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# CONFEDERATED SALISH AND KOOTENAI TRIBES

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## HIGHER EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP STUDENT POLICY & PROCEDURES HANDBOOK



*A People of Vision*

The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribal Council is pleased to support our eligible tribal members who pursue post-secondary education and training. Please dedicate yourself to achieving your academic goals with the help of these resources. Be aware that failing to make adequate academic progress can result in the forfeiture of this funding. Realize your personal potential and discover the opportunities for meaningful employment that education can offer. Become the leaders you are meant to be.

**Application deadline is Friday, May 1, 2026**

All students who apply and receive a Higher Education Scholarship from the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes are subject to the provisions contained in this Higher Education Student Policy & Procedures Handbook. Every effort will be made to be fair and equitable given our available resources. Every student is accountable for submitting documents and meeting academic standing requirements for allowable funding each year.

The Scholarship Officer is available to assist students in completing Higher Education, Vocational Training, and FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) applications. The Scholarship Officer can also provide information on financial aid sources, assist with the selection of a school or career, and help students navigate problems encountered while attending school.

**Students can submit their applications by either mailing to:**

**CSKT Education Department  
Attn: Miranda Burland, Scholarship Officer  
P.O. Box 278  
Pablo, MT 59855**

**Or scanning and emailing to the Higher Education Scholarship Officer  
at [Miranda.Burland@cskt.org](mailto:Miranda.Burland@cskt.org).**

Faxed Higher Education Scholarship applications **will not** be accepted.

Students must read this Student Policy Handbook. Any questions or clarification needed should be made to the Higher Education Scholarship Officer at (406)675-2700 ext. 1074 or by emailing Miranda Burland at [Miranda.Burland@cskt.org](mailto:Miranda.Burland@cskt.org).

## **SCHOLARSHIP ELIGIBILITY**

To be considered eligible for a Tribal Higher Education Scholarship the applicant must meet all of the following criteria:

- 1) Be an enrolled member of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes.
- 2) Possess a high school diploma or GED/ HiSET;
- 3) Be accepted into a regionally accredited post-secondary institution;
- 4) Cannot be in "default" status with other funding sources; and
- 5) Cannot have been convicted of a felony in the past (1) year.

Tribal funding that an applicant may receive is supplemental to other forms of federal and campus-based financial aid. An applicant must apply for federal funding such as Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA or Pell), Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (SEOG), State Student Incentive Grant (SSIG), College Work-Study, and Montana University Systems Native American Tuition Waiver. Funds can be used to pay for tuition and fees, room and board, books, and miscellaneous expenses related to school.

### **RESIDENCY NOTE:**

Both students who live on the and off the Flathead Reservation are eligible for CSKT scholarships. However, federal regulations require CSKT to prioritize awarding scholarships to students residing on the Reservation. After on-Reservation students are taken care of, any remaining funds will be awarded to off-Reservation students. *See 25 C.F.R § 40.1.*

### **INCARCERATED APPLICANTS:**

Applicants incarcerated in tribal, state, or federal penal institutions are ineligible to receive funding while they are incarcerated.

### **FELONY CONVICTIONS:**

Applicants who have been convicted of a felony will not be considered for funding until (1) one year after the conviction date. If you are convicted of a felony during the academic year of being funded, your funding will be suspended at that time.

### **ELIGIBLE INSTITUTIONS:**

The course of study must be from a regionally accredited institution and must result in the attainment of an Associate's, Bachelor's, Master's degree, Certificate, or another instrument indicating successful completion. These institutions must be able to accept Pell funding from the Department of Education.

### **LENGTH OF ELIGIBILITY FOR FUNDING:**

The time period that a student can receive CSKT higher education funding is directly connected to the attempted credits taken. Undergraduate students are eligible to receive the Higher Education scholarship at 150% for a total of:

#### **Quarter Schools:**

Associate Degree: 135 maximum quarter credits

Bachelor Degree: 270 maximum quarter credits

#### **Semester Schools:**

Associate Degree: 90 maximum semester credits

Bachelor Degree: 180 maximum semester credits

Students who have exceeded the maximum credits allowed may petition the to the Appeals Committee, refer to Appeal Process on page 7. which consists of the Tribal Education Department Head and the

Executive Director of Tribal Member Services, for approval or denial. Credits that are accumulated in Salish or Kootenai Language courses will not count towards your credit limit, as long as the student is making progress in these courses. Language courses will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis before being recommended to appeal.

## **APPLICATION PROCESS**

Students must complete and submit pages 3 & 4 of the Higher Education Scholarship application packet by **Friday, May 1, 2026** to the Scholarship Officer. If a student submits their application after this date, it will be marked as LATE and funding will not be guaranteed for the academic year.

### **What is needed for a COMPLETE application file?**

- 1) 2026-2027 Higher Education Scholarship **application** (page 3) and Information Disclosure Authorization (page 4).
- 2) After completing Part 1 of your **Financial Needs Analysis** (pages 5 & 6), you must **submit it to the Financial Aid Office** of the school that you choose to attend. After completing Part 2, your Financial Aid Office will send it back to the Tribal Education Department on or before August 7<sup>th</sup>.
- 3) **OFFICIAL College Transcripts:** (you must request them from your school; see notes below)
  - a. If you are a **New Student**, meaning you have never attended a college/university/vocational training institute, then you do not have college transcripts to submit.
  - b. If you are a **Continuing Student**, meaning you are currently attending school the last term (quarter or semester), then you must submit your OFFICIAL transcript to the Tribal Education Department by the second week of July. **DO NOT REQUEST THEM UNTIL YOU HAVE FINISHED YOUR SPRING TERM.**
  - c. If you are a **Returning Student**, meaning you have taken time off school, then you must get your “official transcript” on or before May 1<sup>st</sup> to the Education Department. Most schools will send an official transcript, at your request, to your funding source with your signed release of information. It is your responsibility to obtain your official transcript.
- 4) Copy of Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood (CDIB) or Tribal ID. This can be obtained from the Tribal Enrollment Office. You can call the Enrollment Office at 406-675-2700 ext. 1014 and request that a copy be sent to the CSKT Education Department Scholarship Officer.
- 5) Copy of your college’s **acceptance letter or email** you plan to attend. You may already have a letter on file **IF** you are a continuing student attending the same school; check with the Scholarship Officer to see if this is in your file.
- 6) Copy of **High School Transcript or Diploma or GED/HiSET Certificate or Transcript**. All 2026 High School graduates should submit a copy by July 2026. You can request that your high school submit a copy to the Scholarship Officer.
- 7) **Student Agreement Form**. This form will be emailed out to all students in July 2026. It will need to be filled out and sent back by August 7, 2026. This packet will inform students of what is still missing from their file, provide an award amount (if available at that time), and verify application information and academic standing, if provided.

The priority deadline for all other needed documents (#3-#7) for your file are due by Friday, August 7, 2026. This ensures that your fall term funding is submitted to your school in a timely manner. Your funding will be delayed if your documents are not all submitted by this date.

**STUDENTS**- If you need any clarification or have questions on your academic standing, degree you wish to pursue, or probation/ suspension status, you need to contact the Scholarship Officer to discuss the details and the Policy Handbook.

**SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT RESPONSIBILITIES:**

1. Submit a completed application on or prior to Friday, May 1, 2026.
2. Submit a current grade report within 30 days of the end of each quarter/semester and your upcoming term's schedule; by mail or email; the grades are not required to be "official." **The next term's funding will not be released until your grades and schedule are submitted and reviewed.**
3. Declare a major area of study by the end of your second year.
4. Inform the Tribal Scholarship Officer of any changes to your major, address, email, phone number, school, or course schedule.
5. Maintain acceptable institutional academic standards.
6. Achieve a minimum of a 2.5 GPA and pass all classes (whether full-time or part-time) to meet credit and GPA requirements for each term.
7. Submit a new application each year to be considered for scholarship funding.
8. Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) each academic year.

**PRIORITY FOR FUNDING:**

Students who have completed their Higher Education file by the deadline dates will have priority for funding. Students must be in good academic standing to receive funding. This consists of turning in all required paperwork.

**STUDENT STATUS:**

**Continuing Students** are students who have not taken an absence from college for more than a quarter or semester.

**New Students** are students who have never attended college before or received Tribal Higher Education funding.

**Returning Students** are students who have taken a break from college for more than one quarter or semester.

**FUNDING LEVELS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION**

**UNDERGRADUATE FUNDING:**

**FULL-TIME STUDENTS:** Undergraduate students who are taking 12 or more credits each quarter or semester may be eligible for the full scholarship amount of up to \$5,000 for the academic year.

