# GOVERNOR NATHAN DEAL'S
# REALIZING EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT CAN HAPPEN
# SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM
# REGULATIONS – 5200.

## 2011 - 2012 AWARD YEAR

**Effective Date – February 3, 2012**

2082 East Exchange Place
Tucker, Georgia 30084

## 5201. Table of Contents.

### Section


5201. Table of Contents. ..... 2
5202. Program Overview. ..... 4
5203. Definitions. ..... 5
5204. School System Requirements. ..... 11
5204.1. Application Procedures. ..... 11
5204.2. School System Awards. ..... 11
5204.3. Program Participation Requirements. ..... 11
5205. Student Eligibility Requirements to be selected as a REACH Scholar. ..... 13
5205.1. Citizenship. ..... 13
5205.2. Enrollment. ..... 13
5205.3. Financial Requirements. ..... 13
5205.4. Academic Achievement. ..... 13
5205.5. Attendance. ..... 13
5205.6. Discipline and Behavior Requirements. ..... 13
5205.7. Preferences. ..... 14
5206. Continuing Eligibility for REACH Scholars during Middle School and High School. ..... 15
5206.1. Enrollment Requirements. ..... 15
5206.2. Financial Requirements. ..... 15
5206.3. Academic Achievement Requirements. ..... 15
5206.4. Attendance Requirements. ..... 15
5206.5. Discipline/Behavior Requirements. ..... 16
5206.6. Mentoring Requirements. ..... 16
5206.7. Program Event Participation Requirements. ..... 16
5206.8. Graduation Requirements. ..... 16
5206.9. Failure to Meet Middle School and High School Continuing Eligibility Requirements. ..... 16
5207. REACH Scholar Requirements to Receive Award Funding in College. ..... 17
5207.1. Citizenship Requirements. ..... 17
5207.2. Selective Service. ..... 17
5207.3. Default and Refund Due. ..... 17
5207.4. Enrollment Requirements. ..... 17

5207.5. Academic Achievement Requirements. ..... 17
5207.6. Length of Eligibility. ..... 18
5207.7. Drug Free Act. ..... 18
5207.8. Incarceration. ..... 18
5207.9. Eligible Coursework. ..... 18
5207.10. College Student Application Requirements. ..... 19
5208. Award Requirements. ..... 20
5208.1. Award Amounts. ..... 20
5208.2. Adjustments to Award Amounts. ..... 20
5208.3. Disbursement of Funds. ..... 20
5208.4. Payment to REACH Scholars. ..... 20
5208.5. Calculation of Refunds. ..... 20
5208.6. Collection of Refunds. ..... 21
5209. Administrative Reviews and Exceptions. ..... 22
5209.1. Administrative Reviews. ..... 22
5209.2. Exceptions. ..... 22

## 5202. Program Overview.

Governor Deal's Realizing Educational Achievement Can Happen (REACH) Scholarship Program is a needs-based mentorship and scholarship program with specific financial, academic, and behavior eligibility requirements. The purpose of the REACH Scholarship Program is to increase academic persistence and achievement of Georgia's middle and high school students and to increase college access and success for Georgia's low-income and underserved populations.

Individual public K-12 school systems will apply for participation and funding, on behalf of its students.

Participating school systems will nominate and select 7th grade students to participate in the REACH Program. The Program encourages increased parental involvement and offers students the academic and social support of a school coach and mentor. Upon graduation from high school, an eligible student attending a University System of Georgia, Technical College System of Georgia, or HOPE-eligible private postsecondary institution may receive REACH Scholarship funds for use towards any component of the Cost of Attendance. During the 2011-2012 Award Year, school participation is limited to invited school systems.

The REACH Program was established during the 2011-2012 Award Year (State Fiscal Year 2012) as a pilot program and is administered by the Georgia Student Finance Commission, in accordance with these regulations. It is funded by private donations.

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## 5203. Definitions.

