

Massachusetts Assistance for Student Success Program

VII. John & Abigail Adams Scholarship

**BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION
JOHN AND ABIGAIL ADAMS SCHOLARSHIP**

DEFINITIONS:

ELIGIBLE INSTITUTION:

An institution within the system of public institutions of higher education as identified in Section 5 of Chapter 1 5A of the Massachusetts General Laws, except those institutions retaining Massachusetts resident tuition payments.

ELIGIBLE PROGRAM:

Any state-supported undergraduate degree program offered by an eligible institution.

ELIGIBLE STUDENT:

An undergraduate student who has been **admitted** to an eligible institution and meets the following requirements:

- a) has graduated from or under the auspices of a Massachusetts public high school, as of June 2005 or thereafter, and by the end of the junior year, was in the highest 25 percent in their district on the 10th grade Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) English Language Arts and Mathematics test, and scored in the Advanced Category on one test and Proficient or Advanced on the other test.
(note: an earned GED does not fulfill the high school graduation requirement)
- b) is a permanent legal resident of Massachusetts for at least one year prior to the start of the academic year and who is a United States citizen or a non-citizen eligible under Federal Title IV
- c) is enrolled full-time in the first traditional academic semester (fall) following high school graduation in a Massachusetts public college or university
- d) continues to enroll as a full-time student in consecutive traditional academic semesters in an eligible Massachusetts public college or university
- e) maintains a cumulative 3.0 GPA on all academic coursework at the institution awarding the degree; or if transferring, has maintained a cumulative 3.0 GPA at the transfer institution;
- f) the institution is responsible for verifying the cumulative GPA at the end of the spring semester of each academic year; if the student drops below the required 3.0 GPA, the scholarship is forfeited for the duration of his/her college enrollment
- g) annually files the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
- h) maintains Satisfactory Academic Progress in accordance with institutional standards
- i) is in compliance with applicable law regarding Selective Service Registration
- j) is not in default with applicable law regarding any Federal or State student education loans for attendance at any institution or owes a refund for any previous financial aid received

The institution may not grant an exception to the above requirements. In rare and extenuating circumstances, the Commissioner may permit an exception to the above criteria and authorize (in writing) the institution to award the Adams Scholarship. In such cases, supporting documentation must be provided by the student and maintained by the institution and the Office of Student Financial Assistance.

AWARD VALUE:

The award under this program shall be equal to the value of required tuition (not including fees) for all state-supported undergraduate courses

The scholarship may be awarded to eligible students for a maximum of four years or eight semesters of continuous enrollment (not including summer terms).

The program will be awarded at no cost to the institution.

AWARD PROCEDURE

Beginning with the Class of 2005, the State Department of Education will annually certify the eligibility of student recipients for the John and Abigail Adams Scholarship. Consistent with other programs, the State Department of Education will provide students with a letter of eligibility and provide the Board of Higher Education and Office of Student Financial Assistance with a list of eligible students designated as Adams Scholarship recipients.

Each John and Abigail Adams Scholarship recipient shall be responsible for submitting documentation of eligibility to the institution where he/she will enroll.

The Office of Student Financial Assistance shall annually provide institutions with a roster of eligible students that have met the requirements of completing the FAFSA. Institutions may use this roster to verify student eligibility whenever other documentation is not available.

The institution shall award scholarships equal to the value of required tuition. The Adams Scholarship is a non-need based program. Financial need is not a requirement for eligibility. However, recipients must meet all requirements as defined for eligible students including filing the FAFSA.

ANNUAL REVIEW

One year after the date of implementation, the Board of Higher Education shall evaluate the effectiveness of this program to determine adjustments to the selection and eligibility criteria, as necessary and as warranted by state-wide performance of students on the MCAS, and by any changes to the exam contents (e.g., the addition of Science and History to the competency determination). Thereafter, a comprehensive evaluation will be conducted annually to assess the program's effectiveness, the results of which will be reported to the Governor and members of the Massachusetts Legislature.

PARTICIPATION AGREEMENTS

All institutions must file a State Financial Aid Participation Agreement to be maintained on file in the State Office of Student Financial Assistance.

AUDIT REQUIREMENTS

- a) It shall be the responsibility of each college and university to maintain documentation of a recipient student's eligibility for the John and Abigail Adams Scholarship

- b) The Commissioner shall require each campus to furnish annually to the Board of Higher Education a report detailing specific information regarding recipients of the John and Abigail Adams Scholarship Program. The Office of Student Financial Assistance will coordinate specification and procedures for this report
- c) All financial books, records and documents pertaining to this program shall at all times be open to inspection, review and audit by the Commissioner, the State Auditor or their authorized representatives who shall have access to the premises wherever such books, records and documents are located. The institution shall retain such financial books, records and documents for seven years. An institution may retain such records for a period of five years if approval is received from the Records Conservation Board in accordance with General Laws, Chapter 30, Section 42.