

THE STATE SCHOOL AID ACT OF 1979 (EXCERPT)
Act 94 of 1979

388.1856 Tuition incentive program.

Sec. 256. (1) The funds appropriated in section 236 for the tuition incentive program shall be distributed as provided in this section and pursuant to the administrative procedures for the tuition incentive program of the department of treasury.

(2) As used in this section:

(a) "Phase I" means the first part of the tuition incentive assistance program defined as the academic period of 80 semester or 120 term credits, or less, leading to an associate degree or certificate.

(b) "Phase II" means the second part of the tuition incentive assistance program which provides assistance in the third and fourth year of 4-year degree programs.

(c) "Department" means the department of treasury.

(d) "High school equivalency certificate" means that term as defined in section 4.

(3) An individual shall meet the following basic criteria and financial thresholds to be eligible for tuition incentive program benefits:

(a) To be eligible for phase I, an individual shall meet all of the following criteria:

(i) Apply for certification to the department any time after he or she begins the sixth grade but before August 31 of the school year in which he or she graduates from high school or before achieving a high school equivalency certificate.

(ii) Be less than 20 years of age at the time he or she graduates from high school with a diploma or certificate of completion or achieves a high school equivalency certificate.

(iii) Be a United States citizen and a resident of Michigan according to institutional criteria.

(iv) Be at least a half-time student, earning less than 80 semester or 120 term credits at a participating educational institution within 4 years of high school graduation or achievement of a high school equivalency certificate.

(v) Request information on filing a FAFSA.

(vi) Meet the satisfactory academic progress policy of the educational institution he or she attends.

(b) To be eligible for phase II, an individual shall meet either of the following criteria in addition to the criteria in subdivision (a):

(i) Complete at least 56 transferable semester or 84 transferable term credits.

(ii) Obtain an associate degree or certificate at a participating institution.

(c) To be eligible for phase I or phase II, an individual must not be incarcerated and must be financially eligible as determined by the department. An individual is financially eligible for the tuition incentive program if he or she was eligible for Medicaid from the state of Michigan for 24 months within the 36 consecutive months before application. The department shall accept certification of Medicaid eligibility only from the department of health and human services for the purposes of verifying if a person is Medicaid eligible for 24 months within the 36 consecutive months before application. Certification of eligibility may begin in the sixth grade. As used in this subdivision, "incarcerated" does not include detention of a juvenile in a state-operated or privately operated juvenile detention facility.

(4) Beginning in fiscal year 2017-2018, the department shall not award more than \$8,500,000.00 annually in tuition incentive program funds to eligible students enrolled in the same college or university in this state.

(5) For phase I, the department shall provide payment on behalf of a person eligible under subsection (3). The department shall reject billings that are excessive or outside the guidelines for the type of educational institution.

(6) For phase I, all of the following apply:

(a) Payments for associate degree or certificate programs shall not be made for more than 80 semester or 120 term credits for any individual student at any participating institution.

(b) For persons enrolled at a Michigan community college, the department shall pay the current in-district tuition and mandatory fees. For persons residing in an area that is not included in any community college district, the out-of-district tuition rate may be authorized.

(c) For persons enrolled at a Michigan public university, the department shall pay lower division resident tuition and mandatory fees for the current year.

(d) For persons enrolled at a Michigan independent, nonprofit degree-granting college or university, or a Michigan federal tribally controlled community college, or Focus: HOPE, the department shall pay mandatory fees for the current year and a per-credit payment that does not exceed the average community college in-district per-credit tuition rate as reported on August 1, for the immediately preceding academic year.

(7) A person participating in phase II may be eligible for additional funds not to exceed \$500.00 per

semester or \$400.00 per term up to a maximum of \$2,000.00 subject to the following conditions:

(a) Credits are earned in a 4-year program at a Michigan degree-granting 4-year college or university.

(b) The tuition reimbursement is for coursework completed within 30 months of completion of the phase I requirements.

(8) The department shall work closely with participating institutions to develop an application and eligibility determination process that will provide the highest level of participation and ensure that all requirements of the program are met.

(9) Applications for the tuition incentive program may be approved at any time after the student begins the sixth grade. If a determination of financial eligibility is made, that determination is valid as long as the student meets all other program requirements and conditions.

(10) Each institution shall ensure that all known available restricted grants for tuition and fees are used prior to billing the tuition incentive program for any portion of a student's tuition and fees.

(11) The department shall ensure that the tuition incentive program is well publicized and that eligible Medicaid clients are provided information on the program. The department shall provide the necessary funding and staff to fully operate the program.

History: Add. 2011, Act 62, Eff. Oct. 1, 2011;—Am. 2012, Act 201, Eff. Oct. 1, 2012;—Am. 2014, Act 196, Eff. Oct. 1, 2014;—Am. 2015, Act 85, Eff. Oct. 1, 2015;—Am. 2016, Act 56, Eff. June 27, 2016;—Am. 2016, Act 249, Eff. Oct. 1, 2016.