**"Academic Year"** means a period of time, usually nine months, during which a Full-Time student is expected to complete the equivalent of two semesters or three quarters of postsecondary coursework.

**"Administrative Review"** means a review by Commission staff of an eligibility determination made by an Eligible Middle School, Eligible High School, and/or Eligible Postsecondary Institution or by the Commission to determine if a REACH Scholarship program rule, policy, or regulation was applied correctly in a student's specific case.

**"Associate Degree"** means a two-year Degree conferred on students by a postsecondary institution upon completion of a unified Undergraduate program of study in an academic discipline or major. Associate Degrees typically require a student to earn at least 60 semester or 90 quarter credit hours.

**"Award Year"** means four consecutive quarters or three consecutive semesters, beginning with the summer term and ending with the spring.

**"Board of Regents"** means the governing body of the University System of Georgia.

**"Certificate"** means an academic credential granted by a postsecondary institution indicating satisfactory completion of training by a student in an organized technical Undergraduate program of study which is not a Diploma program of study, an Associate Degree, Baccalaureate Degree, Graduate Degree or Continuing Education. A Certificate program of study typically requires fewer credit hours than a Diploma program of study.

**"Commission"** means the Georgia Student Finance Commission, the agency responsible for administering certain postsecondary educational student financial aid programs offered by the State of Georgia, and other programs for which funds may be appropriated or assigned to it by the state legislature, or from other sources, from time to time.

**"Continuing Education"** means postsecondary courses designed for personal development, or an extension of the traditional on-campus learning process, and does not lead to credit toward a postsecondary Certificate, Diploma, or Degree.

**"Cost of Attendance"** means the estimated expenses, both direct and indirect, which may be incurred by a student and the student's family to finance the cost of receiving a postsecondary education. As determined by the student's postsecondary institution and as defined by Federal Title IV Regulations, these expenses may include Tuition, fees, room, meals, books, supplies, transportation, and personal expenses.

**"Degree"** means an Associate Degree or Baccalaureate Degree conferred on students by a postsecondary institution, upon completion of a unified Undergraduate program of study in an academic discipline or major.

**"Diploma"** means an academic credential granted by a postsecondary institution indicating satisfactory completion of training by a student in an organized technical Undergraduate program of study which is not a Certificate program of study, an Associate Degree, Baccalaureate Degree or Graduate Degree. A Diploma program of study typically requires more credit hours than a Certificate program of study.

**"Distance Learning"** means an educational process that is characterized by the separation, in time or place, between instructor and student. It may include courses offered principally through the use of television, audio, video cassettes/discs, correspondence, audio/computer conferencing, and transmission by computer, Internet, open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, or satellite.

**"Eligible High School"** means any public secondary educational institution in Georgia authorized to grant high school diplomas and accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. Any high school not meeting the definition of an "Eligible High School" is considered to be an ineligible high school.

**"Eligible Middle School"** means any public secondary educational institution in Georgia authorized to educate students in the 6$^{th}$ through 8$^{th}$ grades and accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. Any middle school not meeting the definition of an "Eligible Middle School" is considered to be an ineligible middle school.

**"Eligible Non-Citizen"** means a person who, in accordance with the Federal Title IV Program Regulations, is a United States permanent resident with a permanent resident card (I-551); or a conditional permanent resident (I-551C); or the holder of an arrival-departure record (I-94) showing any one of the following designations: " refugee", " asylum granted", " parolee" (I-94 confirms paroled for a minimum of one year and status has not expired), or "Cuban-Haitian entrant". Victims of human trafficking, in accordance with the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act, may also be considered Eligible Non-Citizens. Persons with an F1 or F2 student visa, a J1 or J2 exchange visitor visa, or a G series visa are not Eligible Non-Citizens.

