

DISCUSSION/ACTION
February 18, 2005

HIGHER EDUCATIONAL AIDS BOARD

BOARD REPORT #05-14

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE SCHOLARSHIP
SMALL SCHOOLS

**HIGHER EDUCATIONAL AIDS BOARD
BOARD REPORT #05-14
Academic Excellence Scholarship
Selection of Scholars for Schools with Enrollment of Under 80 Students**

Question for the Board to Consider: Should ACT scores, rather than GPAs, be used to determine the AES recipients for schools with enrollment under 80 students?

Issues: Ten (10) students are selected, from all public and private schools in the state with enrollment under 80, to receive the Academic Excellence Scholarship. Grade requirements and course requirements may differ from school to school. Using the ACT score may even the criteria for comparing students from one school to the next. ACT scores are currently used as a tie-breaking criteria.

**Statutes, Rules and Policies Regarding the
Academic Excellence Scholarship
Selection of Scholars for Schools with Enrollment of Under 80 Students**

STATUTES

39.41 Academic Excellence Higher Education Scholarships.

39.41(1)(bm) "Senior" means a pupil enrolled in the 12th grade in a public or private high school, the Wisconsin School for the Deaf or the school operated by the Wisconsin Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

39.41(1m)

39.41(1m)(b) By February 15 of each school year, the school board of each school district operating one or more high schools and the governing body of each private high school may, for each high school with an enrollment of less than 80 pupils, nominate the senior with the highest grade point average in all subjects who may be designated as a scholar by the executive secretary under par. (c) 3.

39.41(1m)(c) The executive secretary shall:

39.41(1m)(c)1. For the school operated by the Wisconsin Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired, designate the senior with the highest grade point average in all subjects as a scholar.

39.41(1m)(c)2. For the Wisconsin School for the Deaf, designate the senior with the highest grade point average in all subjects as a scholar.

39.41(1m)(c)3. Designate not more than 10 seniors nominated under par. (b) as scholars.

39.41(1m)(c)5. For each public or private high school with an enrollment of less than 80 pupils, notify the school board of the school district operating the public high school or the governing body of the private high school that the school board or governing body may nominate a senior under par. (b) who may be designated as a scholar by the executive secretary.

39.41(1m)(cm) The executive secretary may grant waivers under par. (m).

39.41(1m)(dm) If the high school weights different courses differently to determine a pupil's grade point average, the faculty of the high school shall select for each scholar designated under par. (d) a senior with the same grade point average as an alternate for the scholar, or, if there is not another pupil with the same grade point average, a senior with the next highest grade point average as an alternate for the scholar.

39.41(1m)(e) Except as provided under par. (em), if 2 or more seniors from the same high school of less than 80 pupils have the same grade point average and, except for the limitation of one nominated senior, are otherwise eligible for nomination under par. (b), the faculty of the high school shall select the senior who may be nominated by the school board of the school district operating the public high school or the governing body of the private high school for designation under par. (b) as a scholar by the executive secretary. If that senior is designated as a scholar by the executive secretary and does not qualify for a higher education scholarship under sub. (2) (a) or (3) (a), faculty of the high school shall select one or more of the remaining seniors with the same grade point average for certification as a scholar and the school board of the school district operating the high school or the governing body of the private high school shall certify to the board one or more of these seniors as eligible for a higher education scholarship as a scholar under sub. (2) (a) or (3) (a) until the scholarship may be awarded by the board.

39.41(1m)(em) If the high school weights different courses differently to determine a pupil's grade point average, and the senior designated as a scholar by the executive secretary under par. (e) does not qualify for a higher education scholarship under sub. (2) (a) or (3) (a), the faculty of the high school shall select one senior with the same grade point average for certification as a scholar, or, if there is no senior with the same grade point average, one senior with the next highest grade point average for certification as a scholar, and the school board of the school district operating the high school or the governing body of the private high school shall certify to the board the selected senior as eligible for a higher education scholarship under sub. (2) (a) or (3) (a) until the scholarship may be awarded by the board.

39.41(1m)(m) Notwithstanding pars. (a), (b) and (d), if a high school ranks its seniors on the basis of grades in academic subjects, the school board of the school

district operating the high school or the governing body of the private high school or, for purposes of par. (d), the faculty of the high school may request a waiver from the executive secretary in order to fulfill its requirements under par. (a), (b) or (d) on the basis of grade point averages in academic subjects.

39.41(8) The executive secretary shall promulgate rules establishing criteria for the designation of scholars under sub. (1m) (c) 3.

RULES

CHAPTER HEA 9 WISCONSIN ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE SCHOLARSHIP

Note: Chapter HEA 9 as it existed on February 28, 1998 was repealed and a new chapter HEA 9 was created effective March 1, 1998.

HEA 9.01 Purpose. The purpose of this chapter is to define the various aspects of the Wisconsin Academic Excellence Scholarship Program authorized by [s. 39.41, Stats.](#), as to the naming of the scholar and the responsibilities of the high school, and continuing student eligibility and the responsibilities of the educational institution.

