall ensure that the total amount of financial aid awarded to a scholar for a year of study does not exceed the total cost of attendance.

(2) The SEA shall ensure that loans are reduced prior to reducing a scholarship awarded under this program.

(c) The SEA shall ensure that the selection process is completed, and the awards made, prior to the end of each secondary school academic year.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1070d-38)

§ 654.51 What are the continuing eligibility criteria?

(a) A scholar continues to be eligible for scholarship funds as long as the scholar continues to—

(1) Meet the eligibility requirements in § 654.40(b), (e), and (f);

(2) Be enrolled as a full-time student at an institution of higher education except as provided in paragraph (b) of this section; and

(3) Maintain satisfactory progress as determined by the institution of higher education the scholar is attending, in accordance with the criteria established in 34 CFR 668.14(e) of the Student Assistance General Provisions regulations.

(b) In order to be eligible for scholarship funds, a scholar must be enrolled full time for the first year of study. If after the first year of study, the SEA determines that unusual circumstances justify waiver of the full-time attendance requirement, the scholar may enroll part time and continue to receive a scholarship payment. The SEA shall prorate the payment according to the scholar's enrollment status for the academic period during which he or she continues to be enrolled on a part-time basis but remains otherwise eligible for the award. For example, if a scholar for whom the full-time enrollment requirement is waived by the SEA is enrolled as a half-time student for one semester, he or she is eligible to receive one-quarter of his or her scholarship during that semester.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1070d-33, 1070d-36)

§ 654.52 What are the consequences of a scholar's failure to meet the eligibility criteria?

(a)(1) An SEA may permit a scholar to postpone or interrupt his or her enrollment at an institution of higher education without forfeiting his or her scholarship for up to 12 months, beginning on the date the scholar otherwise would have enrolled in the institution after the SEA awarded his or her scholarship or the date the scholar interrupts enrollment.

(2) A scholar who postpones or interrupts his or her enrollment at an institution of higher education in accordance with standards established by the