

# WHITE EARTH



# SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

## POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Revised August 2021

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## WHITE EARTH SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM POLICIES & PROCEDURES

**All program policies and procedures are effective immediately and will apply to all applicants for the 2021-2022 academic year, as well as all future applicants.**

The White Earth Reservation Tribal Council or White Earth Reservation Business Committee (hereinafter referred to as RTC or RBC) and the White Earth Scholarship Program (hereinafter referred to as WESP) reserve the right to interpret and apply all policies and procedures approved and adopted for use in the conduct of official business of the White Earth Reservation. All determinations by the White Earth RBC relative to any such interpretation and application shall be final and conclusive in each case.

### ELIGIBILITY

#### **TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR THE WHITE EARTH SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS, ALL APPLICANTS MUST:**

- **BE AN ENROLLED MEMBER OF THE MINNESOTA CHIPPEWA TRIBE, WHITE EARTH BAND (25 CFR 40.1)**  
Tribal enrollment will be verified for each WESP application made by a student.
- **\*SUBMIT AN APPLICATION TO THE WESP**
  - Applicants must submit an application to the WESP for each new academic year.
  - Returning applicants must reapply each year, and transfer applicants must submit an application for each institution they attend.
  - Federal guidelines require applicants wishing to attend during Summer Sessions(s) to submit a separate WESP application for the Summer Session(s).

All applications **MUST** be sent directly to the scholarship office. A complete, original signed student application will be accepted. Originals are required for signature verification purposes. WESP does not accept responsibility for lost or missing applications.

- **MUST HAVE A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA OR GENERAL EQUIVALENCY DIPLOMA (GED)**  
Applicants must either graduate from high school or complete a GED program. Transcripts, GED Testing Scores or a copy of the diploma must be received by WESP prior to being considered for a WESP award.
- **APPLY AND BE ACCEPTED AT AN ACCREDITED POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTION, ENROLLED IN AN ACCREDITED PROGRAM (25 CFR 40.1)**  
All eligible programs and post-secondary institutions must be federally accredited institutions of higher education or other accredited schools offering vocational and technical training, as stated within the 25 CFR. Applicants enrolled in a program/course that does not provide college credits are not eligible for this program. In addition, applicants enrolled in correspondence courses, community education courses, private companies and professional organizations are ineligible.
- **APPLY FOR ALL AVAILABLE FINANCIAL AID**  
All applicants agree, by applying to the WESP, to also complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), and to apply for other resources for financial assistance to attend a post-secondary institution. Minnesota residents attending a Minnesota College or University must also apply to the Minnesota Indian Scholarship Program (MISP). Applicants residing and/or attending an institution outside Minnesota must complete a WESP Out of State Needs Analysis (OOSNA) in lieu of the MISP application.
- **SUBMIT AN EDUCATION PLAN**  
Education Plans are required of all applicants. These plans must include all post-secondary education courses previously attempted or completed, regardless of completion thereof, as well as courses the student is currently enrolled in and all remaining courses required for graduation from their program. Liberal education, core and related requirements: electives and all additional courses taken, including repeats, non-passing grades and classes from which the student formally withdrew. Therefore, an actual record of student attendance (previous service check of total terms attempted and GPA) is mandatory.

○ **SUBMIT COURSE REGISTRATION INFORMATION**

All applicants are required to submit a copy of their course registration or class schedule for the upcoming term of attendance no more than one month after the classes or program is in session. Registration information will be verified against the Education Plan and must include student's name and/or student ID and each course's name, course ID number, and number of credits for each individual course. If changes are noted, the student must provide information to WESP regarding change in major, availability of classes, etc. All attempted credits should be at college level (100 level or above). Preparatory and/or remedial classes in lower levels may not be funded by the WESP unless recommended or required by the institution.

○ **SUBMIT PREVIOUS POST-SECONDARY ACADEMIC TRANSCRIPTS (GRADES)**

All applicants are required to submit a full transcript from each post-secondary institution they attend. This includes applicants who enroll in and then withdraw or stop out of courses prior to completing any given term. The transcripts will be reviewed to assist in determining priority for funding, as well as monitoring academic progress and total time in school.

- To remain eligible if awarded, previous semester/quarter grades or transcript (including term registration) must be submitted to WESP prior to receiving an award.
- FRESH START – Failing (F) or Withdraw (W) grades will be forgiven after 3 full academic years.

**When all other WESP (and institution) requirements are met by the student, the WESP will make an award determination.** If a file is incomplete, it will be assumed that the student is not attending school at this time, and consideration for awards will not occur. If a student has not received notification regarding their award or denial from the WESP within two weeks prior to the date classes begin, it is the student's responsibility to contact the financial aid office, and the WESP for clarification. All applicants with complete WESP files will be notified via mail regarding their WESP award application. Award denial notification will include reason(s) for denial, within the correspondence.

**PROGRAM PRIORITY**

○ **APPLICATION PRIORITY DEADLINE**

The WESP Priority Deadline will occur on May 31<sup>st</sup> of each year, prior to the next academic school year. Applications to WESP will be first come, first serve during the academic year as their files are complete. Eligible applicants applying after the sixth week of attendance will be given second priority. Applicants applying after the eighth week may not receive an award. Applications received after the term has ended will not be funded. In cases of limited funding, additional priority may apply.

○ **PRIORITY PLAN**

Priority will be given to on a first come, first served basis to eligible full or part-time applicants as follows:

- 1) New or returning applicants in good standing (academically), pursuing their First Program Service:  
2-Year Program (Certificate, Diploma, AAS, AS, AA, or other)      4-Year Program (BA, BS, or other)  
Graduate Program (Masters, Doctorate or other)  
**\*\*Note: WESP will fund one (1) degree per program level.**
- 2) Returning applicants pursuing an additional program service, as noted above, in which the previous credits and previous program services ARE applied (accepted as a portion or pre-requisite of the coursework by the institution) towards achievement of new/additional program (i.e., an L.P.N. to an A.D.N., or R.N. or A.A. to a Baccalaureate degree).
- 3) Returning students with prior academic or progress issues i.e., below 2.0 Term GPA requirement, academic probation, suspension or termination, or expulsion from the institution
- 4) Returning students with a previous program service where the previous service cannot or will not be applied toward the new diploma, certificate or degree sought

In cases of limited funding, priority will be given to students based on their home address as follows (25 CFR 40.1):

- 1) Students living on the White Earth Reservation
- 2) Students living near the reservation (within 75 miles of the reservation borders)
- 3) All other students

○ **MAXIMUM TERMS OF ATTENDANCE**

- Undergraduate applicants are expected to complete an associate degree (or other 2-Year Program) within 5 semesters; undergraduate applicants who are obtaining a bachelor's degree are expected to complete a program in 10 semesters, or 5 semesters if transfer from a 2-Year Program. \*Maximum of 10 undergraduate terms.
- Graduate applicants must complete their degree objective within a specified amount of time. The time frame will depend on enrollment status and educational objective.
- Part-time applicants will be determined and considered on a case-by-case according to their education plan.
- Recommended maximum terms of attendance will be one term beyond program length, as established by the institution, not to exceed the maximum term of attendance limit established within recommended federal guidelines.

○ **LOW PRIORITY**

Applicants will be considered “Low Priority” to receive a WESP award if they meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Are applying eight weeks after the day classes begin
- Are applying for summer school funding
- Have been on Academic Probation with the WESP or post-secondary institution
- Have been Suspended by the WESP, or the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe scholarship programs previously
- Are not achieving “Reasonable Academic Progress” towards completion of their program
- Are seeking an additional certificate, diploma, or degree not applicable to the first program
- Are attending beyond “Recommended Maximum Terms of Attendance”
- Are not seeking a degree
- Have adequate family contribution resources for financial aid purposes
- Returning applicants: with prior academic or progress issues
- Expelled from the institution
- Returning applicants: with a previous program service(s) where the previous service cannot or will not be applied toward the new diploma, certificate or degree sought

**AWARDING PROCEDURES**

The WESP provides equitable, limited financial assistance for eligible applicants to attend accredited post-secondary institutions. The WESP will operate under the direct supervision of the Scholarship Manager. The award determinations made by the Scholarship Manager will be within the WESP Policies. If special consideration is necessary, or in the case of an appeal, the Scholarship Manager will consult with the WESP Advisory Board.

• **STUDENT BUDGETS**

A WESP award amount cannot be determined until after we receive the student budget from the institution, as well as all other material required by WESP guidelines. This usually occurs within six weeks after the student mails/files the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), provided the student has met all other requirements at the institution and with the WESP.

