

**KALAMAZOO COMMUNITY FOUNDATION  
EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION PERMANENT FUND**

Revised - May 2017

**SCHOLARSHIP SELECTION AND AWARD GUIDELINES**

**1. NAME OF THE SCHOLARSHIP**

Excellence in Education Scholarship  
Excellence in Education Incentive Award

**2. SPONSOR AND PURPOSE OF THE SCHOLARSHIP**

This fund was established in 1987 by the Excellence in Education Steering Committee for the purpose of recognizing the important role K-12 public and non-public schools play in the life and well being of our community. The goals of this program are to recognize and reward students who achieve academic excellence; to recognize educators who have had a significant influence on the lives of the student scholarship recipients; to encourage and support educators as they strive for professional excellence; and to reinforce the crucial link between citizen interest/ support and the quality of education.

**3. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

**Incentive Grant**

Teachers and administrators who serve in the public, charter and non-public schools within Kalamazoo County are eligible to compete for **Incentive Award Grants**.

**Scholarship Award**

The nominee for an **Excellence in Education Scholarship** must be a student within the top 2% of his/her graduating class in a high school within Kalamazoo County.

**4. SELECTION CRITERIA**

**Incentive Grant**

Grant recipients are selected using the criteria published annually in the Incentive Award Application brochure. This enables the Steering Committee to change the criteria in order for the program to maintain its vitality.

**Scholarship Award**

Participating schools select their student nominees for recognition based on a 3.7 or better GPA through the first semester of their senior year and be in the top 2% of their graduating class. The quota for each high school is 1 nominee for every 50 students.

## 5. AWARD AMOUNT

### **Incentive Grant**

Two (2) types Incentive Grants will be awarded: Multi-Educator/Building-Wide in the amount of \$1,000 and District-Wide/Multi-District/School Cluster in the amount of \$1,500. Districts also give a 25% match for each award given to teachers in their district. Award amounts are based on the fluidity of Excellence in Education funds.

### **Scholarship Award**

Currently, the scholarship award is \$1,000. The scholarship amounts are based on the fluidity of the Excellence in Education funds.

## 6. DURATION OF AWARD

### **Incentive Grant**

The Incentive Grant is to be used within one (1) year, but funds may be carried over for up to a year in special circumstances upon request. Reconciliation of grant funds is due to the Kalamazoo Community Foundation representative within two (2) weeks of the completion of the project for which it was funded. Award recipients are eligible to receive the Individual Grant once every three (3) years. (Two (2) years between the award year and application year.) A teacher may receive an individual grant and a multi-grant in the same year.

### **Scholarship Award**

The scholarship awards are for one (1) year. The student may request to escrow the award for up to four (4) years, however, it is the student's responsibility to request the use of the award by contacting the Kalamazoo Community Foundation in the summer of the fourth year or the award will be forfeited.

## PROCEDURES & POLICIES

## 7. APPLICATION PROCEDURES

### **Incentive Grant**

Teachers and educators applying for an Incentive Award must submit their proposals to the superintendent's office of their school system as designated in the Application Brochure. The superintendent in turn will forward all grants to the superintendent of the Kalamazoo RESA.

### **Scholarship Award**

This is a nomination process done by the individual school systems based on a grade point average of 3.7 or higher. Nominees will each select one (1) Significant Educator.

## 8. SELECTION PROCEDURES AND POLICIES

### **Incentive Grant**

Grant proposals will be reviewed first at the local level for merit and relevancy to the district's educational program. Those endorsed will be forwarded to the Kalamazoo RESA's Superintendent's office and then to the Educator's Task Force for final judging.

### **Scholarship Award**

- Each school district and non-public school will select their top graduating seniors up to their allocated quota of 2% of their senior class as determined by the first State Aid Count day. This equates to one (1) for every fifty (50) students.
- Non-public schools with less than the number of seniors needed to allow for one (1) student will jointly determine one (1) student to recommend.
- Participating schools have the responsibility to identify their top students, using their local formula.
- Completed nomination forms must be returned to the Student Scholarship Task Force by the end of the first week of February or a date indicated on the notice to the schools.
- Students selected will receive notification and have the opportunity to select a Significant Educator by the end of the second week in February.
- All informational forms must be returned to the Student Scholarship Task Force by the end of February or as indicated in the annual information to the schools.

