

# 2025

## HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELOR FINANCIAL AID TRAINING

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### UNDERSTANDING NEW MEXICO'S TUITION-FREE COLLEGE PROGRAMS

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NEW MEXICO  
HIGHER EDUCATION  
DEPARTMENT



*Fostering Student Success from Cradle to Career*



The background of the slide is a photograph of a modern building with large windows. In the foreground, a group of students is walking down a staircase with a metal railing. A young woman with long brown hair, wearing a black beanie, glasses, and a brown shirt with a blue backpack, is smiling at the camera. Other students are visible behind her, slightly out of focus.

# WHAT WE WILL COVER:

1- Tuition Free College

2- Lottery Scholarship

3- Opportunity Scholarship

4- Transition To College

01



TUITION FREE COLLEGE



# NEW MEXICO FREE TUITION COLLEGE

New Mexico continues to lead the nation in Higher Education programs and be a pioneer in free college initiatives

Offer two scholarships that cover 100% tuition, among other programs for credit bearing courses or certifications

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Ensures more New Mexicans have the opportunity to pursue higher education without financial burdens



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**NEW MEXICO LEGISLATIVE  
LOTTERY SCHOLARSHIP**



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# ELIGIBLE LOTTERY PATHWAY STUDENT

## **A Scholarship for Recent High School Graduates**

The Legislative Lottery Scholarship covers 100% of tuition for recent New Mexico high school graduates



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- Residency in New Mexico: Have met residency requirements NMAC 5.7.18
- Graduated: Completion of all required coursework and receipt of a diploma from a public or accredited private high school in New Mexico. (Incorporate 3<sup>rd</sup> bullet) High School Equivalency Credential: A certification that is equivalent to a high school diploma, such as the GED, which is recognized by the state of New Mexico
- Home-based or Nonpublic Secondary Educational Program: An educational program that is not administered by the public education system, which may include homeschooling or private education options which is recognized by the state of New Mexico
- Full-time: A student who is enrolled in 15 or 12 credit hours.



# INITIAL ELIGIBILITY



**First semester** eligibility requirements are as follows:



Maintain New Mexico residency as per state requirements after high school graduation or equivalent credential receipt.



Enrolled in at least 12 credit hours at an eligible public postsecondary institution or tribal college in New Mexico. Must successfully complete 12 credit hours by end of first “full-time” semester.



Achieve a minimum GPA of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale during the initial semester.



First semester may be covered by Bridge Scholarship 3% funds, other institutional aid or Opportunity Scholarship funding.



# 16-MONTH GRACE PERIOD



The Legislative Lottery Scholarship has a 16-month grace period after high school graduation.

- If a student enrolls at a non-qualifying institution, it will affect eligibility.
- Part-time enrollment may be an option during the 16-month grace period.
- Following the grace period, a minimum enrollment of 12 credit hours is required to initiate the first semester of Lottery Scholarship benefits.

**What if a student does not enroll full-time once the 16-month grace period expires and continues part-time?**

***The student has lost eligibility for the Lottery Scholarship. Eligibility for the Opportunity Scholarship requires a two-year waiting period.***



A photograph of three students standing outdoors on a grassy lawn. On the left is a young man with short dark hair wearing a grey hoodie. In the center is a young woman with long dark hair wearing a black t-shirt with 'ENMIL ROSWELL' printed on it. On the right is a young woman with long dark hair wearing a blue and white baseball-style shirt. They are all smiling at the camera. In the background, there are trees and a building.

# CONTINUING ELIGIBILITY

**A scholarship may be awarded to a student in their second semester who has met first semester eligibility requirements as follows:**



Maintain New Mexico residency as per state requirements.



Successfully completes Initial Semester.



Achieves a cumulative GPA of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale.



Enrolled in required credit hour minimum at a 2-year or 4-year institution.



Student tracking is essential to ensure student meets the academic year requirement.

# SUMMER SEMESTER

In no case shall the Legislative Lottery Scholarship fund more than three summer semesters.

A student may enroll between three and nine credit hours for summer semesters.

Students may enroll in more than nine credit hours, but the scholarship shall be capped at nine credit hours including accelerated programs.

Summer semesters are not a requirement; provided that the student is not required to attend summer semesters to maintain eligibility or required as part of an accelerated program.