**"Eligible Postsecondary Institution"** means an institution that is:
(1) a unit of the University System of Georgia; or
(2) a branch of the Technical College System of Georgia; or
(3) a private non-proprietary (non-profit) postsecondary institution located in Georgia that is eligible to participate in the HOPE Scholarship program, which is not a unit of the University System of Georgia, which is not a unit of the Technical College System of Georgia, which is not a four-year or Graduate level institution of higher education, that is, or is a part of, a college or university system that is owned and operated by a state other than Georgia which is not a Graduate school or college of theology or divinity, and

which is accredited or holds candidate status for accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools or was previously accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges or Schools within the last seven years and which otherwise meets the requirements of this definition, except for lack of accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools; or
(4) a private proprietary (for-profit) postsecondary institution located in Georgia that is eligible to participate in the HOPE Scholarship Program, which is a Baccalaureate Degree granting postsecondary institution, which is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, which is not a Bible college, which is not a Graduate school or college of theology or divinity, which admits as regular students only persons who have a high school diploma, a General Education Development (GED) diploma, or a degree from an accredited postsecondary institution, whose students are eligible to participate in the Federal Pell Grant program, which has been reviewed and approved for operation and for receipt of HOPE Scholarship funds by the Georgia Nonpublic Postsecondary Education Commission, and which is domiciled and incorporated in the State of Georgia and which has been in existence for at least ten years and which met all requirements of Part 4 of this definition by January 1, 2011.

**"Enroll", "Enrolled" or "Enrollment"** means a student has completed the registration requirements, as defined by the postsecondary institution, except for payment of Tuition and fees.

**"Exception"** means a formal action by the Commission to waive a specific program regulation for a student.

**"Full-Time"** means Enrollment for the equivalent of at least 12 semester or 12 quarter credit hours during a term at a postsecondary institution.

**"Future First-Generation College Students"** means an individual whose Parent(s) or guardian(s) have not attended a postsecondary institution, and whose Parent(s) or guardian(s) are not currently enrolled at a postsecondary institution.

**"Georgia Resident" or "Georgia Residency"** means an individual or the status of such individual who is a United States citizen or Eligible Non-Citizen and meets the in-state Tuition requirements of the Board of Regents or the governing body of the TCSG Eligible Postsecondary Institution he or she attends, or meets the criteria of the *Georgia Residency Requirements for State Programs Regulation,* as specified and limited by these regulations.

**"Grade Eligibility Review"** means an evaluation of student eligibility based on the student's grades or calculated Cumulative Grade Point Average at the end of a grading period.

**"High School Cumulative Grade Point Average"** means the calculation of high school grades earned in core coursework to determine student's "standing" and eligibility for the REACH Scholarship at the Grade Eligibility Review. The high school

Cumulative Grade Point Average is calculated, by the specific school at which the student attends, on a traditional 4.00 scale, to the hundredth decimal, without rounding. A traditional 4.00 scale is defined as 4.00 = A+, A, A-, 90.00 or above; 3.00 = B+, B, B-, 80.00 – 89.99; 2.00 = C+, C, C-, 70.00 – 79.99; 1.00 = D+, D, D-, 60.00-69.99; and 0 = F, 59.99 or below.

**"Home Institution"** means an Eligible Postsecondary Institution in which the student is Enrolled and is in a Matriculated status working toward a Degree, Diploma, or Certificate.

**"Home Study"** means an arrangement whereby a school-age child is involved in a course of study in which instruction is carried out at home rather than in a classroom and is governed by and operating in accordance with the requirements of O.C.G.A. § 20-2-690 (c).

**"Host Institution"** means a postsecondary institution a student is temporarily attending as a Transient student.

**"Incarcerated"** means to be confined by competent public authority or under due legal process. A student is considered Incarcerated if he or she is serving a criminal sentence in a federal, state, or local penitentiary, prison, jail, reformatory, work farm, half-way house, or similar correctional institution (whether operated by the government or a contractor) or is sentenced to home detention.

**"Learning Support"** means remedial or developmental coursework required by the postsecondary institution or chosen by the student that does not count toward the student's Degree, Certificate, or Diploma program requirements.