HEA 9.02 Definitions. In this chapter:

1. "GPA" means the cumulative grade point average, as it is normally determined by each high school.
2. "High school" means a Wisconsin school with grades 9-12 which is recognized by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.
3. "Institution" means a public or private non-profit institution of higher education in Wisconsin which is accredited by a national or state accrediting agency, and which has signed a participation agreement with the Higher Educational Aids Board in accordance with [s. 39.41 \(5\) \(a\), Stats.](#)
4. "Scholar" means a student determined to be eligible to receive a monetary award under the Academic Excellence Scholarship Program.
5. "Scholarship" means the Wisconsin Academic Excellence Scholarship authorized by [s. 39.41, Stats.](#)

HEA 9.03 Scholar Qualifications. A scholar who is otherwise eligible to receive a monetary award under the scholarship program shall receive an award only if all of the following apply:

1. The scholar is a resident of the United States who is either a citizen or an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence by the Federal Immigration and Naturalization Service.
2. The scholar is a Wisconsin resident according to the residency standards of [s. 36.27, Stats.](#)

HEA 9.04 Naming the Scholar.

1. The number of scholarships available to each high school shall be based on the enrollment in that school as of the 3rd Friday in September in the academic year in which the scholar is selected. No adjustment shall be made to the number of scholarships available even if the enrollment increases or decreases during the academic year.
2. Students under ch. 220, Stats., and students participating in the full-time open enrollment program shall compete for the scholarship at the high school they actually attend.
3. The scholar shall be selected based on the scholar's GPA as it is normally determined by each high school and as shown on the official transcript as of the last day of the last semester that ended just prior to the February 15 deadline.
4. For purposes of selecting the scholars and alternate scholars, the scholar's and alternate's GPA shall include the same number of places past the decimal that the high school normally uses on the official high school transcript.
5. No scholarships shall be re-allocated after the February 15 deadline. The school's nominees and alternates are final.
6. High schools which operate on a tri-mester system shall have 30 days beyond the last day of the 2nd tri-mester to submit the name of the scholar.

HEA 9.05 High School Responsibilities.

1. Each school board of the school district, or the governing body of a private high school, shall determine, and have in writing, a policy establishing how long a student must have attended that high school to compete for the scholarship, how the student acquires senior status, and when the student is eligible to compete for the scholarship.
2. Each school board of the school district, or the governing body of a private high school, shall determine, and have in writing, a policy defining the grading system used in that high school, including whether it is weighted or unweighted, which subjects are included in the GPA on the official high school transcript, how pass-fail grades are incorporated into the GPA, how grades from study abroad or from alternative or home schools are incorporated into the GPA, and how to incorporate grades earned in another country by students with permanent resident status.
3. The faculty of each high school shall determine, and have in writing, a policy that describes the tie breaking procedures and criteria used to determine the scholars and alternates and to put them in rank order.
4. High schools with fewer than 80 students shall submit to the Higher Educational Aids Board the name of the senior with the highest GPA in all subjects by February 15 of each school year. The GPA shall be based on a 4.000 grade point scale with the grade of "A" equaling 4.000. Grades shall be unweighted for this GPA and shall be expressed on a 4.000 scale. The high schools shall also submit:
 - a. A copy of the student's high school transcript.
 - b. The student's highest score and percentile ranking earned on the American College Test, Scholastic Aptitude Test, or other test required by the Wisconsin institution in which the student intends to enroll.
 - c. A letter from the student indicating the reasons that the student feels qualified for the scholarship and an intent to attend, by September 30 of the year in which the

student graduates from high school, a participating University of Wisconsin institution, a participating private institution of higher education in Wisconsin, or a participating institution in the Wisconsin Technical College System.

- d. The secretary shall designate the 10 students with the highest GPAs in high schools with fewer than 80 students, as the recipients of the scholarship. In the event of a tie, the secretary shall rank students based on the scores from the American College Test, the Scholastic Aptitude Test, or other comparable tests. If a tie remains, the secretary shall rank students based on the content and quality of the students' letters.

HEAB POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

CHAPTER 5

State of Wisconsin Financial Aid Programs Academic Excellence Scholarship (AES)

This program provides scholarships to selected 12th grade students who have the highest grade point average in each public and private school in the state. The number of scholarships for which each high school is eligible is based on the total student enrollment (grades 9-12). The scholarships are awarded based on the following formula:

| | |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| Over 2,500 students | six scholarships |
| 2,000-2,499 students | five scholarships |
| 1,500-1,999 students | four scholarships |
| 1,000-1,499 students | three scholarships |
| 500-999 students | two scholarships |
| 80-499 students | one scholarship |

Less than 80 students no more than 10 scholarships, in aggregate.

Students receive a maximum of \$2,250 per year to be applied towards tuition. Half of the scholarship is funded by the state and half by the school. Tuition and fees in excess of \$2,250 is the responsibility of the student. Students may attend any UW, private or Technical school in Wisconsin with an AES.

Funds available for this program are based on a nine-month academic period.

Eligibility

In order to receive this scholarship, the student must:

1. be enrolled in a participating UW, Wisconsin Technical College or private, non-profit post-secondary institution in the State by September 30th of the academic year following the year in which the student graduated from high school;

2. be enrolled on a full-time basis (as determined by the school) in a degree or certificate program;
3. make satisfactory academic progress (per federal student financial aid criteria);
4. meet the Wisconsin residency requirements (see [Residency](#) section of this manual); and
5. maintain at least a 3.000 cumulative grade point average.
6. No student is eligible for more than four years (or eight semesters) at a UW or private, non-profit post-secondary institution. No student is eligible for more than three years (or six semesters) at a Wisconsin Technical College.

Application Process

2. Schools With Total Enrollments Less than 80 Students:
 - a. The 10 students from public or private high schools with the highest grade point averages are selected, per HEAB administrative rules.
 - b. If there is a tie, students are chosen based on their ACT or SAT scores and then on the quality and content of letters submitted by the students, listing the reasons they feel qualified to receive the scholarship.