• **MAXIMUM AWARD**

Each year a new maximum award will be determined by the WESP, based upon previous funding data and current contract/budget limitations. Note that many applicants will not receive the maximum award, due to other financial resources that must be considered and included within the student budget, due to federal, state, institutional and other guidelines.

• **Current Award Amounts – Effective Fall 2019**

- Qualified Undergraduate Students registered for up to 12 semester credits may receive \$250 per credit with a maximum amount of \$3000 per semester or \$6000 per academic year.
- Qualified Graduate Students registered for up to 8 semester credits may receive \$350 per credit with a maximum amount of \$2800 per semester or \$5600 per academic year.

• **STUDENT RESOURCES FOR FINANCIAL AID PURPOSES**

All financial aid or monetary assistance a student is eligible to receive will be considered a student resource by the WESP, including but not limited to the following examples:

Parent Contribution	Student Contribution	Pell, SEOG, State Grants
Loans	Work Study	Scholarships (athletic/academic/college, etc.)
Tuition Waivers	Employment Benefits	JTPA/CEP/DVR/Veterans etc.

A WESP award may replace or reduce certain other student financial aid resources to be utilized by the student to pay for school and/or living expenses while in school. Questions regarding student budgets and how they are determined should be directed to the financial aid office at the institution and/or the agency offering the financial assistance in question.

• **STUDENT AWARD OR DENIAL PROCESS**

After a student award or denial has been determined, a letter will be generated and mailed to the student within two weeks. The institution will also be notified via postal letter or electronically by way of the MISP Institutional Budget. A roster of student awards/denials may be forwarded to each institution’s financial aid office upon award determination. A copy of your award letter will accompany check to the institution for processing and financial aid fee payment/disbursement.

Please contact your financial aid office for dates and information regarding student financial aid disbursement. A copy of any further correspondence relating to student academic standing will be forwarded to the institution’s financial aid office for their consideration.

After student fees are paid at the institution, there may be an overage amount released to eligible applicants. The student is responsible for payment of all fees incurred to attend school and should utilize any remaining amount for school related and living expenses. Budgeting is very important! Eligible applicants in good standing will not have their next scholarship award check released to the institution for fee payment until they submit academic transcripts confirming successful completion of all courses, a term minimum 2.0 GPA and a copy of their course registration for the next term. This means that your check will not arrive until after your next term begins, so please plan and budget accordingly.

- **AWARD ADVANCES AND/OR LOANS**

The WESP does not provide advances on awards or loans. The WESP does not pay current or previous student loans. The WESP does not pay student application or admission fees, nor does the WESP provide advances to pay student housing deposits or prepayments, uniform and equipment or tool costs, etc.

## ENROLLMENT STATUS & TERMS

- **FULL TIME ENROLLMENT**

The WESP requires full-time undergraduate applicants to successfully complete no less than 12 semester credits each term and graduate students to successfully complete no less than 8 semester credits each term. Full-time status may otherwise be determined by the institution for the following: summer school applicants, graduate applicants, or other, as documented by the institution.

Full-time applicants who leave classes (withdraw, drop, stop out, etc.) bringing them below full-time status for other than mitigating circumstances automatically put their future WESP awards at risk.

- **PART TIME ENROLLMENT**

Applicants registering for less than 12 undergraduate credits or less than 8 graduate credits (or deemed part-time by institution standards) are considered part-time by the WESP. Part-time applicants will be considered for funding; however, the award may be limited by the student budget, as determined by the financial aid office, which includes the family contribution based on income and any other grants the student may receive. As in all other cases, if the student budget is met by the other grants or loans taken prior to completion of a WESP application, the student may not be eligible to receive a WESP award.

- **GRADUATE PROGRAMS**

Applicants seeking a graduate degree may be eligible to receive an award from the WESP, provided they meet the following criteria:

- Are participating in an approved program such as Business, Education, Human Services, Law, and Medicine
- Complete requirements of the WESP Graduate checklist (see scholarship office for a copy).

Graduate applicants are required to maintain a 3.0 Term GPA while in school. Other procedures for graduate applicants, including priority establishment and general guidelines, will follow undergraduate program policies.

- **SUMMER SCHOOL**

Due to budgetary limitations, in most cases summer session funding will not take place. All applicants must submit a separate WESP application for summer funding. All applicants must be aware that their entire WESP award for the previous academic year will be included in determining summer funding eligibility. Only special circumstances will be considered for summer funding.