**"Level"** means the discipline level or classification of a particular behavior infraction of the progressive discipline model established by Georgia Department of Education. Each level represents more serious misbehavior and consequences as follows:

a. **"Level I"** means minor acts of misconduct which interfere with orderly school procedures, functions, extracurricular activities, approved transportation, or a student's personal learning.

b. **"Level II"** means intermediate acts of misconduct which require administrative intervention. These acts include, but are not limited to, acts of minor misconduct and misbehaviors directed against persons or property but which do not endanger the safety and/or well-being of others.

c. **"Level III"** means serious acts of misconduct including, but not limited to, serious disruptions of the school environment, threats to health, safety or property, and/or other acts of serious misconduct. These serious acts of misconduct may result in immediate out-of-school suspension.

d. **"Level IV"** means the most serious level of misconduct, which are so serious, they may require the intervention of outside agencies and/or law enforcement. Health, safety and well-being are seriously threatened by this level of act.

**"Matriculated"** means a student is fully admitted and Enrolled at a postsecondary institution in a unified academic program of study leading to a Degree, Diploma, or Certificate.

**"Middle School Grade Averages"** means the grades earned at the end of the grading period in core coursework by the middle school student that are used to determine student's "standing" and eligibility for the REACH Scholarship at each Grade Eligibility Review. The middle school grade ranges are on a scale defined as: A+, A, A-, 90.00 or above; B+, B, B-, 80.00 – 89.99; C+, C, C-, 70.00 – 79.99; D+, D, D-, 60.00-69.99; and F, 59.99 or below.

**"Parent"** means the natural/biological mother or father, adoptive parent, or United States court-appointed legal guardian of a student, or the adult "sponsor" participating on behalf of the student.

**"Participating School System"** means a public school system in the State of Georgia that has been selected to participate in the REACH Scholarship Program.

**"Postsecondary Cumulative Grade Point Average"** means the calculation of postsecondary grades earned, as determined and calculated according to the Eligible Postsecondary Institution's GPA calculation methodology.

**"REACH Scholar" or "Scholar"** means a student who, nominated and selected based on eligibility requirements starting in 2012, is participating in the REACH program and meeting program requirements during middle school, high school, and college.

**"REACH Scholarship Program" or "REACH Scholarship"** means a State of Georgia student financial aid program that provides needs-based scholarship assistance to Georgia Residents attending Eligible Postsecondary Institutions. The REACH Scholarship Program is funded by private sector donations, and administered by the Commission in accordance with these regulations.

**"Satisfactory Academic Progress"** means the academic standards required of students by their postsecondary institutions in order to be eligible to receive payment from Federal Title IV Programs, in accordance with Federal Title IV Regulations.

**"Study Away"** means postsecondary credit-earning coursework approved by an Eligible Postsecondary Institution for its students in locations outside the State of Georgia, including locations in foreign countries**.**

**"Technical College System of Georgia" or "TCSG"** means the State of Georgia's unified system of public technical colleges which is governed by the Board of Commissioners of the Technical College System of Georgia.

**"Transient"** means temporary admission to a Host Institution for the purpose of completing coursework and earning postsecondary credit that the Home Institution has agreed to accept as transferable postsecondary credit.

**"Truant"** means any child subject to compulsory attendance who during the secondary school calendar year has more than five days of unexcused absences.

**"Tuition"** means the charges to a student for postsecondary academic instruction without regard to other fees such as technology, activity, athletic, health, etc.

**"University System of Georgia" or "USG"** means the State of Georgia's unified system of public colleges and universities, which is governed by the Board of Regents.

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## 5204. School System Requirements.

### 5204.1. Application Procedures.

For fiscal year 2012 (FY12), the participating school systems will be selected and notified by the Commission.

For fiscal year 2013 (FY13) and subsequent years, an open application process will be made available for all school systems during the fall.