### **Significant Educators**

Each scholarship recipient will choose one (1) educator who was influential during their educational development. Educator will be defined to include any person hired by the school district or non-public school such as teachers, administrators, counselors, custodians, bus drivers, food service workers, secretaries, teacher aides, coaches, etc.

## **9. AWARD PROCEDURES AND POLICIES**

### **Incentive Grant**

- A representative of the Excellence in Education Steering Committee notifies recipients of their selection in March.
- School districts are asked to recognize recipients at a board meeting in May; or in the manner deemed appropriate for each district; at which time, letters of congratulations and checks from the Kalamazoo Community Foundation are presented in a manner appropriate for each district.
- It is the responsibility of the Kalamazoo Community Foundation to see that the award checks, made payable to the school districts, are in the hands of the superintendents during the first week in May.

### **Scholarship Awards**

- Scholarship Recipients are notified of their selection in February on behalf of the Excellence in Education Steering Committee and the Kalamazoo Community Foundation.
- Significant Educators are notified of their selection in March.
- Scholarship recipients and Significant Educators are recognized at a reception during April or May.
- At the reception, scholarship recipients receive a letter of congratulations from the Kalamazoo Community Foundation along with a response form, which must be returned to the Foundation before the scholarship check can be processed.
- Scholarship checks are made payable to the educational institution and mailed directly

to the institution by the end of the first week in August along with a policy letter outlining the manner in which the funds may be used. Recipients will receive notification that the check has been mailed to the college/university.

- If a student is unable to attend college or other post high school training during the first year after receiving the award, the funds will be placed in escrow for the student.
- The student will be allowed to use the funds for summer school or within four (4) years of the award date.
- It is the responsibility of the award recipient to notify the educational institution of the scholarship.

## 10. PUBLICITY

### **Incentive Grant**

In addition to the recognition given by the individual school districts, districts may publicize award winners as they choose. The Excellence in Education Steering Committee will also prepare a press release announcing the award recipients annually.

### **Student Award**

It is the responsibility of the Excellence in Education Steering Committee to prepare annual publicity announcing the scholarship recipients.

## 11. STEERING COMMITTEE COMPOSITION AND DUTIES

### **Membership**

The Excellence in Education Steering Committee shall be comprised of from nine (9) to twelve (12) members representing the following:

Kalamazoo Community Foundation  
Both large and small Kalamazoo County Public School Districts  
Non-Public School  
Kalamazoo RESA  
Kalamazoo Association of Retired School Personnel

In addition, the Steering Committee may augment itself by seeking representation from other groups with an interest in supporting and improving education, such as foundations and educational or civic groups.

The Chair, with input of the Committee, shall recruit potential members from the organizations listed above. Appointment shall be made by majority vote.

The Chair of the Committee shall normally be a County public school superintendent appointed to the Committee by the KRESA Superintendent and approved by the Kalamazoo Community Foundation. No Family member of a member of the Steering Committee may receive a monetary scholarship or grant through the Excellence in Education Permanent Fund. Family members are defined as spouses, domestic partners, children, step-children, grandchildren, step-grandchildren, great grandchildren, or step-great grandchildren (including those of

spouses or domestic partners), brothers or sisters (including those of spouses or domestic partners), ancestors (including those of spouses or domestic partners), and spouses of any of the above. This also includes any other person(s) living in the household within the previous twelve (12) months or others with a significant relationship to an interested person.

### **Duties**

The Committee shall establish a budget each September for the current school year. As part of the budget process, the committee shall determine the award amounts and number of recipients dependent upon the grantmaking dollars available.

The Committee shall determine all policies and procedures relating to the award amounts, selection of recipients, and manner of recognitions.

A minimum of 50% of the members of the committee must be present or polled for votes on policy matters, with all decisions made by a majority of the quorum present and voting.