Exemption: An appeal letter will not be required if the student will graduate from the institution immediately following the summer session funded regardless of previous maximum amount for the year (student will not be required to complete ANY other courses at the institution prior to graduation.); OR the institution requires the student to attend throughout the summer in order to complete the program and graduate from the institution.

Non-Exemption: WESP will not consider applicants who begin their programs in the summer, nor will it consider funding applicants choosing to attend during summer sessions where attendance is not required by the institution.

- **MINIMUM PROGRAM LENGTH**

The WESP will not provide awards for applicants attending a program less than one, full-time academic year in length. Applicants must be enrolled in an accredited course at least 4 semesters/6 quarters. Applicants wishing to pursue short-term training to enhance their employability are advised to seek other means of financial assistance, such as financial aid, student employment, employers, state, and federal assistance programs, you may appeal this decision (see appeal process).

## ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

- **REASONABLE ACADEMIC PROGRESS**

The WESP must abide by the guidelines governing our federal contract. It is our intent to structure the WESP to operate fully within those guidelines, providing assistance – financial, counseling, or technical – for all dedicated applicants to achieve their post-secondary education goals. The ultimate goal of the WESP is to help all dedicated applicants graduate from his or her chosen program. Each year, this program has been unable to assist all eligible applicants who apply; due not only to budget constraints, but also applicants who receive an award and do not complete their programs on time. For this reason, all applicants are required to submit an Education Plan and course registration information prior to each term that they attend, as well as academic transcripts at the end of each term. The WESP will review each student's academic progress on an individual basis. Applicants not making reasonable academic progress towards completion of a degree will not continue to receive funding from this program. Reasonable academic progress will be reviewed according to the following criteria:

Education Plan (submitted by student prior to award)

- Registration check, for courses needed to graduate from their program/institution
- Grade Point Average
- Coursework completed
- Total number of terms attended/credits completed
- Total number of terms remaining until graduation from the institution

- **TERM GRADE POINT AVERAGE (GPA) REQUIREMENT**

All undergraduate applicants are required to maintain a minimum grade point average (GPA) of 2.0 each term (quarter or semester or grading period equivalent as set by the institution) they attend a post-secondary institution. All graduate applicants are required to maintain a minimum grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 each term. Applicants in good standing must also successfully complete all courses they attempt during each term of attendance, whether they are awarded at full or part-time status. Each student's GPA and course completion record will be considered in all award determinations, regardless of when or where the record was earned by the student. Student academic history is maintained and reviewed prior to each award determination.

- **SUBMISSION OF ACADEMIC TRANSCRIPTS/GRADES**

Academic Transcripts reflecting the minimum academic requirements (Term GPA and successful completion of term course work at the student's full or part-time level) must be received by the WESP office, along with a copy of course registration, prior to release of the student's next award. If a student fails to submit their academic transcripts within four weeks into their next term of attendance, the student risks losing their award(s) for the remainder of the academic year. The student may be notified in writing, defining the time limit for grade submission prior to cancellation of the remaining award(s). Applicants failing to comply with this or any other WESP request will be ineligible for the remainder of the academic year; the WESP will assume the student is not attending and/or does not wish to continue their program. The WESP reserves the right to rescind student awards due to not attending and/or does not wish to continue their program. The WESP also requires applicants receiving an award from this program to submit academic transcripts at the end of the academic year, as well as the end of their academic career.

- **INCOMPLETE COURSEWORK**

Scholarship awards for applicants failing to complete their coursework within the term (quarter/semester) will be withheld until formal notification has been made by the student and the institution to the WESP, employing an official grade change notice from the institution. All other eligibility requirements will also apply and must be met before the release of further awards. At the same time, applicants may be placed on Academic Probation with the WESP. Please refer to Academic Requirements. Mitigating circumstances will be considered via a complete appeal (See Appeals & Grievances).

## INELIGIBLE STUDENTS

- **DEFAULT STATUS**

Applicants in default status with any student lending agency or institution will not be eligible to receive a WESP award until after they provide proof they are no longer in default and meet all other WESP criteria.

- **INCARCERATED APPLICANTS**

Applicants currently incarcerated are not eligible to receive a WESP award.

- **FINANCIAL AID INELIGIBLE**

Applicants who are ineligible for federal financial aid and/or loans for any reason are ineligible to receive an award from WESP.