### 5204.2. School System Awards.

School systems selected to participate in the REACH Scholarship Program will be awarded funds for two years. The school system will be allotted a specific number of scholarships, to be awarded to students within the school system selected as REACH Scholars, in year one of the award. The allotment in year two will be 50% of the number of scholarships awarded in year one, rounded up to the nearest whole number. School systems are required to raise matching funds to provide an equal number of scholarships provided by the REACH Scholarship Program in year two.

### 5204.3. Program Participation Requirements.

School districts selected to participate in the REACH Scholarship Program must agree to:

a. Establish a nomination and application process to identify and select REACH Scholars,

b. Establish a mentoring program, including but not limited to: recruiting and training mentors, conducting mentor background checks, and developing or identifying mentoring curriculum,

c. Identify a school coach who will monitor student academic performance, behavior, and attendance on a weekly basis and meet with each scholar a minimum of one time per month to develop and discuss education and career plans,

d. Establish disciplinary guidelines for students failing to maintain eligibility requirements,

e. Plan and hold one signing ceremony for selected scholars per school year and a minimum of two activity nights per school year for scholars and their parents,

f. Involve scholars in extracurricular school events, as appropriate (e.g. open house tours, graduation ceremonies, future signing ceremonies, meetings),

g. Raise funds to cover administrative costs, matching scholarship funds in year two, and 100% of the scholarships awarded in year three and beyond, and

h. Prepare an annual program progress report, to be submitted to the Commission. Details of the information that must be included in the program progress report will be provided to participating school systems.

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## 5205. Student Eligibility Requirements to be selected as a REACH Scholar.

### 5205.1. Citizenship.

A student must be a United States citizen or an Eligible Non-Citizen for 12 consecutive months immediately prior to the first day of classes of the spring term of the Reach Scholar's 7th grade school year.

### 5205.2. Enrollment.

A student must be enrolled as a full-time student at an Eligible Middle School.

### 5205.3. Financial Requirements.

A student must qualify for the Free or Reduced Lunch Program, in accordance with O.C.G.A. § 49-4-5.

### 5205.4. Academic Achievement.

A middle school student must have a grade of a "C" or better in each core course, including any foreign language courses, for the past two reporting periods for schools on a semester system or four reporting periods for schools on a quarter system. If grades are given in numerical values, each numerical grade earned must be a minimum of a 75.00 or higher in each core course, including any foreign language courses, for the past two reporting periods for schools on a semester system or four grading periods for schools on a quarter system.

### 5205.5. Attendance.

a. A student's attendance record must demonstrate the student's adherence to the established policies and procedures of the local board of education the mandatory state school attendance policies (O.C.G.A. §20-2-690.1) over the previous two semesters or four quarters.

b. Any student deemed Truant is ineligible for the REACH Scholarship Program.

c. School systems may establish and require REACH Scholars to adhere to more rigorous attendance requirements for the purpose of REACH Scholarship eligibility.

### 5205.6. Discipline and Behavior Requirements.

a. A student must not have more than two total combined Level I and/or Level II disciplinary infractions and zero out-of-school suspensions, as defined by Georgia's Progressive Discipline Model (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-735), during the two semesters or four quarters immediately preceding the spring term of the student's 7th grade year.

b. School systems may establish and require REACH Scholars to adhere to more rigorous discipline eligibility requirements for the purpose of REACH Scholarship eligibility.

**5205.7. Preferences.**

Participating School Systems will give preference during the selection of REACH Scholars to:

a. Students who are Future First-Generation College Students,

b. Students who have fewer than three excused absences and one unexcused absence during the two semesters or four quarters immediately preceding the spring term of the student's 7th grade year, and

c. Students who have zero disciplinary infractions during the two semesters or four quarters immediately preceding the spring term of the student's 7th grade year.

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## 5206. Continuing Eligibility for REACH Scholars during Middle School and High School.

