

New Mexico Opportunity Scholarships Presentation Q&A

- 1. On the side-by-side, it states for both Lottery and Opportunity scholarships that a student has an 18-month window is it 16 or 18? - It is a 16-month window per the lottery statute.**
- 2. Will we get a copy of this recorded presentation? – Yes, the recording will be provided by NMEAF.**
- 3. If a student loses their Opportunity Scholarship because of the GPA, do they have the two-year window before they can request it back? –Yes, this is correct**
- 4. How soon are students made aware that they are being awarded the New Mexico Opportunity Scholarship? Before or after the semester starts? - That’s going to be answered at the institutional level because everyone packages a little bit differently, and you have different deadlines. Based on the memo that I sent out to the Financial Aid Directors back on July 8th they should be able to award before the fall semester starts, everyone that qualifies so they should be providing that award. Will be awarding 100% of tuition and allowable fees.**
- 5. Regarding New Mexico residency eligibility, will there be an exception made for students in military families transferring to New Mexico during their senior year of high school? – We can make that accommodation yes, that’s allowable within the residency code.**
- 6. Will we need a transfer transcript like what we do with Lottery for transfer students? – Yes**
- 7. What if a student comes to complete a bachelor’s degree but already has 140 credit hours? - Will they be awarded funds for 20 hours only or would that extend until they complete their BS degree? – Only up to 160 hours so they could get the 20 hours but anything above that would not be covered by the Opportunity Scholarship.**
- 8. What do we do about highly fluctuating GPAs? – The cumulative 2.5 GPA is still prescribed in statute.**
- 9. Are students receiving VA benefits or employee tuition waivers eligible for the New Mexico Opportunity Scholarship? – Yes, they are, it can be placed towards cost of attendance where allowable.VA benefits are considered compensation which can be applied after Opportunity Scholarship to help cover cost of attendance where allowed. If an employee is paying part of school, then the Opportunity Scholarship may cover the balance, depending on the case basis.**
- 10. Do you recommend that we exclude the differential tuition till further notice from the HED Office? – Yes**
- 11. Could a student maintain above a 2.5 grade point average be allowed to take any time off from school and still be eligible for the scholarship? – Absolutely, that is where the exceptional mitigating circumstances clause kicks in to petition.**
- 12. Is a lottery student who received lottery in the Spring22 and prior semesters is only taking 12 credit hours this fall, do they lose eligibility for both or can they receive the Opportunity Scholarship? – They should continue to maintain their eligibility for lottery when working with probationary semester.**

- 13. If the student attends an out of state college or university and decides to come back to New Mexico would they be eligible for the Opportunity Scholarship?** – Only if they have established residency in New Mexico.
- 14. How does it work for students who are below the 2.5 cumulative before awarding can we give them the opportunity and keep them as long as they are getting a 2.5 in the semester showing that they are working on bringing up the cumulative? Do these students need an official academic plan?** – Yes, to the academic plan, yes to the award and yes to maintaining a 2.5 GPA.
- 15. Can these funds be applied to any graduate level courses?** – Only if student is taking the graduate level course, a five or six level course, as part of completing their bachelor's degree.
- 16. Did you just state that a student who has completed their bachelor's degree within 140 hours is still eligible for 20 more hours after their bachelor's degree?** – No, the Opportunity Scholarship would cover up to 20 more credit hours to complete the 160 credit hours.
- 17. What if a student moves out of state their senior year of high school and they are not part of a military family, can they come back to New Mexico for college and qualify for the Opportunity and Lottery Scholarships?** – Residency is looked as a matter of intent, to stay within the state of New Mexico. An administrative code called inconsistent acts which moving out of the state would be considered an inconsistent act with intent to maintain residency, which they would no longer be a resident for tuition purposes. If it is not a military situation, they would not qualify.
- 18. Do attempted dual credit hours count towards the total allowed hours and if the student is a dual credit student which GPA is used for college their college GPA or their high school GPA?** – Attempted hours, if on a dual credit would apply. The high school GPA does not count it's the cumulative GPA within college.
- 19. Students who have adjusted credit option, how does this affect their eligibility for the Opportunity Scholarship?** – The grades should still be taken in consideration.
- 20. If the student is on the Lottery Scholarship track does Opportunity Scholarship automatically kick in to cover the fees of each lottery semester?** – Yes, as long as there is available funding.
- 21. If a student obtains an associate degree utilizing other funding such as grants, would they be able to utilize the Opportunity Scholarship towards their bachelor's degree?** – Yes, they can utilize the Opportunity Scholarship towards their bachelor but not towards a second associate degree.
- 22. If a student on the Lottery Scholarship decides to stay at a community college after the three eligible semesters to finish their degree, can we give me the Opportunity Scholarship?** –A recommendation would be to transfer because they have had a qualifying semester and then three lottery semesters. But working with a case-to-case basis, the Opportunity Scholarship can be awarded but with caution that they will be considered a returning adult losing eligibility for Lottery and Opportunity Scholarships for their bachelor's degree.
- 23. EMS providers like EMT and paramedics often take courses for a certificate with no college credit associated with it, there's a shortage of EMS providers across the state of New Mexico. Is there a way to get students in these classes covered by the Opportunity Scholarship? These classes don't run by semester lines and there is no way to get them college credits at the time -** They must be a credit bearing certificate program.

- 24. Is there a difference between returning students and students who take a break in attending? Does it depend if they have gotten prior Opportunity Scholarship funding?** – No differential in funding. Yes, the qualification criteria are really the qualification criteria as prescribed now moving forward.
- 25. If a student has three credits left to graduate and they're in their last semester of lottery eligibility, can they be funded and if so, would it be with Lottery or Opportunity funds?** – They can be funded by lottery funds, there is an allowance for the last semester in the administrative code for lottery.
- 26. If a student already has an associate degree and has remaining hours of 90 credit hours, can they use those remaining hours towards another associate degree, as they are not interested seeking a bachelor's degree.** – No, the statute allows for one associate degree.
- 27. Does the Opportunity Scholarship pay for books that are added to tuition and fees as course fees by the institution?** – If every student is required to pay the book fee uniformly then yes it would qualify.
- 28. A returning student that has holds at UNM but want to attend CNM would the holds need to be paid at UNM first?** – If the student wants their credits to transfer, they will need to pay their hold.
- 29. Students are not required to fill out the FAFSA to qualify for the Lottery or the Opportunity Scholarships?** – No, they are not but we strongly encourage every student who can fill one out to please do so.
- 30. Are developmental or remedial credit hours considered when calculating attempted hours?** – Yes, if they are registered as credits on the transcript.
- 31. Students in associate nursing degree programs are only offered 9 to 11 credit hours in a semester. Will they be eligible for the Opportunity Scholarship, or will they need to add an elective course if available?** - They will be eligible for the Opportunity Scholarship because they are over the 6 credit hours. If they are on the lottery track they could individually petition for an exceptional circumstances clause to reduce that credit requirement.
- 32. For some classes that require summer enrollment, but the credit hours required are more than the 9 credits can they still award those students? For example students in red tech in the summer take 11 credit hours.** – Yes, you can award the student.
- 33. Our medical degrees have some very large lab fees are they covered?** – You are going to have to petition and request a waiver for those.
- 34. Is the activity fee covered?** – Yes, it is allowable as long as it's a condition of enrollment.
- 35. If a student comes to the institution as a non-resident, they are not a New Mexico High School Graduate but they establish residency a year later are they eligible?** – Yes, if they have established residence for tuition purposes through intent.
- 36. How do we prioritize tuition scholarships with the Opportunity Scholarship?** – The tuition specific scholarships should be applied before the Opportunity Scholarship.
- 37. What fees can be waived?** – Course specific fees can be waived but only by a case- by- case basis. A letter by the institution is required with a letterhead that says, "we would like the following fees to be covered by the Opportunity Scholarship".

- 38. Students who are recent graduates and taking the gap year enrolled less than full-time, can they be paid by the Opportunity Scholarship for during that lesson? What if they don't enroll full-time?** – Yes it is. They would have to petition and use mitigating circumstance to stay on the Opportunity Scholarship, with good reasoning.
- 39. Can the Navajo members living in Arizona and Utah be awarded?** – Yes, members of the Navajo nation that reside in Utah and Arizona because they're contiguous with New Mexico making them New Mexico residence for tuition purposes.
- 40. What certificates and/or degrees qualify?** – Some certificates qualify but all the associate and all of the bachelor's programs qualify.
- 41. Regarding certificate programs anything that is credit bearing, that's federally recognized can we fund those?** – They must be part of the list that HED is getting out that are workforce appropriate in demand.
- 42. Students who receive the Opportunity Scholarship but later complete their FAFSA, after the draw down and are state aid eligible. What is the process for the Opportunity Scholarship adjustment?** – Cannot think of state aid that is required to fill out FAFSA. The one that would be available would be the state student incentive grant.
- 43. What is the process of NMOS adjustments?** – Always apply all state aid first.
- 44. When do you anticipate having the list of the certificate eligible programs?** – Maybe by the end of next week.