- **PAST TERM FUNDING**  
Financial assistance for any terms completed prior to applying to WESP will not be considered. This includes any previous student debt.
- **DEVELOPMENTAL/REMEDIAL COURSES**  
Courses/classes below the 100-college level are not eligible for scholarship assistance unless the applicant provides written proof that the institution has placed them in the specific course via Accuplacer Assessment or similar placement tool.
- **DUAL INSTITUTIONS**  
Applicants who attend two or more institutions concurrently will not receive funding at more than one institution.
- **PROGRAM LENGTH**  
Any program less than 24 credits in the state of Minnesota. Any program less than 40 credits outside the state of Minnesota.
- **CREDITS BEYOND DEGREE REQUIREMENT**  
Credits will be tallied and compared to the student's Education Plan. Applicants attending beyond the scheduled program length or having more credits than needed to graduate from their program – regardless of when or where the credits were earned – may be deemed ineligible or low priority for a WESP award. Award determination will not take place until the student addresses the situation with the WESP through an official appeal, and their advisor at the institution. Appeals due to mitigating circumstances will be reviewed on an individual basis; however, compliance with program policies will be required.
- **\$0 UNMET NEED**  
Applicants with adequate gift aid (grants and/or scholarships they will not have to pay back upon leaving school) to pay for their post-secondary education and demonstrate \$0 Unmet Need will not receive an award from the WESP. These applicants will be notified accordingly.
  - **EXCEPTION**  
An exception to this is WESP replacement of (partial) loans for applicants, up to the maximum award amount for the academic year. This takes place in lieu of loans and prior to student receipt of the loan. An additional exception may be for assistance with school costs only, up to the WESP maximum award per academic year, for student's whose family contribution, as assessed through the financial aid office is more than the student need.

## ACADEMIC PROBATION, SUSPENSION, AND TERMINATION

- **ACADEMIC PROBATION**  
The first time that full or part-time applicants do not earn the Term GPA academic minimum, and/or fail to successfully complete their coursework (withdrawing, not earning a passing grade or failing, etc.) for other than documented, appealed, or permitted mitigating circumstances, will automatically be placed on Academic Probation (AP) with the WESP. AP will be in effect during the student's next (one) term of attendance, regardless of funding date, status with the WESP, change in program, or transfer to a different school.  
  
If the student's transcripts for the completed term on Academic Probation prove the required achievement of a Term GPA and successful completion of all coursework with a passing grade, and all other WESP requirements have been met, the term of AP may be lifted for the next term of attendance.  
  
All applicants earning below the required academic minimum may be required to seek assistance at their institution in the form of tutoring or special study sessions.
- **SUSPENSION – 1<sup>st</sup> Notice**  
If, during Academic Probation, the academic status does not improve to the minimum Term GPA requirement or the student again fails to complete their coursework or earn a passing grade, the student will automatically be placed on Suspension with the WESP. Suspension refers to cancellation (awards are rescinded) of all subsequent awards for the next (one) academic term or until all requirements are met and suspension is lifted by the WESP.  
  
Following Suspension from the WESP, a student may choose to reapply for a WESP award. Applicants do so with the understanding their application will be considered lower priority by the WESP. Suspension will not be lifted, and the applicant will not be considered for further funding, until the applicant meets the following criteria:
  - Successfully complete at least one academic term without WESP assistance; and
  - Successfully complete all classes, without withdrawals or failing grades, and
  - Maintain the minimum Term GPA requirements or above for all terms, including future terms funded by WESP
  - Meet all other WESP requirements



In addition, upon resumed eligibility to the WESP, Applicants will automatically be placed on AP for one academic year of attendance. This will be at least three consecutive quarters or two consecutive semesters or the academic equivalent thereof, regardless of where or when the student attends a post-secondary institution.

- **SUBSEQUENT SUSPENSION – 2<sup>nd</sup> Notice**

If a student continues to achieve less than the academic minimum while on AP for a second or subsequent time, student status will automatically advance to Suspension with the WESP for a second time. However, the length of the Suspension will also automatically increase to one academic year (3 quarters/2 semesters) of attendance, regardless of when or where that attendance takes place. Students will automatically be placed on AP for one academic year of attendance following the subsequent suspension. The suspension will not be lifted, and the applicant will not be considered for further funding, until the applicant meets the criteria specified for suspension for one academic year. \*See Suspension pg. 8

Subsequent Suspension will result in termination from the WESP.