### 5206.1. Enrollment Requirements.

a. A REACH Scholar must be enrolled as a full-time student at an Eligible Middle School or an Eligible High School.

b. If a REACH Scholar transfers out of the Participating School System, the student may remain eligible as long as the student transfers into another Participating School System. The REACH Scholar must continue to meet all REACH Scholarship Program requirements and any specific requirements of the Participating School System to which the student transferred.

c. If a REACH Scholar transfers to a school system that is not participating in the REACH program, the student will no longer be eligible for participation in the REACH Scholarship Program and will not be eligible to receive the scholarship upon high school graduation.

### 5206.2. Financial Requirements.

a. A student must qualify for the Free or Reduced Lunch Program, in accordance with O.C.G.A. § 49-4-5.

b. If a student's family experiences a change in financial circumstances and/or if the student is adopted or placed with a foster family and the child no longer qualifies for the Free or Reduced Lunch Program, the student will remain an eligible REACH Scholar, as long as the student continues to meet program requirements.

### 5206.3. Academic Achievement Requirements.

a. A participating middle school student must maintain grades of "C" or better (75.00 or better in numerical form) in all core classes, including foreign language coursework.

b. A participating high school student must maintain a GPA of 2.5 or better in all core classes, including foreign language coursework.

c. Grade eligibility will be officially assessed through a Grade Eligibility Review at the end of each grading period.

### 5206.4. Attendance Requirements.

REACH Scholars must adhere to the school's stated attendance policy and attend classes regularly. Students with more than one unexcused and/or more than 3 excused absences in one year may be subject to review and risk losing their place in the program.

**5206.5. Discipline/Behavior Requirements.**

a. A REACH Scholar must have no more than two total combined Level I and/or Level II infractions and zero out-of-school suspensions per school year.

b. A REACH Scholar convicted of committing certain felony offenses involving marijuana, controlled substances, and/or dangerous drugs, is immediately ineligible for further participation in the REACH Scholarship Program.

c. A REACH Scholar must meet stated school and school system drug and alcohol use policies.

    1. A REACH Scholar who fails to comply with the school and school system's drug and alcohol policies will be immediately withdrawn from the REACH Scholarship Program.

**5206.6. Mentoring Requirements.**

A REACH Scholar must, to the extent possible, meet with his or her assigned mentor once every two weeks during the school year.

**5206.7. Program Event Participation Requirements.**

A REACH Scholar, and his or her Parent, must attend all scheduled REACH Scholarship Program events, activities, programs, and meetings. A written notice will be required from the REACH Scholar's parent to excuse the REACH Scholar from attendance at a specific event.

**5206.8. Graduation Requirements.**

A REACH Scholar must meet all State of Georgia and Georgia Department of Education requirements to graduate from high school and receive a high school diploma from an Eligible High School.

**5206.9. Failure to Meet Middle School and High School Continuing Eligibility Requirements.**

Unless specifically stated otherwise in these regulations, REACH Scholars are subject to adverse consequences up to possible termination from program participation, as determined appropriate by the Participating School System, for failure to maintain the eligibility requirements of the REACH Scholarship Program.

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## 5207. REACH Scholar Requirements to Receive Award Funding in College.

### 5207.1. Citizenship Requirements.

A REACH Scholar must be a United States citizen or an Eligible Non-Citizen at the time of initial participation in the REACH Scholarship Program and must continue to meet Citizenship requirements while Enrolled in an Eligible Postsecondary Institution.

### 5207.2. Selective Service.

A REACH Scholar must be in compliance with United States Selective Service System requirements, if such requirements are applicable, prior to receiving REACH Scholarship award funds.

### 5207.3. Default and Refund Due.

A student must not be in default on a Federal Title IV or State of Georgia educational loan, nor owe a refund on a Federal Title IV or State of Georgia student financial aid program, nor in any other way be in violation of Federal Title IV Regulations or State of Georgia student financial aid program regulations. A student must meet the requirements of this section at the time funds are disbursed by the Commission on behalf of the student. If such student has repaid the defaulted loan or refund due in full, or resolved the default status, then he or she may be eligible to receive REACH Scholarship funds beginning with the school term in which repayment was made in full, but not retroactively for previous school terms. A student's default status can be resolved one of four ways: 1) completing an acceptable rehabilitation plan 2) having the loan repurchased by the original lender and the default status reversed, 3) by consolidating the loan out of a default status, or 4) by receiving an approved Title IV debt settlement, to include a compromised settlement.

### 5207.4. Enrollment Requirements.

a. A REACH Scholar must be Enrolled at an Eligible Postsecondary Institution in a Matriculated status leading to a Certificate, Diploma, or Degree.

b. A REACH Scholar must be Enrolled Full-Time through the last day of the institution's drop/add period to be eligible for REACH Scholarship funds.

### 5207.5. Academic Achievement Requirements.

a. A REACH Scholar must meet Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP), as defined and certified by his or her Eligible Postsecondary Institution.

b. A Reach Scholar must maintain a minimum cumulative Postsecondary GPA of 2.0 or higher.

**5207.6. Length of Eligibility.**

a. A REACH scholar must Enroll in an Eligible Postsecondary Institution and begin receiving REACH Scholarship awards within 2 years of the date of his or her high school graduation.

b. A REACH Scholar's eligibility to receive awards expires 5 years from the date the student began receiving REACH Scholarship funds.

c. A REACH Scholar may have his or her length of eligibility extended if he or she serves on active duty in the military during the 2 years immediately following the date of his or her high school graduation or if the student is called to and serves on active duty in the military during the 5 year period following the first date that REACH Scholarship funds were received. The length of such extension will be based on the amount of time served on active duty, rounded up to the nearest whole year.

**5207.7. Drug Free Act.**

A REACH Scholar convicted of committing certain felony offenses involving marijuana, controlled substances, or dangerous drugs, is ineligible for REACH Scholarship award funds starting on the day of conviction, in accordance with the Georgia Drug-Free Postsecondary Education Act of 1990, O.C.G.A. § 20-1-24. REACH Scholars will not be allowed to regain eligibility for the REACH Scholarship award.

**5207.8. Incarceration.**

A REACH Scholar is ineligible to participate in or receive funding from the REACH Scholarship Program if Incarcerated.

**5207.9. Eligible Coursework.**

a. A REACH Scholar who Enrolls in Learning Support (remedial) coursework is eligible for REACH payment.

b. A REACH Scholar participating in Distance Learning coursework is eligible to receive REACH payment. The institution offering the Distance Learning coursework must be an Eligible Postsecondary Institution.

c. A Transient student is eligible to receive REACH payment. Both the Home Institution and the Host Institution must be Eligible Postsecondary Institutions. The Host Institution awards REACH funds to the Transient student based on certification of eligibility from the Home Institution. The Home Institution is responsible for verifying the eligibility of their Transient students. Upon the student's return to the Home Institution, the Host Institution must provide information necessary for the Home Institution to determine continued REACH eligibility. A student taking coursework at his or her Home Institution and a Host Institution during the same school term is eligible for REACH payment at only the Home Institution. The Home

Institution is liable for the return of funds the student receives at the Host Institution, if the Home Institution erroneously certifies the student's eligibility to the Host Institution.

d. A REACH Scholar Enrolled in an Eligible Postsecondary Institution may qualify for REACH payment while participating in a Study Away program. The student's Home Institution must be an Eligible Postsecondary Institution and must approve the Study Away program for credit toward the student's program of study requirements prior to the student's departure. The REACH payment must take place through the Home Institution, unless the student is participating in a Study Away program via another Eligible Postsecondary Institution, then the process for Transient students is used (Refer to (c) of this section). The Home Institution may coordinate the Study Away program through institutions that are not eligible to participate in the REACH program. For example, the student's Home Institution may have an arrangement with an out-of-state institution's Study Away program.

e. A REACH Scholar is ineligible to use REACH payment for coursework classified by his or her Eligible Postsecondary Institution as Continuing Education or Audit coursework.

f. A REACH Scholar is ineligible for REACH payment for coursework from which he or she totally withdrew if, as a result, such coursework does not appear on the student's academic transcript as a "Withdrawal" or any other similar identification.

