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May 3, 2018

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chairman Tim Hofferth and Members, SC Commission on Higher Education
FROM: Chairman Paul Batson, III and Members, Committee on Access & Equity and Student Services

Proposed New Palmetto Fellows Application Process

Background

The South Carolina General Assembly established the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship Program in 1988 to recognize the most academically talented high school seniors and encourage these students to attend college in the State. From 1988 until 1995, the S.C. Commission on Higher Education awarded an average of 42 new Palmetto Fellows Scholarships each year. The State awarded \$2,500 per academic year to each recipient, and the institution in which the recipient was enrolled was required to match that amount.

In 1996 the S.C. General Assembly increased funding for the program thereby increasing the average number of new Palmetto Fellows Scholarships awarded each year as well as the average award amount. Institutions were no longer required to provide matching funds. With the implementation of the S.C. Education Lottery in 2002, the General Assembly approved an increase in the maximum Palmetto Fellows Scholarship award amount. Palmetto Fellows may receive up to \$6,700 for their freshman year and up to \$7,500 for their sophomore, junior and senior years for a maximum of eight terms towards their first bachelor's at an eligible higher education institution in South Carolina.

Current Process

Currently, there are two award periods; the Early Award and the Late Award. During each award period a counselor submits **one** packet with all eligible students.

- **The Early Award**
 - Opens mid-October and closes December 15.
 - Students and colleges are notified of Early Award eligibility mid-March.

Eligibility for the Early Award:

- Rank in the top 6% in 10th or 11th; *and*
- 1200 SAT* or 27 ACT*; *and*
- 3.5 SC UGP by the end of Junior Year

Or the alternative criteria for the Early Award:

- 1400 SAT* or 32 ACT*; *and*
- 4.0 SC UGP by the end of Junior Year

** Students have until the November test administration to earn the requisite test scores.*

- **The Late Award**

- Opens mid-April and closes June 15.
- Students and colleges are notified of Late Award eligibility mid-August.

Eligibility for the Late Award:

- Rank in the top 6% in 10th, 11th or 12th; *and*
- 1200 SAT* or 27 ACT*; *and*
- 3.5 SC UGP by the end of Senior Year

Or the alternative criteria for the Late Award:

- 1400 SAT* or 32 ACT*; *and*
- 4.0 SC UGP by the end of Senior Year

** Students have until the June test administration to earn the requisite test scores.*

Proposed Process

This process would allow S.C. institutions the potential to recruit South Carolina's top academically talented students earlier.

1. Allow counselors to submit students as they become eligible:
 - a. Counselors do not have to wait until they have collected all eligible students before they submit one packet; eligible students can be submitted as they become eligible.
2. Extend the opening/closing date for the Early Award:
 - a. Open in September and close end of April
 - b. Students/colleges will be notified as the student becomes eligible
 - c. Students would have until the March test administration to earn the requisite test score.
3. Minimal changes to the Late Award:
 - a. Open in May and close June 30
 - b. Students/colleges will be notified as the student becomes eligible
4. Rank Reports:
 - a. **ALL** high schools MUST submit a ranking report, with the first packet submitted.

The eligibility criteria for the Early Award would remain the same:

Eligibility for the Early Award:

- Rank in the top 6% in 10th or 11th; *and*
- 1200 SAT* or 27 ACT*; *and*
- 3.5 SC UGP by the end of Junior Year

Or the alternative criteria for the Early Award:

- 1400 SAT* or 32 ACT*; *and*
- 4.0 SC UGP by the end of Junior Year

** Students have until the March test administration to earn the requisite test scores.*

Under the new process, the Early Award would open early September of every year. Instead of counselors waiting until they have one packet with all eligible students, counselors could now submit students as they become eligible. The deadline for the Early Award would move from December to March. This would allow students more opportunities to take the SAT/ACT to earn the requisite score. The Early Award would close by the end of April.

The eligibility criteria for the Late Award would remain the same:

Eligibility for the Late Award:

- Rank in the top 6% in 10th, 11th or 12th; *and*
- 1200 SAT* or 27 ACT*; *and*
- 3.5 SC UGP by the end of Senior Year

Or the alternative criteria for the Late Award:

- 1400 SAT* or 32 ACT*; *and*
- 4.0 SC UGP by the end of Senior Year

** Students have until the June test administration to earn the requisite test scores.*

Under the new process, the only change for the Late Award would be the opening date. The Late Award would open in May instead of April.

Students and Colleges will both be notified as the student becomes eligible.

Recommendation:

The Committee on Access & Equity and Student Services commends favorably to the Commission approval of the proposed new Palmetto Fellows application process.

Palmetto Fellows Scholarship

Current Application Process

During the student's graduating year (including summer after high school graduation)

Mid-October

Early Award Opens;
Application materials become available; Counselors can submit ONE packet with eligible students using end of **11th grade GPA/rank** (or 10th grade rank if needed).

December 15

Early Award closes.

Mid-April

Late Award Opens;
Application materials become available; Counselors can submit ONE packet with eligible students using end of **12th grade GPA/rank** (or 10th/11th grade rank if needed).

August

Students enroll at a 4-year institution.

November

Last test administration to earn the requisite test scores for the Early Award.

Mid-March

Students & Colleges are notified of student eligibility.

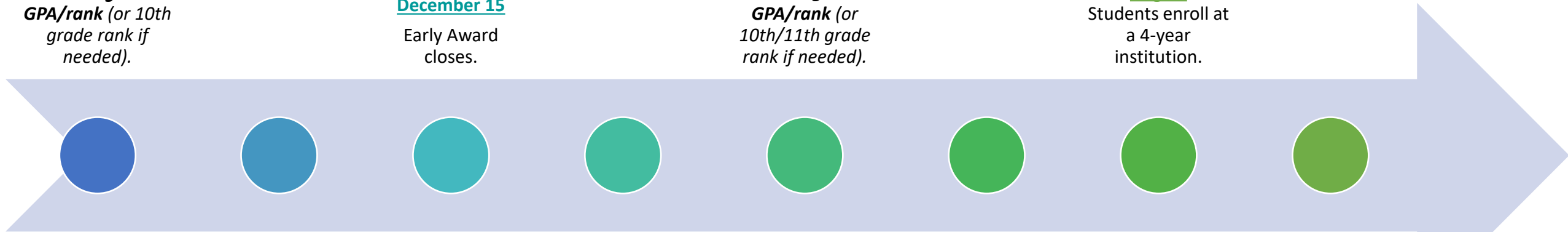
June

Last test administration to earn the requisite test scores for the Late Award.

Late Award closes June 15th.

Late August

Students & Colleges are notified of student eligibility.



Palmetto Fellows Scholarship

New Application Process

During the student's graduating year (including summer after high school graduation)

September

Early Award Opens;

Application materials become available; Counselors can submit students as they become eligible using end of **11th grade GPA/rank (or 10th grade rank if needed)**.

March

Last test administration to earn the requisite test scores for the Early Award.

May

Late Award Opens;

Application materials become available; Counselors can submit students as they become eligible using end of **12th grade GPA/rank (or 10th/11th grade rank if needed)**.

June

Last test administration to earn the requisite test scores for the Late Award .

Late Award closes June 30th.

End of August

Final notifications go out to Students & Colleges about eligible students.

Continuous

Students & Colleges are notified as student become eligible.

End of April

Early Award closes.

Continuous

Students & Colleges are notified as student become eligible.

August

Students enroll at a 4-year institution.

`Document No. 4149

COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION**CHAPTER 62**

Statutory Authority: 1976 Code Section 59-104-20

62-300 - 62-375. Palmetto Fellows Scholarship and Palmetto Fellows Scholarship Enhancement

62-310. Definitions.

A. "Early awards" is defined as a period determined by CHE to apply for the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship. Application must be made through the students' high school. This period is generally from ~~October~~ September through ~~December~~ April of the academic year.

BB. "Late awards" is defined as a period determined by CHE for high school seniors to apply for the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship. Application must be made through the students' high school. This period is generally from ~~April~~ May through June of the academic year.

62-320. Palmetto Fellows Scholarship Application.

A. The Commission on Higher Education will send information regarding the application process to all South Carolina high schools, home school associations and district superintendents. High schools and/or home school associations that do not receive information regarding the application process from the Commission on Higher Education by the beginning of each application process must contact the Commission for information. It is the sole responsibility of the high schools, home schools, home school associations, and district superintendents to contact CHE regarding the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship program including the application process. High school officials will identify students who meet the specified eligibility criteria by each established deadline. High school officials must submit applications (both electronic and/or paper documentation) no later than the established deadline(s) along with the appropriate signatures, official transcripts and test score verification to the Commission on Higher Education. High school officials must certify each eligible applicant's signature form. Students who are enrolled at out-of-state high schools are personally responsible for contacting the Commission on Higher Education about the application process and must adhere to the same established deadline(s).

B. Applications for early awards must be submitted to the Commission on Higher Education for the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship by the date established in ~~December~~ April each academic year. Students must meet one of the following set of academic criteria in order to be eligible to apply for the early awards (students cannot use the early awards criteria to apply during the late awards):

1. Score at least 1200 on the SAT or 27 on the ACT through the ~~November~~ March test administration of the senior year; earn a minimum 3.50 cumulative GPA on the current SC Uniform Grading Policy (UGP) at the end of the junior year; and rank in the top six percent of the class at the end of either the sophomore or the junior year; or

2. The alternate criteria of a score at least 1400 on the SAT or 32 on the ACT through the ~~November~~ March test administration of the senior year and earn a minimum 4.00 cumulative GPA on the UGP at the end of the junior year, without regard to class rank.

I. In order to apply for the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship using rank as one of the eligibility criteria, home school students must be a member of an approved home school program (as defined in relevant State Statute) that provides an official class rank for their members. ~~The home school association~~ All high schools must submit a rank report on ~~the association's~~ letterhead that includes the class rank and GPA based on the current SC Uniform Grading Policy for all ~~home school~~ students in the applicant's class. If a ~~home school~~ student is unable to obtain rank verification, he/she may also be eligible to apply using the alternative criteria of scoring at least 1400 on the SAT (or 32 on the ACT) and earning a minimum 4.00 cumulative GPA on the UGP, without regard to class rank. These students must meet all other eligibility criteria.