- **TERMINATION**

Termination of all future WESP awards can take place if the student:

- Is placed on Academic Probation, Suspension, Subsequent Suspension, resumes eligibility to WESP, and the lack of academic progress or achievement continues.
- Has met or exceeded the maximum term limit for their program, or the term limit as stated within WESP Policies, whichever comes first.
- If a student relinquishes their enrollment with the White Earth Reservation. (Student files will be transferred to the next reservation of enrollment upon written request by the student and/or next tribal scholarship program.)

## APPEALS & GRIEVANCES

**Bona fide appeals of decisions made under these guidelines may be submitted to the WESP for review.**

- **APPEALS PROCESS**

All applicants may appeal any award determination made by the WESP. Applicants with a bona fide grievance or appeal may submit the written, signed appeal form, identifying the specific nature of the issue, and providing any pertinent documentation, to the Scholarship Manager within thirty (30) days after the date of correspondence providing the initial award determination to the student. The Scholarship Manager will submit the file to the Advisory Board for review. At this time, the Advisory Board may uphold or reverse the previous award determination based upon established program guidelines. A quorum (at least 2/3) of the WESP Advisory Board representatives will review and vote on the appeal, upholding or providing the new award determination. The Scholarship Program Staff will refrain from this voting process. All determinations made by the WESP Advisory Board will be representative of the White Earth RBC and the WESP: fair, comprehensive, and within program guidelines. Applicants will be notified via correspondence within two weeks after the appeal/award determination.

- **MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES**

The federal guidelines governing this program allow the WESP to review situations where mitigating circumstances may have impeded student academic progress. Mitigating circumstances may include a “student’s medical diagnosed condition impairing the ability to continue a course of study documented by their physician, or any other undue hardship that significantly hinders a student’s academic progress.” Signed, proper documentation from appropriate sources, including but not limited to the student’s physician, academic advisor and/or other representative of the institution must be submitted with pertinent correspondence from the student prior to scholarship award review.

- **ADVISORY BOARD**

The WESP Advisory Board may provide direction and decisions to student appeals within the Policies of the WESP. Student appeals, items for special consideration based upon appropriate data and subsequent proposal for modifications to the WESP Policies will be introduced to the WESP Advisory Board for recommendation and approval prior to presentation to the White Earth RBC for final approval. A majority (at least 2/3) of the active Advisory Board shall constitute a quorum.

## ADVISORY BOARD

The White Earth Scholarship Program Advisory Board will provide guidance to the White Earth Scholarship Program. Members of the Advisory Board will review updated policies and procedures, provide recommendations for program improvements, and review student appeals and approve/disapprove appropriately.

The WESP Advisory Board will consist of at least three, but no more than five, members of differing professional positions. Members will be appointed by the White Earth Reservation Tribal Education Division and/or White Earth Reservation Business Committee and will serve until they notify WESP that they can no longer do so, until they are no longer in a professional

position to adequately serve on the Advisory Board, or until removed by the White Earth Tribal Education Division or the White Earth Reservation Business Committee. The WESP Advisory Board will consist of various members including:

- A representative from a White Earth Tribal Education Division or a designated representative thereof;
- A representative from an accredited college or university or a designated representative thereof.
- WESP staff, providing documentation relating to the appeals, WESP policy information; and
- Any other member(s), as appointed by the White Earth Reservation Tribal Education Division and/or the White Earth Reservation Business Committee.

The WESP Staff will be responsible for coordinating the WESP Advisory Board meetings. WESP staff will attend all Advisory Board meetings, but only to provide documentation relating to appeals or WESP policy information; WESP staff will not vote during the appeals review process. The WESP Administrative Assistant will keep meeting minutes and relative documents. In cooperation with the Scholarship Manager, the WESP assistant will also generate student correspondence relating to decisions as per the WESP Advisory Board. Note that final WESP Advisory Board determinations will be mailed to the student within two weeks of review.

For the purpose of equitable consideration and student privacy, the WESP Advisory Board will consider each student appeal without the student's name on the documents.

The WESP Advisory Board will meet once annually and throughout the year as needed. Updated policies, decisions and relative information will be provided to all WESP Advisory Board members as it arises and/or prior to each WESP Advisory Board meeting. If a quorum (at least 2/3) of the WESP Advisory Board is unable to meet within a reasonable amount of time following a student appeal, all the WESP Advisory Board members will be provided with the pertinent information and contacted in person or via email on an individual basis for their decision to the student appeal. A majority, as low as 2/3 members, of the active Advisory Board will constitute a quorum. The decision of each WESP Advisory Board member will be properly recorded as to date and ruling.