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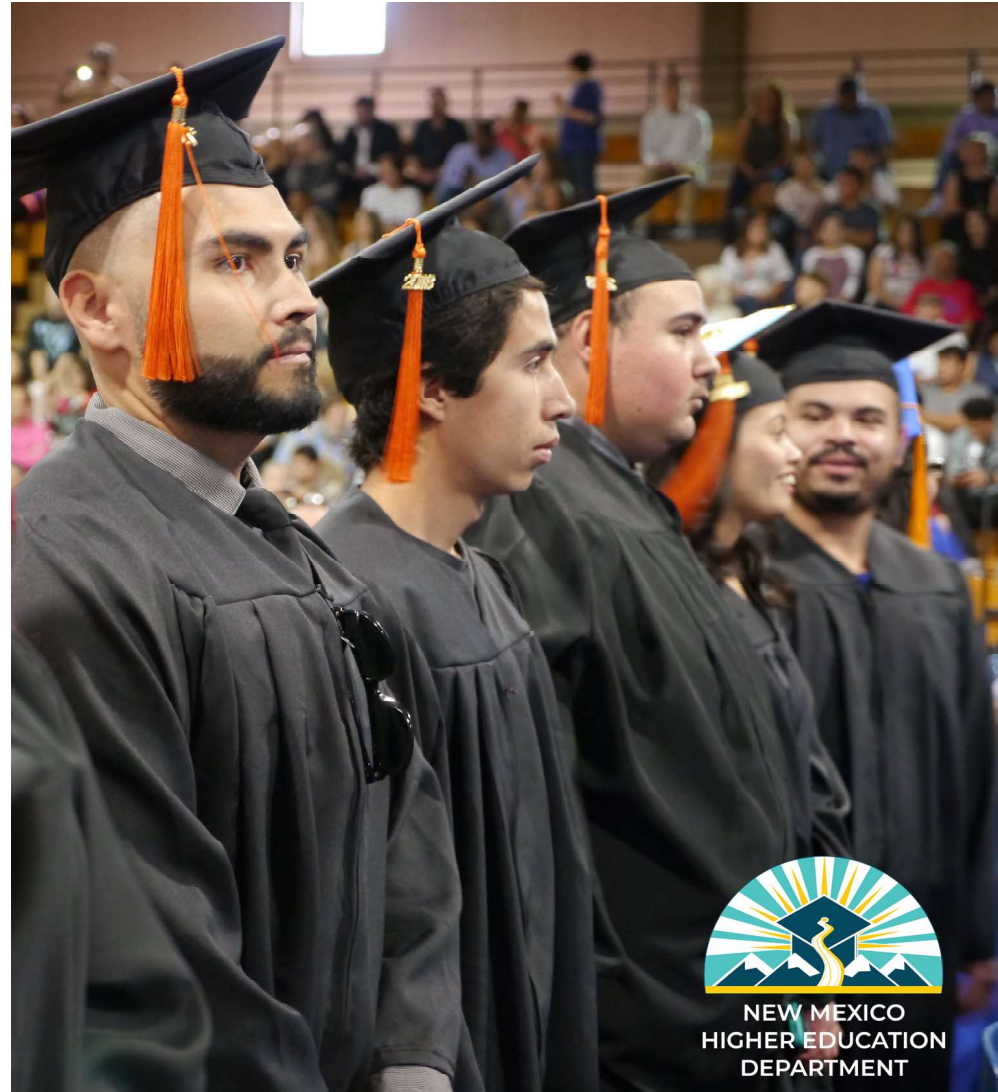


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## 12 TO FINISH *Campaign*

- The "12 to Finish" campaign encourages students at a 2-year community college to take 12 credit hours each semester.
- By doing so, they are more likely to meet the annual requirement of 24 credit hours needed to maintain their lottery Scholarship successfully.
- A summer semester should be utilized as a last resort to fulfill the annual credit hour requirement.
- "12 to Finish" promotes timely graduation and enhances student success.



## 15 TO FINISH *Campaign*

- The "15 to Finish" campaign encourages students at a 4-year university to take 15 credit hours each semester.
- By doing so, students are more likely to meet the annual requirement of 30 credit hours needed to maintain their Legislative Lottery Scholarship successfully.
- A summer semester should be utilized as a last resort to fulfill the annual credit hour requirement.
- "15 to Finish" promotes timely graduation and enhances student success.





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**NEW MEXICO OPPORTUNITY  
SCHOLARSHIP**



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# ELIGIBLE OPPORTUNITY PATHWAY STUDENT

## **A Scholarship for Returning Student Learner**

The Opportunity Scholarship covers 100% of tuition and course specific fees for returning student learner



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- Is not a Recent Graduate Learner.
- Has not earned a bachelor's, master's degree or doctoral degree at the time the scholarship is awarded.
- Has established and maintained New Mexico residency or is an active member of the New Mexico National Guard.
- Must enroll in a minimum of 6 credit hours per spring and fall semester (no minimum in the final semester before graduation). Tuition over 18 credit hours is not covered by the scholarship.
- May enroll in 3-9 credit hours per summer semester (optional); provided that a student is not required to attend a summer semester to maintain eligibility.
- Maintains a cumulative grade point average of 2.5 or higher on a 4.0 scale.



# CREDIT HOUR CAP

## 2-Year Institution:

**90 attempted credit hours** for the completion of **one** associate degree.

## 4-Year Institution:

**160 attempted credit hours** for the completion of **one** bachelor's degree.



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The background of the slide is a photograph of the Michael J. Glennon Building, a modern academic structure with a curved facade and a mix of stone and concrete materials. The building's name is visible on the upper left. A large, dark blue rectangular box is centered at the top, containing the title 'DUAL CREDIT' in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters.

# DUAL CREDIT

Any completed dual credit courses shall not count toward the credit hour cap.

If a student has graduated high school with an associates degree under Dual Credit, the student may not use funding towards an additional associate degree.

A dual credit student who has obtained their associate degree must begin pursuing a bachelors degree at a four-year institution.

# WORKFORCE CERTIFICATE

- A scholarship may be awarded for one or more workforce certificates.
- Student(s) with a bachelor's degree does not qualify for the Opportunity Scholarship award.
- A student may receive an Opportunity Scholarship award for multiple credit-bearing certificates, provided that each certificate is high demand (CIP) as determined by the Higher Education Department in consultation with Workforce Solutions Department.
- There is no credit hour requirement on approved certificates.





# 04

## TRANSITION TO COLLEGE

Guiding students to maximize dual credit opportunities can significantly accelerate their college education.



# DUAL CREDIT AND STATE SCHOLARSHIPS

The background of the slide features a photograph of a modern building with large glass windows and a statue of a wolf howling. The wolf statue is in the foreground, and the building is in the background. The sky is blue with some green foliage visible at the top.

Ensure that students and parents understand what dual credit is and its potential benefits.

Such as:

- Reducing college tuition costs
- Decreasing the time needed to earn a degree.

Inform students about state funding requirements necessary to maintain their scholarships while in college.

# THANK YOU!

Does anyone have any questions?

**Financial Aid Division**

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# RESOURCE LINKS



Main HED Webpage



Reach Higher New Mexico Webpage

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