**5207.10. College Student Application Requirements.**

a. A REACH Scholar must complete a REACH Scholar Enrollment Verification Form to be submitted to Georgia Student Finance Commission on a semester or quarterly basis.

b. A REACH Scholar must complete and submit to the Commission the Enrollment Verification Form no later than the last day of the term for which the REACH Scholarship award is sought.

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## 5208. Award Requirements.

REACH Scholarship awards may be used towards any portion of a REACH Scholar's Cost of Attendance and are not limited to paying tuition and fees.

### 5208.1. Award Amounts.

The REACH Scholarship award amount is a maximum of $2,500 per Academic Year, for up to four years. Students are eligible for a maximum amount of $1250 per semester or $833 per quarter. Students awarded the maximum amount per semester or quarter are limited to receiving payment during two semesters or three quarters; however, students awarded less than the maximum amount per semester or quarter may receive funding for three semesters or four quarters per year, so long as the maximum term and yearly award amounts are not exceeded.

### 5208.2. Adjustments to Award Amounts.

A REACH Scholar's award amount must be reduced if the student is receiving any other student financial aid from federal, state, institutional or private sources, which in combination with the REACH Scholarship award amount would exceed the student's Cost of Attendance. The student's REACH Scholarship award, plus any other student financial aid, must not exceed the student's Cost of Attendance.

### 5208.3. Disbursement of Funds.

The Commission will process Enrollment Verification forms and automatically initiate payments to Eligible Postsecondary Institutions on behalf of Eligible REACH Scholars.

### 5208.4. Payment to REACH Scholars.

REACH Scholarship award funds may be applied to any of the Eligible Postsecondary Institution's direct charges, such as Tuition, fees, room and meals. If a REACH Scholar does not owe a balance, the institution shall pay any remaining amount of the REACH Scholar award to the student.

### 5208.5. Calculation of Refunds.

a. If a student officially withdraws, drops out, drops hours, is expelled, or otherwise fails to complete a period of Enrollment, and is entitled to a refund, a portion of such refund may need to be returned to the REACH Program.

b. If applicable, the Eligible Postsecondary Institution must first apply the Federal Title IV Return of Funds policy for any federal aid the student may have received. To determine the refund to REACH Program, the institution must then apply the institution's refund policy, if different from Federal Title IV Return of Funds policy, to the student's original REACH award.

c. The Eligible Postsecondary Institution must determine the amount of the refund due back to the REACH Program and notify the Commission. The amount of the REACH award not determined to be owed back to the REACH Program is retained by the institution and/or the REACH Scholar.

**5208.6. Collection of Refunds.**

A student who owes a refund to the Commission should pay the Eligible Postsecondary Institution and the Eligible Postsecondary Institution should pay the Commission or, at its sole discretion, the Commission may require the student to pay the refund directly to the Commission.

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## 5209. Administrative Reviews and Exceptions.

### 5209.1. Administrative Reviews.

a. The REACH Scholarship Program Regulations are applied to each student considered for REACH Scholarship funds by appropriate officials. If a middle school or high school student believes a REACH Scholarship rule or regulation was incorrectly applied in his or her case, the student must seek resolve from the Participating School System. The Commission will *only* review requests for an Administrative Review from REACH Scholars enrolled in an Eligible Postsecondary Institution and seeking award funding.

b. In order for an Administrative Review to be considered, the REACH Scholar must submit a written request for an Administrative Review to the Commission office within 45 days of receiving notice of denial from the Eligible Postsecondary Institution. If additional information is requested from the student, it must be provided within the time frame specified by the Commission. The Commission decides a case based only on documentation provided, rather than a personal presentation.

### 5209.2. Exceptions.

Requests for Exceptions to the REACH Scholarship Program Regulations cannot be considered, reviewed, or granted under any circumstances.

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