



WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ACT MEMO

2009 Wisconsin Act 306
[2009 Senate Bill 407]

Academic Excellence Scholarships

Background

Under the Academic Excellence Higher Education Scholarship Program, the Higher Educational Aids Board (HEAB) awards scholarships to the seniors with the highest grade point average (GPA) from each high school in the state that enroll in a public or private institution of higher education in Wisconsin. These students are referred to as “scholars.” The number of scholars that may be designated in each high school is based on the number of students in the high school.

Designation of Alternate Scholars

2009 Wisconsin Act 306 (the Act) amends the law pertaining to designation of alternate scholars so that the process is the same for all high schools, regardless of whether the school weights its GPAs.

Under the Act, if a designated scholar declines a scholarship, a high school must designate as alternate scholars any seniors with the same GPA as the scholar or, if there is no other student with the same GPA, any remaining seniors with the next highest GPA, but not less than 3.800 or the equivalent.

Prior to enactment of the Act, if a high school did weight its courses for purposes of determining GPAs, and no other student had the same GPA as the original scholar, the school could designate as an alternate scholar the student with the next highest GPA. However, if a high school did *not* weigh its courses, an alternate scholar was required to have the same GPA as the original scholar.

This provision first applies to scholarships awarded for the 2010-11 academic year.

This memo provides a brief description of the Act. For more detailed information, consult the text of the law and related legislative documents at the Legislature’s Web site at: <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/>.

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Scholarship Eligibility for Students Not Continuously Enrolled in an Institution of Higher Education

The law provides that if a student is awarded a scholarship, is enrolled full time in a participating institution of higher education, and maintains at least a 3.000 GPA, they are eligible for a scholarship in the subsequent year. The Act specifies that if the student does not enroll in a participating institution of higher education in the subsequent year, they are eligible for the scholarship in the second year following the year in which they previously received the scholarship.

This provision first applies to a scholarship recipient who is enrolled in an institution of higher education in the 2009-10 academic year.

Effective date: May 27, 2010.

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