

Michael C. Ferguson Achievement Awards Scholarship

The Michael C. Ferguson Achievement Awards Scholarship Program, included in the Educational Accountability Act of 1998, recognizes students who demonstrate superior performance on the Grade 8 and 10 reading, writing and mathematics assessments administered as the Delaware Student Testing program (DSTP).

Basis for Granting Scholarships

The Michael C. Ferguson Achievement Awards are based on the student's score on the results of the annual spring administration of the Delaware Student Testing Program (DSTP). The Scholarships may be awarded to a maximum of 150 eighth grade students in the content areas of reading, writing and mathematics and to a maximum of 150 tenth grade students in the content areas of reading, writing, and mathematics. These awards are presented to two classifications of students.

1) The highest scoring eighth and tenth grade students in the state in reading, in writing, and in mathematics shall receive the scholarships.

The awards at each grade level may be given to a maximum of 75 students in the areas of reading, writing, and mathematics. The number of awards shall be as close to twenty-five in each area as possible and the unassigned awards shall be awarded in the priority order of reading, mathematics and writing. This means that there may be students who receive a performance level 5 in these subjects that are not granted scholarships because the maximum number of scholarships was awarded to students with higher standard scores. However, this may also mean that in some subject areas the highest scores may be in performance level 4 or lower.

2) The highest scoring eighth and tenth grade students in the state in reading, in writing, and in mathematics, who participate in the free and reduced lunch program and who are not already identified as one of the students in class 1) above shall receive the scholarships.

The awards at each grade level may be given to a maximum of 75 students in the areas of reading, writing, and mathematics. The number of awards shall be as close to twenty-five in each area as possible and the unassigned awards shall be awarded in the priority order of reading, mathematics and writing. This means that there may be students who receive a performance level 5 in these subjects that are not granted scholarships because the maximum number of scholarships was awarded to students with higher standard scores. However, this may also mean that in some subject areas the highest scores may be in performance level 4 or lower.

Since the highest scores for each of the subject areas are determined independently, some students may receive scholarships based on their score for one content area

but not the other two while some students may receive scholarships in more than one content area and may also receive scholarships for their 8th and their 10th grade scores.

A Foreign Exchange student who is on a temporary visa is not eligible to receive the Michael C. Ferguson Achievement Award Scholarship.

Use of Scholarship Funds and Notification

The Michael C. Ferguson Scholarship Award can only be used at a regionally or nationally accredited post secondary institution or at a Delaware or other state approved private business and trade school in the United States of America. The award cannot exceed direct educational costs.

The Department of Education will annually announce the winners of Michael C. Ferguson Scholarships. All scholarship awards are administered by the Delaware Higher Education Commission. The Delaware Higher Education Commission shall send a "Request for Information" form to Michael C. Ferguson Scholarship recipients annually to update their account information.

Funds deposited for scholarships through the Michael C. Ferguson Achievement Awards shall cease to be available to the recipient if the recipient does not attend a post secondary institution within five calendar years after graduating from high school. It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to notify the Higher Education Commission of any change of address during the scholarship eligibility period. Students may receive their scholarship awards even if they are living in another state at the time they attend a post secondary institution. If a student does not plan to attend a post secondary institution immediately after high school graduation, it is the parent or guardian's responsibility to provide timely notification to the Delaware Higher Education Commission prior to enrollment in order to receive payment of the scholarship. The Delaware Higher Education Commission will send enrollment verification forms to institutions identified by recipients. When completed verification forms are received by the Delaware Higher Education Commission, disbursement of scholarship funds will be made to the institution. Recipients may defer all or a portion of payment of Michael C. Ferguson Scholarships beyond their first post secondary year, but must assume the responsibility to notify the Delaware Higher Education Commission of their plans to claim the Scholarship, and may not extend payment beyond the five year limit.