

SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article – Education

Subtitle 3. [General State Scholarship] ~~FREE STATE GRANT~~ EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE AWARD Program

18-301.

(A) There is a program of [general State scholarships] ~~FREE STATE~~ EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE AWARDS in this State that are awarded under this subtitle.

(B) THE PROGRAM SHALL CONSIST OF THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF AWARDS:

(1) GUARANTEED ACCESS GRANTS THAT ARE AWARDED TO THE NEEDIEST STUDENTS TO ENSURE THAT 100 PERCENT OF EDUCATIONAL COSTS, AS DEFINED BY REGULATIONS ADOPTED BY THE COMMISSION, ARE PAID; AND

(2) EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS THAT ARE AWARDED TO LOW AND MODERATE INCOME STUDENTS TO ASSIST IN PAYING EDUCATIONAL COSTS, AS DEFINED BY REGULATIONS ADOPTED BY THE COMMISSION.

18-301.1.

The State Scholarship Administration shall publicize the availability of [general State scholarships] ~~FREE STATE~~ EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE AWARDS.

18-302.

(a) Except for a distinguished scholar award under § 18-1101 of this article, the recipient of a [general State scholarship] ~~FREE STATE~~ AN EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE AWARD may not hold any other scholarship awarded under this title.

(b) [(1) Each applicant for a general State scholarship shall:

(i) Take a competitive examination administered by the State Scholarship Administration; and

(ii) EACH RECIPIENT OF A ~~FREE STATE~~ AN EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE AWARD SHALL:

(1) Be accepted for admission in the regular undergraduate program at an eligible institution or be enrolled in a two-year [terminal certificate] ASSOCIATE DEGREE program in which the course work is acceptable for transfer credit for an accredited baccalaureate program in an eligible institution[.];

[(2) An applicant is exempt from the examination if the applicant: