



Direct Education Scholarship Policy

(Revised 2024)

Revised April 19, 2024

1. PUEBLO OF LAGUNA DIRECT EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP BACKGROUND

Many generations of Pueblo of Laguna (POL) leadership and elders spoke of the value of education in its many forms and the obtaining of knowledge that can be utilized to help protect and advance the Laguna people. The Pueblo of Laguna Council continued to support this effort by adopting Resolution No. 27-95 which authorized for regular enrolled members of the Pueblo an awarding of “educational grants to provide SUPPLEMENTAL funds for tuition, books, supplies, travel expense, room and board and child care for Undergraduate, Graduate, and Vocational Students attending regionally accredited higher education institutions and vocational schools.”

In the year 2013, the Pueblo of Laguna Council agreed to and accepted a monetary settlement which brought to a close its outstanding trust mismanagement lawsuit against the United States of America. On October 26, 2013 the Council accepted and endorsed an allocation plan that outlined how funds from the settlement were to be allocated to support Pueblo operations and priorities. Among the priorities designated to receive funding was the portion of the Permanent Growth Investment Fund used to support and fund the educational grants authorized by Resolution No. 27-95. The addition of monetary resource increased the amount of financial resources available to fund the SUPPLEMENTAL educational grants allowing the Pueblo to support more of its regular enrolled members.

On April 5, 2014, the Pueblo of Laguna Council reviewed and accepted updates to the policy governing the criteria for the awarding of a supplemental education grant, along with changes to amounts of the supplemental awards and also removing personal/family income as one of the basis for eligibility. (See GENERALELIGIBILITY AND PROGRAM DETAILS)

On April 5, 2014, the Pueblo of Laguna Council also adopted Resolution No. 35-14 which initiated an updated annual process authorizing and directing the use of funds drawn from the Permanent Growth Investment Fund to fund educational grants in accordance with the Pueblo of Laguna Direct Education Scholarship policy and Resolution No. 27-95.

In 2016, per resolution No. 59-16 and resolution No. 63-16, the PoL Council was presented with and subsequently adopted a new policy governing the PoL Direct Education Scholarship program which clarified eligibility requirements, enhanced monetary support for Graduate level courses, and added a component to assist nontraditional students.

The Pueblo of Laguna Council extends our wishes for courage and perseverance to students and families as they take steps toward a college or vocational education. We are pleased that an increase in monetary resources offers the Pueblo an opportunity to assist more students who want to pursue a higher education but we also encourage students and families to seek a range of resources to defray the costs of a higher education. The scholarships awarded under this policy are SUPPLEMENTAL in nature and not intended to fully cover the costs of a higher education. You are encouraged to seek out and apply for other sources of funding to assist with meeting the costs associated with obtaining a higher education.

2. POLICY APPLICABILITY, NON REQUIREMENT TO FUND, AND POLICY REVIEW

2.1. POLICY APPLICABILITY

This policy is intended for use only with funds provided directly by the Pueblo of Laguna from source(s) of funds that are available for allocation by official action of the Pueblo of Laguna Council. This list is not intended to be all inclusive but provide examples of funding sources which will be subject to the requirements in this policy. Examples of source(s) of funds available for allocation by official action include:

- 2.1.1. Any Regular or Supplemental Allocation from the Pueblo of Laguna Permanent GrowthFund.
- 2.1.2. Pueblo of Laguna negotiated contributions from third parties to fund education grants.
- 2.1.3. Pueblo of Laguna sponsored funds established to receive private contributions to funded education grants.
- 2.1.4. Contributions received from the Pueblo of Laguna owned entities to fund education grants.

2.2. NON-REQUIREMENT TO FUND

This policy does not, nor is it intended to, compel or require the Pueblo of Laguna Council to provide any monetary resources for the POL Direct Education Scholarship program.

2.3. REVIEW OF POLICY

The Pueblo of Laguna Council shall require that this policy be reviewed at a minimum of at least every 3 years. The Council may require more frequent reviews if they determine necessary. The review, at a minimum, shall look at the following:

- 2.3.1. Review program functionality to ensure both applicants and administrators are provided clear guidance and requirements.
- 2.3.2. Review the program to ensure that applicant requirements are still relevant.
- 2.3.3. Review the program to ensure that funding levels of direct education scholarships are still impactful for applicants.
- 2.3.4. Review the program to ensure that financial resources required to fund future applicants can be supported.

2.4. SELECTION OF A POLICY REVIEW TEAM

The Governor shall appoint members to this policy review team. The policy review team shall provide a report and any recommendations to the Council in a manner to be determined by the Council. Any changes, modifications, or updates to this policy require the approval of the Pueblo of Laguna Council.

USE OF SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS AND DURATION OF FUNDING

3.1. DEGREE PROGRAM FUNDING

A major objective of the POL DES program is to provide an opportunity to as many Pueblo of Laguna members as possible. Therefore, the POL DES program will focus on vertical support of higher education and not horizontal support. Scholarship applications will not be considered for a certification or degree program if the applicant has already obtained such a certification or degree. The source of funding for the previously obtained certification or degree is not a consideration when eligibility for a scholarship is being considered.

3.2. USE OF EDUCATIONAL GRANTS

The scholarships provided by the POL DES program are intended to be SUPPLEMENTAL in nature and may not fully cover the costs of a higher education. The scholarships are intended to assist the student with the following expenses:

- 3.2.1. Tuition (in person/on-line learning)
- 3.2.2. Books and Supplies
- 3.2.3. Travel Expenses to and from college and or classes
- 3.2.4. Room and Board
- 3.2.5. Childcare Expenses

3.3. STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS

Study Abroad Programs are acceptable use of educational grant options for college juniors and seniors who wish to broaden their educational horizons. A student seeking scholarship support must first be accepted into a study abroad program through their college or university. A formal letter of approval, along with official transcripts demonstrating a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher are required for scholarship support. A packet of information describing the study abroad program, area of study, time frame, country and the educational benefit must accompany the request. The scholarship amount will be the same for a study abroad program as it would be if the student were attending a regular term in the United States. All additional expenses beyond the amount of the scholarship award are the student's responsibility.

3.4. DISTANCE EDUCATION

Eligibility of Distance Education courses, at regionally accredited institutions, may be acceptable ways of earning a degree. Exceptions to this basic requirement must be approved on a case-by-case basis prior to classes commencing. Factors considered are: (1) Cumulative 2.5 GPA; (2) Access to computer, software and internet capacity; (3) Prior online experience; (4) Plan of Study; (5) Self-motivation.

3.5. DURATION OF FUNDING

3.5.1. Associate and Bachelor Degree Program/Vocational Certification Program

The POL DES program may provide financial support for up to **10 academic semesters or up to 120 earned credit hours** or the completion of the degree/vocational program; whichever of these occurs first, provided that an applicant has not already obtained an Associate, Bachelor Degree or Vocational Certification as determined by a review of the applicant's completed application and required documentation submission.

Each academic semester that an applicant receives funding from the POL DES program will be tabulated as an academic semester of participation. Any semester for which an applicant received funding support from the POL DES since July 1, 2014 according to official program records, will be tabulated when determining eligibility.

3.5.2. Graduate and Doctorate Degree Program

The POL DES program may provide financial support for up to 10 academic semesters towards the completion of a graduate and doctoral level degree, provided that an applicant has not already obtained a Graduate Degree or a Doctorate Degree as determined by a review of the applicant's completed application and required documentation submission.

Each academic semester that an applicant receives funding from the POL DES program will be tabulated as an academic semester of participation. Any academic semester for which an applicant received funding support from the POL DES since July 1, 2014 according to OFFICAL PROGRAM Records will be tabulated when determining eligibility.

4. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

4.1. REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL APPLICANTS

ALL Individuals who apply for an educational grant from the POLS DES program **MUST**:

- 4.1.1. BE a regular enrolled member of the Pueblo of Laguna. (“Naturalized” Laguna tribal members and descendants are **not** eligible for funding from the POL DES program); **AND**
- 4.1.2. SUBMIT ALL required documents by the specified deadline(s) for the academic year or term for which funding is requested; **AND**
- 4.1.3. **MUST NOT HAVE** already have obtained a certification or degree in the field of study for which they are now applying for a scholarship (in an effort to provide opportunity to as many Pueblo of Laguna members as possible, this program will focus on vertical support of higher education and not horizontal support).
- 4.1.4. **Male applicants** 18 years of age or older **MUST ANNUALLY** fulfill their obligation to present themselves to their respective village officer(s) within in the deadline established by the village official(s) and in an acceptable manner, usually no later than March 31 of each year and usually an in-person presentation at a village meeting or in writing. After the established deadlines for the presentation have passed on an annual basis, Partners for Success will verify that a male applicant has fulfilled their obligation to present themselves to their respective village officer(s) of the applicant’s affiliated village. Failure to comply with this provision will result in a male applicant being ineligible to apply.