Applicants may appeal the decision made by the WESP Advisory Board by submitting a written, signed letter of appeal, with proper documentation, through the WESP office for White Earth RBC consideration. The WESP will provide student information to the White Earth RBC. At least two (2) members of the White Earth RBC may review the entire student file, if deemed necessary, prior to their award determination. The White Earth RBC will provide written documentation regarding this award determination to the WESP. The WESP will notify the student in writing within two weeks of receipt of the award determination from the White Earth RBC. Award determinations made by the White Earth RBC within program guidelines will be considered final.

## PAYBACK OF GRANTS

### • **AWARD DEDUCTIONS**

Applicants accepting an award from the WESP who, for other than mitigating circumstances, do not successfully complete (see definition) the term will have the appropriate amount deducted from the final payment and subsequent payments, if necessary, until that amount has been recovered by the Tribe. For example, if you took 12 credit hours and passed 9 credit hours, the three you did not pass would be deducted from the next payment. If the next payment does not cover the amount, it will be deducted from the first payment for the next marking period. Failing (F) or Withdraw (W) grades will be forgiven after 3 calendar years (see Fresh Start pg.4).

**DEFINITION OF SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION** = Applicants not achieving the minimum Term GPA or its equivalent at the end of a given academic period for any class and/or not (stop out, fail to enroll, withdraw, or are expelled from their institution) successfully completing all courses for which they enroll.

**EXCEPTION:** An exception will be made for students who exceed full-time status, withdraw from a course(s), and still maintain full-time status. For example, an undergraduate student who enrolls in 15 credits and withdraws from 3 credits will not be penalized for the withdraw grade if they maintain full-time status with 12 credits and successfully complete all courses/credits. A graduate student who enrolls in 10 credits and withdraws from 2 credits will not be penalized for the withdraw grade if they maintain full-time status with 8 credits and successfully complete all courses/credits. Students may repeat the same course without penalty. If a student withdraws from a course and drops below full-time status, the full amount for the course will be withdrawn from the student's next award. **\*\*Effective Fall 2020**

### • **REPEATING CLASSES**

The WESP will not pay for any repeated courses.

## GRADUATION INCENTIVES

### • **GRADUATION INCENTIVE REQUIREMENTS & QUALIFICATIONS**

- Applicants must be an enrolled member of the White Earth Band of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe. All applications will be verified by the White Earth Enrollment Office.
- Applicants must complete a Graduation Incentive Application, W-9, and Direct Deposit Form before their application is considered complete. All areas of the forms must be completed.
- College graduate applicants must submit their final graduation transcript that shows their awarded degree information, major, minors, degree GPA, and award/graduation date.
- High School graduates must submit their transcript showing their cumulative GPA and diploma/graduation date.
- GED applicants must submit documentation showing their successful GED completion date. \*White Earth Adult Basic Education GED graduates are not eligible for the WESP Graduation Incentive. White Earth ABE graduates must contact the White Earth ABE Program Manager regarding graduation incentives.
- Applications will be processed in the order they were received. Incomplete applications will not be processed until all required documents are received.
- Graduation Incentives will be sent directly to the financial institution indicated on the direct deposit form.
- Graduation Incentives are not guaranteed and are contingent on availability of funds.
- Applicants that graduated prior to September 1, 2021 will not be eligible for the Graduation Incentive.

### • **AWARDING PROCEDURES**

White Earth Enrolled Graduates will be eligible for the incentive one (1) time at each degree level. Students who complete multiple degrees in the same degree level will not receive more than one Graduation Incentive award per degree level.

#### • **Current Incentive Amounts – Effective September 1, 2021**

- \$200 – High School Diploma or GED
- \$300 – 2-Year Degree (AA, AS, AAS, other)
- \$400 – 4-Year Degree (BA, BS, other)
- \$500 – Masters Degree
- \$600 – Doctorate Degree

## RIGHT TO REVISION

The WESP reserved the right to revise student eligibility criteria requirements upon approval by the WESP Advisory Board, White Earth Reservation Business Committee, Bureau of Indian Affairs, U.S. Congress, and within budget limitations.

Approval of White Earth Scholarship Program Updated Policies & Procedures	
Name (Print)	Date
WESP Advisory Board	05/27/2021
White Earth Education Division Director	07/13/2021
White Earth Legal Review	07/13/2021
White Earth RBC	07/16/2021