**PART-TIME STUDENTS:** Undergraduate students who are taking less than 12 credits each quarter or semester will be eligible up to \$2,500 each year on a pro-rated amount depending on the number of credits being taken.

**GRADUATE FUNDING AND CREDITS:**

A set-aside amount of \$140,000 for graduate level students will be available each fiscal year. Eligible students can receive up to \$5,000 per year, depending on financial need and attempted credits.

**Graduate Level Students** will not be identified as a part-time student because they may be enrolled below 12 credits each term. Funding amounts will be pro-rated each term, depending on the number of

credits being taken. Schools will determine if a graduate level student is full-time or part-time based off the institute's credit criteria.

Any student that is taking three (3) credits or below will not be funded.

### **CSKT HIGH-NEED DEGREE FIELD FUNDING:**

The CSKT Education Department and Tribal Council support all students in achieving their educational goals and accomplishments in any field of study of their choosing. If you are enrolled and accepted into one of CSKT's high-need degree fields, as either an Undergraduate Junior or Senior level or a Graduate level student. You will be awarded up to \$6,000 for the academic year.

This award amount is designated for the following fields of study:

- Civil and/or Electrical Engineering
- Education K-12 Teachers
- Hydrology
- Pharmacy
- Social Work
- Physician and Physician Assistant
- Nurse Practitioners and Nursing

Students only qualify for the \$6,000 award if their degrees will be in these identified high-need fields (not for degrees that lead to work in the CSKT priority professions noted below).

The entire list of employment opportunities within the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes can be found at the Tribal Personnel Department or at <https://cskt.org/category/apply/>.

### **SCHOOLING OPTIONS**

#### **VOCATIONAL TRAINING:**

If you are planning to attend a Vocational/ Training School or Trade Program through an accredited institution, the Tribal Education Department will approve funding on a case-by-case basis.

A limited number of vocational training programs are available locally. Students who have an interest should contact Salish Kootenai College at (406) 675-4800 or the Missoula or Kalispell Technical Centers; contact the Tribal Education Department for phone numbers to the Technical Centers. Each of these include placement options at the time of completion. A limit of four (4) one-year vocational/technical training certificates can be obtained and must remain within the number of specified credit hours. Two certificates in non-related fields may be obtained; however, the third and fourth certificates must relate to a previous obtained certificate. Applications for vocational training are submitted on the same forms and criteria as higher education.

#### **ONLINE EDUCATION:**

Full-time, "distance education" courses (12-15 credits) may be funded. However, freshman and sophomore students will be encouraged to enroll for only 6 online credits to demonstrate extended working knowledge of the Internet, ability to complete the independent study, and course success. Junior and Senior students can enroll full-time in online education. All students must notify TED that distance education is included in your studies.

#### **SUMMER SCHOOL:**

Students who would like to attend summer school are still subject to the \$5000 maximum amount per academic year. To the extent that funds are available, students wanting to attend summer school may receive financial assistance from the Tribal Scholarship Program to offset the cost of tuition, fees, and

books. Students must select this option if they plan to attend summer school. Applications will be approved on a case-by-case basis.

#### **OUT-OF-STATE SCHOOLS:**

Students attending out-of-state and private schools will be funded at in-state tuition level and will still have a maximum of up to \$5,000 per academic year.

#### **OUT-OF-COUNTRY SCHOOLS:**

Students attending out-of-country schools may be funded on a case-by-case basis.

### **CSKT HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCIAL POLICY**

#### **SCHOLARSHIP AVAILABILITY:**

Only students in good academic standing and with a complete application file will be considered for funding. Students should be prepared that NOT all students who apply will be awarded a scholarship. Due to the increase in the number of students applying for funding and the rising cost of tuition, scholarships have become more competitive than in the past.

All CSKT scholarships are based on a tentative budget allowance to the CSKT Education Department. If the budget is reduced, your award may be decreased.

Federal regulations require CSKT to prioritize awarding scholarships to students residing on the Flathead Reservation. After on-Reservation students are taken care of, any remaining funds will be awarded to off-Reservation students. *See* 25 C.F.R § 40.1.

#### **SCHOLARSHIP DISBURSEMENTS:**

All awards will be disbursed to the Financial Aid or Business Office at the student's selected school. Funding disbursements are made by semester (two times per year) or quarter (three times per year) depending on the system the school uses. Be aware that it could take up to two weeks before the funding arrives at the student's school. It may take longer to see when this award is applied to the student's financial account. Please know your summer funding will be included in your annual award, if selected.