4.2. UNDERGRADUATE/VOCATIONAL STUDENT ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

An Undergraduate/Vocational student is defined, for purposes of this program, as an individual who is entering a university, college, vocational, or trade school in pursuit of an associate’s degree, bachelor’s degree, vocational certification, or trade certification. ALL Undergraduate/Vocational student applicants **MUST**:

- 4.2.1. Meet the eligibility requirements pertaining to **ALL** applicants; **AND**
- 4.2.2. BE a **REGULAR HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE** or have obtained a General Education Development (GED) Diploma or have met all requirements for a passing score on the High School Equivalency Test (HiSET); **AND**
- 4.2.3. BE accepted and enrolled as a student attempting a **MINIMUM** of 3 credit hours in the academic term at a regionally accredited post-secondary institution in the United States; **AND**
- 4.2.4. **MEET** the following minimum Grade Point Average (GPA) requirements:
 - 4.2.4.1 For applicants who have **EARNED** 0 to 29 college credit hours as noted on an **OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT**, the **minimum GPA of 2.00** is required.
 - 4.2.4.2 For applicants who have **EARNED** 30 or more college credit hours as noted on an **OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT**, a **minimum GPA of 2.50** must have been earned on a **minimum of 6 earned credit hours** in the most recently completed Fall or Spring academic term.

4.3. GRADUATE STUDENT ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

A Graduate Student is defined as a student who is entering a graduate school and is usually pursuing an advanced academic degree such as a masters or doctoral degree. Graduate student applicants **MUST**:

- 4.3.1. Meet the eligibility requirements pertaining to **ALL** applicants; **AND**
- 4.3.2. Be enrolled at a regionally accredited post-secondary institution in the United States; **AND**
- 4.3.3. Provide a copy of an official academic acceptance correspondence indicating that the applicant is currently enrolled in the graduate or doctoral-level program.

4.4. STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The Pueblo of Laguna is committed to providing equal access to educational opportunities for qualified students with disabilities. The Pueblo of Laguna Direct Education Scholarship shall provide resources to qualified students with disabilities, however; students with disabilities must follow his or her college or university policies, including policies concerning conduct and performance. The student is responsible for demonstrating the need of an academic adjustment by obtaining and approval from their respective college or university's special education service centers. Students must provide official documentation from his or her college or university that identifies acceptance and/or approval for any academic adjustments, course or program modifications, and or auxiliary aids and services. Documentation must be provided at the time of application deadline or within 21 days after the start of the semester.

4.5. SCHOLARSHIP INELIGIBILITY

Applicants are considered **ineligible** for a scholarship in any amount from the POL DES for **ANY** one of the following reasons:

- 4.5.1. **DID NOT** meet any of the eligibility requirements as outlined in Section 4; **OR**
- 4.5.2. **IS** a "naturalized" or descendant member of the Pueblo of Laguna; **OR**
- 4.5.3. **DID NOT** receive a high school diploma or GED diploma or a HiSET diploma; **OR**
- 4.5.4. **DID NOT** meet any minimum GPA requirements as required in this policy; **OR**
- 4.5.5. **IS NOT** attending a college or university that is regionally accredited; **OR**
- 4.5.6. **DID NOT** submit required documents by the specified deadline(s) for the academic year or term for which funding is requested.

5. REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

5.1 REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

The following documents are required to be submitted by the specified deadline(s) for the academic year for which funding is requested:

- 5.1.1. A completed Direct Education Scholarship Application for the semester for which funding is requested, (i.e., fall and spring term). Students must complete an application each semester for which funding is requested; **AND**
- 5.1.2. First year undergraduate and or vocational school students must submit an official high school transcript/GEDdiploma/HiSET diploma (at their expense); **OR**
- 5.1.3 Students who have completed their first semester of undergraduate or vocational school, must submit a current official transcript (at their expense); AND**
- 5.1.4. Graduate students, must submit official transcripts (at their expense); **AND**
- 5.1.5. A copy of official admissions letter and enrollment verification on institution letterhead from a regionally accredited institution stating the degree program; **AND**
- 5.1.6. A Certificate of Indian Blood (CIB) or copy of tribal membership card from the Pueblo of Laguna Tribal Enrollment Office. ("Naturalized" and descendant Laguna tribal members are ineligible for funding). Contact the Tribal Enrollment Office (505) 552-6654 Ext. 1205 or 1206 to request a CIB; **AND**
- 5.1.7 A Personal Statement that explains the purpose for pursuing a college degree in their chosen field of study and career or profession. The statement shall be at least 1 typed page double spaced; **AND**
- 5.1.8. Application and required document submission deadlines must be adhered to.

6. PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

The Pueblo of Laguna, as authorized by Resolution No. 35-14, is working with the Laguna Department of Education Partners for Success (PFS) to ensure an administrative and accounting process is in place in order to complete the awarding of scholarships. The following is a list of the general responsibilities of each:

6.1 Pueblo of Laguna

- 6.1.1 If available, provide for an annual financial allocation to Direct Education Scholarships;
- 6.1.2 Maintain and update the Pueblo of Laguna Direct Education Scholarship Policy as needed;
- 6.1.3 Provide an Application Review Team selected by the Governor of the Pueblo consisting of three or more members. Team member responsibilities include:
 - 6.1.3.1 Review and Certify that each applicant has submitted a current POL DES application and all currently required documents within the identified deadlines; AND
 - 6.1.3.2 Review and Certify that each applicant meets the eligibility requirements to receive a scholarship in accordance with the POL DES Policy; AND
 - 6.1.3.3 Review and Certify the amount of any scholarship that is awarded to an applicant in accordance with the POL DES Policy.
- 6.1.4 Collaborate with the LDOE PFS to develop and provide any reports requested by the Pueblo of Laguna Council regarding the POL DES program.

6.2 LDOE Partners for Success

- 6.2.1 Provide management and administrative services necessary to distribute POL DES applications and policy information to all interested parties; AND
- 6.2.2 Provide management and administrative services necessary to accept POL DES applications and all required documents from applicants; AND
- 6.2.3 Compile and prepare all submitted applications and required documents for review by the Application Review Team; AND
- 6.2.4 Maintain a file for each person who applies for a scholarship from the POL DES program; AND
- 6.2.5 Provide accounting services necessary for the disbursement of awarded scholarships; AND
- 6.2.6 Provide accounting services necessary to ensure the collection and submission of required tax documentation to the appropriate taxation authority; AND
- 6.2.7 Collaborate with the Application Review Team to develop and provide any reports requested by the Pueblo of Laguna Council regarding the POL DES program.

7. SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

7.1. UNDERGRADUATE AND VOCATIONAL SCHOLARSHIPS

The maximum amount of funding available to an applicant is determined by how many credit hours have been earned and how many credit hours will be attempted in a current academic semester. If a scholarship is awarded, the amount of the award will be determined using the following chart:

	Credit Hours Earned	Credit Hours Earned	Credit Hours Earned	Credit Hours Earned
Credit Hours Attempting	0 to 29	30 to 59	60 to 89	90 or more
12 or more	\$2000.00	\$2500.00	\$3000.00	\$4000.00
9 to 11	\$1500.00	\$1875.00	\$2250.00	\$3000.00
6 to 8	\$1000.00	\$1250.00	\$1500.00	\$2000.00
5 or less	\$750.00	\$750.00	\$750.00	\$750.00

Duration of funding cannot exceed 10 academic semesters.

Upon the completion of your degree program you must provide proof of completion and provide current contact information to Partners for Success.

7.2. STUDENT FINANCIAL INCENTIVES

7.2.1. GOVERNOR'S SCHOLARS

The Pueblo of Laguna Council desires to acknowledge and reward exceptional undergraduate/vocational academic performance. Each participant will be identified as a Governor's Scholar and receive additional scholarship funding if they meet the following requirements:

- Must have EARNED a minimum of 12 credit hours in the most recently completed academic semester as reported on an OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT in order to qualify for one of the following awards:
 - A term GPA of 3.00 to 3.49 will result in an additional \$500 being awarded
 - A term GPA of 3.50 or greater will result in an additional \$1000 being awarded.
- Applicants who earn less than 12 credit hours per semester are not eligible for this incentive.

7.3. GRADUATE AND DOCTORATE DEGREE FUNDING

The maximum amount of funding available to graduate level applicants for an academic semester is determined by using the following chart:

Academic Semesters	Award Amount per Academic Semester
Masters-1 and 2	\$4,000.00
Masters-3 and 4	\$5,000.00
PhD-1-4	\$6,000.00

Duration of funding cannot exceed 10 academic semesters. Upon the completion of your degree program you must provide proof of completion and provide current contact information to Partners for Success.

7.4. AWARD NOTIFICATION

Applicants awarded a Pueblo of Laguna Direct Education Scholarship will receive a letter of notification of an official award.

Academic Term	Award Letters Mailed
Fall	August thru September
Spring	January thru February

8. APPEALS

8.1. APPEAL PROCESS

An applicant has the right to appeal a denial of funding for cause according to the appeal process below. An appeal must be initiated no later than 10 Business Days from the DATE ON THE NOTIFICATION LETTER:

- 8.1.1. Upon receipt of a letter of denial from the Application Review Team, a student may appeal the decision in writing to the PFS Director or designee. Any additional documents to substantiate the appeal should be included (e.g., medical reports, transcripts, letters from college personnel, etc.).
- 8.1.2. The PFS Director will make the final decision.

