R621, Terrel H. Bell Education Scholarship Program[1]

R621-1 The following policy has been codified as Utah Administrative Code R765-621.

R621-2 References
    2.1 Utah Code 53B-8-116, Terrel H. Bell Education Scholarship Program
    2.2 Utah Code Title 53E, Chapter 6, Part 3, Licensing Requirements
    2.3 Board Policy R623, Free Application for Federal Student Aid

R765.   Higher Education (Utah Board of), Administration.
R765-621.   Terrel H. Bell Education Scholarship Program.
R765-621-1.   Purpose.
To provide procedures for administration of the Terrel H. Bell Teaching Education Scholarship Program, ensuring it recruit first-generation students into teaching careers, encourages outstanding students to teach in high needs areas in Utah's public schools, and to recognize teaching as a critically important career choice for the state of Utah.

R765-621-2.   Authority.
This rule is authorized by Section 53B-8-116(6).

R765-621-3.   Definitions.
    (1) "Approved Program" means:
    (a) A teacher preparation program that meets the education profession licensure standards described in Section 53E-6-302, and provides enhanced clinical experiences, or prepares an individual to become a speech-language pathologist or another licensed professional providing services in a public school to students with disabilities:
    (b) Courses taken at Salt Lake Community College or Snow College that lead students to make reasonable progress to meet institutional criteria for admission into a program in accordance with Subsection R765-621-3(1)(a).
    (2) "Board means Utah Board of Higher Education.
    (3) "Average Scholarship Amount" means average USHE undergraduate resident tuition and general student fees for the corresponding academic year.
    (3̶4) "Eligible Institution" means a public or private institution of higher education in Utah that offers an approved program.
    (4̶5) "FAFSA" means the Free Application for Federal Student Aid
    (5̶6) "High Needs Area" means a subject area or field in public education that has a high need for teachers or other employees, determined annually by the Board in consultation with State Board of Education.
    (6̶7) "First-Generation Student" means a student whose parents never completed college or beyond.
    (7̶8) "Full-time Enrollment" means 12 semester hours or other number of hours a̶s̶ determined by the recipient's institution.
    (8̶9) "Part-time Enrollment'' means a minimum of 6 credits in a semester.

    (10) "Scholarship staff" means staff in the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education assigned to administer state scholarships on behalf of the Board.

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[1]*Adopted May 17, 2019; amended May 20, 2022, and XXX.*

R765-621-4. General Award Conditions.

(1) Scholarship Award.

(a) Under this program, an eligible institution may award a scholarship to an individual for an amount up to the cost of resident tuition, fees, and books for the number of credit hours in which the individual is enrolled each semester.

(b) An eligible private institution may not award a scholarship for an amount that exceeds the average scholarship amount granted by a public institution of higher education.

(c) A recipient may receive a scholarship for up to four consecutive years, or equivalent when considering institution-approved leaves of absence.

(d) Eligible institutions may award scholarships to full-time or part- time enrolled students.

(2) Application and Award Procedures.

(a) An eligible institution shall develop processes for promoting and distributing awards consistent with this rule, and will set application deadlines that accommodate both full-time and part-time students.

(b) Applications must require a student's declaration to earn a degree in an approved program.

(3) Prioritizing Awards.

(a) Institutions shall prioritize scholarship awards as follows:

(i) First, to first-generation students who intend to work in any area in a Utah public school.

(ii) Second, to students who are not first-generation students but intend to work in high needs area in a Utah public school.

(iii) Third, to students who meet the requirements in Section R765-621-5.

R765-621-5. Initial and Continuing Eligibility.

(1) To be eligible for a scholarship award under this rule, an applicant must do the following:

(a) Declare their intent to earn a degree in an approved program and to teach in a Utah public school after graduation;

(b) Complete the FAFSA in accordance with Board Policy R623, Free Application for Federal Student Aid;

(2) Award recipients must maintain satisfactory academic progress in accordance with their institution's policies.

(3) A recipient must make reasonable progress to meet institutional criteria for admission to an approved program. Once admitted to an approved program a recipient must maintain reasonable progress towards completion of an approved program.

(4) A recipient who transfers to another eligible institution will retain an award if they continue to meet criteria established for recipients at the receiving institution.

(5) After no more than four semesters of full-time, or eight semesters of part-time postsecondary course work, a recipient must apply and be accepted into an approved program at an eligible institution.

(6) A recipient who has not been accepted into an approved program at an eligible institution may be granted a temporary deferment of an award for up to two years while seeking acceptance into an approved program.

(7) After providing a recipient notice and an opportunity to respond, an institution may rescind a recipient's scholarship if the dean of education or the director of financial aid determines the recipient:

(a) is failing to make reasonable progress toward completion of program requirements, or

(b) has demonstrated to a reasonable certainty that he or she does not intend to teach at a public school in Utah after graduation.

(8) Under Section 63G-12-402, verification of lawful presence in the United States is not required to be eligible for this scholarship.

(9) Appeals. Upon request by the student, the institution shall provide an opportunity for the student to appeal a dean or director's determination to rescind the scholarship to a committee of at least three impartial persons.

(10) Leaves of Absence. A recipient may seek leave of absence from attending an institution in accordance with applicable deferral policies at a corresponding eligible institution.

R765-621-6. Transfer of Award Funds.

A recipient may transfer to another eligible institution and retain the scholarship if the recipient meets all requirements of the receiving institution. The recipient shall be responsible for communicating with the recipient's college or school of education and the financial aid office at the receiving institution well in advance. A recipient who does not meet application deadlines or demonstrate satisfactory academic progress may have their scholarship rescinded. The receiving institution shall be responsible to make any adjustments in a recipient's award.

R765-621-7.   Distribution of Award Funds to Institutions.

      The Board will annually distribute available funds to eligible institutions proportionally equal to the total number of teachers who graduated from the eligible institution and were hired by a Utah public school district for the most recent three cohort years available, minus funds for Snow College and Salt Lake Community College allocated at the discretion of the Board and amounts allocated to institutions with new programs without the required three-year history of graduates to fit in the allocation formula, who will receive a minimum allocation amount to be set by scholarship staff.

R765-621-8.   Reporting.

      As specified by the Office of the Commissioner, each institution shall provide, as part of an annual institutional financial aid file submission by February 28 of each year, data pertaining to applications, awards, program enrollments, utilization, funding, and/or other TH Bell Scholarship information for the most recently completed fiscal year. The Board may, at any time, request additional documentation or data related to the T.H. Bell Scholarship and may review or formally audit an institution's compliance with this rule.