

**BOARD OF REGENTS
BRIEFING PAPER
Silver State Opportunity Grant Program**

BACKGROUND & POLICY CONTEXT OF ISSUE:

The 2015 Legislature passed [Senate Bill 227](#) to create the Silver State Opportunity Grant Program (SSOG Program), a state-supported financial aid program, for the purpose of awarding need-based grants to eligible low-income students who are college-ready in order to pay for a portion of the cost of education at a community college or state college within the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE). This unique program is based on a shared responsibility model and guided by a philosophy for awarding grant aid that is based on the total cost of attendance (tuition and fees, books and supplies, room and board, and other living expenses) being shared by partners (the state, federal government, family, and the student). The bill sets forth the eligibility criteria for a grant from the SSOG Program and requires the Board of Regents adopt regulations to administer the program, including prescribing the methodology for calculating costs and the amount of the award, and establishing the process by which a student may meet the 15 credit-hour requirement under the bill.

Based on testimony during the legislative session and in consultation with the Financial Aid Directors at the NSHE community colleges and Nevada State College, System staff developed a policy for the Board's consideration to govern the administration of the SSOG Program. As required under the proposed policy, the Chancellor will establish procedures governing the more detailed operation of the SSOG Program.

SPECIFIC ACTIONS BEING RECOMMENDED OR REQUESTED:

To comply with the passage of Senate Bill 227, amend *Title 4, Chapter 18* of the *Handbook* to create a new section establishing the Silver State Opportunity Grant Program and specifying the policies governing the award of grants under the program at each community college and state college. In addition, delete current *Section 10* (Nevada State Nursing Loan Program) under *Title 4, Chapter 18*, as this program is no longer in operation. (See attached policy proposal.)

IMPETUS (WHY NOW?):

This proposal is brought forward to establish in Board policy the Silver State Opportunity Grant in response to S.B. 227, which was passed by the 2015 Legislature and is effective on passage and approval for purposes of adopting regulations and performing administrative tasks necessary to carry out the provisions of the bill, and on July 1, 2015, for all other purposes.

BULLET POINTS TO SUPPORT REQUEST/RECOMMENDATION:

- This proposed policy is required for institutions to administer the Silver State Opportunity Grant Program (SSOG Program).
- Adoption of the policy will provide immediate guidance for students and administration at NSHE community colleges and Nevada State College to award grants to eligible, low-income students.
- Due to the limited dollars available in federal, state and institutional financial aid programs, financial aid covered only 55.4% of total need for NSHE students in 2012-13. The SSOG Program will help meet the critical financial needs of NSHE students and allow them to focus more on the completion of their degree.
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POTENTIAL ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE REQUEST/RECOMMENDATION:

None have been presented at this time.

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COMPLIANCE WITH BOARD POLICY:

Consistent With Current Board Policy: Title # _____ Chapter # _____ Section # _____
 Amends Current Board Policy: Title #_4_____ Chapter #_18_____ Section #_10 and

POLICY PROPOSAL
TITLE 4, CHAPTER 18, *new* SECTION 10
Silver State Opportunity Grant Program

- b. The Student Contribution may be covered by, but is not limited to, the following:*
- i. Student earnings or savings;*
 - ii. Private, institutional, state or federal scholarships, including the Governor Guinn Millennium Scholarship;*
 - iii. Grants not listed under subsection 6 of this section;*
 - iv. Veterans education benefits;*
 - v. Student loans; and*
 - vi. Financial assistance from family or friends.*

5. Family Contribution – The Family Contribution shall be equivalent to the federal nine-month Estimated Family Contribution (EFC), as calculated by the U.S. Department of Education based on FAFSA data and reported on the Institutional Student Information Record (ISIR). The EFC may be prorated for an award period of less than 9 months.

6. Federal Contribution

- a. The Federal contribution shall be equivalent to the total of federal grant aid a student is awarded during the same award year from the following programs only:*

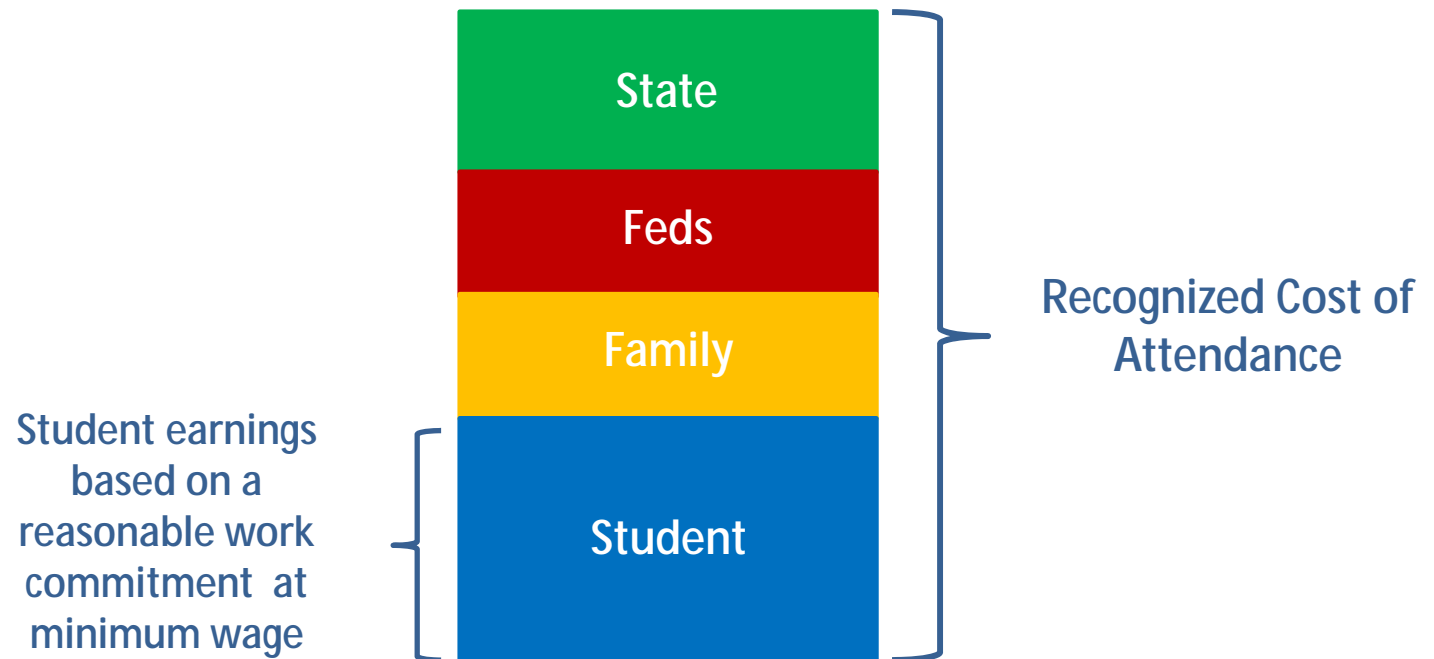
- i. Federal Pell Grant; (am)-12(s)-1(on)-4(f)51()TJ 0 Tc 0 Tw 8.1b-6(l)30.81-5(a)-4(l)-166(0*

Senate Bill 227

The Silver State Opportunity Grant

Senate Bill 227: Shared Responsibility Model (SRM) for State Supported Financial Aid

The SRM is a philosophy for awarding grant aid that is based on the **total cost of attendance** (tuition and fees and living expenses) being shared by **partners** (the state, feds, family, and the student).



Source: *States in the Driver's Seat: Leveraging State Aid to Align Policies and Promote Access, Success and Affordability*. WICHE, 2014.

Silver State Opportunity Grant Eligibility Criteria (Section 3)

- f* Enrolled full time – 15 credits
- š Enrolled in a program of study leading to a degree or certificate
- f* College Ready – evidenced by placement in to a college level course pursuant to the Board of Regents' placement policy (*Title 4, Chapter 16, Section 1*)
- f* Nevada resident
- f* Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

EXAMPLES: How the SRM will work in practice

	Very Low Income Student (0 EFC)	Working Poor Student (very small EFC)	Working Poor Student (small EFC)
Annual Cost of Education ¹	\$17,751	\$17,751	\$17,751
Student Contribution ²	\$8,000	\$8,000	\$8,000
Family Contribution ³	\$0	\$4,000	\$6,000
Federal Contributions ⁴	\$5,730	\$1,780	\$0
State Contribution (SRM grant)	\$4,021 /year or \$2,010.50 /Fall & Spring semester	\$3,971 /year or \$1,985.50 /Fall & Spring semester	\$3,751 /year or \$1,875.50 / Fall & Spring semester

¹ Cost of Education (Section 5.1) based on federal methodology and includes tuition and fees, books and supplies, room
\$1,875.50

Graduation Rates by Credit Load



% Graduated

College Participation

Nevada:
Among the Lowest

Source: Postsecondary Education Opportunity, September 2013

Access and Affordability

Percent of Median Family Income Needed to Pay for College*
2 Year Institutions, 2011 12