9. THE PUEBLO OF LAGUNA COMMUNITY

The Pueblo of Laguna Council desires to emphasize the importance of giving back to the community who ultimately authorized the creation of a fund to provide the scholarships. An important factor to sustaining and growing the Pueblo of Laguna is every member fulfilling their cultural obligation to give back and contribute to the community in various ways, such as community labor, serving in the tribal government, regular attendance at a village meeting, and participation in the annual preparation of the irrigation ditches. Of course, the Council recognizes that the degrees and training that are obtained as a result of this program will open doors to many opportunities away from the Laguna community. The Council encourages those who find opportunities away from the Laguna community to identify ways to give back such as financial contributions to support future scholarships, offering support to a Laguna student away from home, introducing Pueblo leadership to members of your business and education networks to help grow Laguna efforts, or serve as member of the Board of Directors of a Pueblo owned business or non-profit.

In order to facilitate communication and outreach with persons who have received a scholarship, the Pueblo of Laguna and POL owned entities will utilize the mailing and contact information obtained during the application and degree completion process for the following purposes:

- Directly solicit monetary contributions to support the POL Direct Education Scholarship fund.
- Notification to participants of employment opportunities at the Pueblo of Laguna and any of its owned entities.
- Notification to participants of any vacancies on the Board of Directors for any of the Pueblo of Laguna owned entities.
- Communication of information the Pueblo of Laguna Council may deem necessary to provide to current and or past recipients of a scholarship.

10. GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Academic Year (AY): Typically defined as August through May of a given school year.

Accredited Post-Secondary Institution: Certification by regional associations as meeting acceptable standards of education. Accrediting associations include:

MSA	Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools	NASC	Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges
NCA	North Central Association of Colleges and Schools		
NEASC-CIHE	New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Inc., Commission on Institutions of Higher Education		
NEASC	New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Inc.		
SACS-CC	Southern Association of Colleges and Schools-Commissions on Colleges		
WASC-Jr.	Western Association of Schools and Colleges-Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges		
WASC-Sr.	Western Association of Schools and Colleges/Accrediting, Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities		

Associate degree: a two-year degree conferred and defined by a college or institution.

Baccalaureate degree: a bachelor degree (4 yrs.) conferred and defined by colleges or universities.

College Admissions Letter: Notification of matriculation (to enroll as a student in a college/university) into an accredited institution.

Distance Education: A variety of mediums for delivery of instruction to students, including: Internet, video conferencing, teleconferencing and correspondence.

Full-time student: a student who enrolls for and completes 12 credit hours per term in an accredited post-secondary institution or as defined by the institution's registrar or financial aid office.

GPA: Grade Point Average

Institution: College or University

National Accreditation: An institutional approval of a college or institution that attests to meeting acceptable levels of quality and performance. It's advisable to check the transferability of credits between postsecondary institutions. Not all colleges and universities accept the transfer of credits. (i.e., national accreditation versus regional accreditation).

Part-time Student: A student with a course load of less than 12 credits, by an accredited post-secondary institution or as defined by the institution's Registrar or Financial Aid Office.

Personal Expenses: As defined by the Financial Aid Office, items such as, but not limited to, clothes, medical costs and recreation, etc.

Personal Statement: A typed one-page explanation of the purpose for pursuing a college degree in one's chosen field and career.

Plan of Study: A degree plan which presents the list of courses and descriptions in a specific field of study. Supporting documentation to the plan may include: Program outlines, letters of support and college catalog course descriptions which map out the student's program toward the bachelor degree.

Regional Accreditation: An institutional approval of a college or university that attests to meeting acceptable levels of quality and performance. A regionally accredited institution has the authority to confer the bachelors, masters and doctoral degree to students meeting all academic requirements.

Regular-Enrolled Tribal Member: As defined in the Pueblo of Laguna Constitution ("naturalized" Laguna tribal members and "descendants" are ineligible for tribal or BIA grant funding).

Transcript: An official record of a student's academic courses and grades, which is maintained by the school registrar. Laguna scholars are required to have the institution forward official transcripts to the scholarship office at the end of each term.

Transferable Degree: Typically, an Associate's Degree that can readily transfer to a Baccalaureate degree.

Undergraduate Student: A student pursuing a trade with certification, an associate degree (transferable into a bachelor's) or a bachelor degree.