#### **FINANCIAL AID PACKAGES:**

Students must accept the financial aid package (excluding loans) as provided by the college or university. Students are encouraged to apply for other scholarships based on their chosen career or other options matching their interests. Any financial aid declined will not be the responsibility of the Tribal Education Office to add to the student's budget.

#### **FINANCIAL AID INFORMATION:**

It is the responsibility of the student to complete the Financial Needs Analysis - Part 2. Contact your school's financial aid office to be sure your financial aid file is complete with them. At the latest, it should be done one full month prior to classes beginning.

### **ACADEMIC CONSEQUENCES**

**Students make yourselves familiar with this portion of this Student Policy Handbook.**

#### **CSKT SCHOLARSHIP PROBATION:**

If a student falls below 2.5 GPA or does not successfully complete a minimum of 12 credits per quarter/semester (unless listed as a part-time student), they will be placed on CSKT Scholarship Probation or immediate suspension depending on the situation. Probation will consist of students being monitored by the Scholarship Officer; not limited to, but possibly including the options listed below:

- Control the release of funding to monthly disbursements or partial funding release along

with mid-term grade check before remaining funds can be released for the term

- Withhold funding for a quarter/semester
- Place the student on CSKT Suspension

### **CSKT SCHOLARSHIP SUSPENSION:**

Funded students must maintain acceptable institutional academic standards. Students will be placed on suspension in the event he/she fails to maintain the minimum requirements for GPA and/ or credits for two consecutive quarters/ semesters. He/she will be automatically ineligible for assistance for a period of one full year. During the one-year suspension, the student must demonstrate their ability to achieve academic success at their educational institution. No Higher Education Scholarship funding will be available during that time.

### **APPEAL PROCESS:**

The Scholarship Officer will make the initial decision on scholarship awards by applying the established criteria in this Student Policy Handbook. Students will be notified of incomplete application packets, allowing the student sufficient time to correct the deficiencies.

If a student is still dissatisfied with the Scholarship Officer's decision, he/she must then request an appeal to the Appeals Committee within five (5) working days of being notified that they will not be funded. Students are advised to bring or submit the following documents:

- Provide a copy of your current grades or transcripts
- Your graduation audit; course/curriculum outline

Students can communicate with the committee in-person or by teleconference.

Students can appeal the following decisions of the Scholarship Officer:

- Placing the student on academic probation or suspension
- Suspending funding due to exceeding the credit limit, felony conviction within the past year, or not receiving fall funding due to a late application submittal.

Students in default status will not be able to appeal.

Appeals will be presented to the Appeals Committee for approval or denial. The Appeals Committee consists of the Tribal Education Department Head and the Executive Director of Tribal Member Services. The committee will have ten (10) working days to hear the student appeal. The Scholarship Officer will notify the student with the final decision made.

### **RECOMMENDATION FOR MEDICAL / HEALTH COVERAGE:**

All students eligible for Tribal Health Paid Care must update their patient registration information before leaving for school and include verification of full-time enrollment. To obtain an updated application form, please contact Patient Registration at **(406) 745-3525** or **(406) 883-5541 ext. 5047**. This update must be completed **each year** you are enrolled in college.

Students are responsible for notifying the Healthcare Resource Division at the educational institution they plan to attend to discuss available health insurance options while in school. Montana Medicaid eligibility is income-based, and adults ages **19-64** without children may qualify. Students may apply at any Tribal Health clinic or county office.

Students may also contact **Tribal Health Paid Care (THPC)** at **(406) 745-3525 ext. 5053** to verify eligibility for services during their time in college.

It is the student's responsibility to notify THPC of any doctor's office visits—including ER visits—within **72 hours**. The Tribal Education Department recommends enrolling in campus-based care for minor emergency coverage.

Before leaving for college, please ensure routine eye exams, dental visits, and general medical appointments are completed locally. If you receive pharmacy services through Tribal Health Pharmacy, contact the Pharmacist at **(406) 745-3525 ext. 5180** or **ext. 7395** to review prescription procedures.

### **CALENDAR & TIMELINE FOR THE UPCOMING YEAR WHAT TO DO AND WHEN**

**SEPT:** Stay in contact with CSKT Higher Education Scholarship Officer regarding file completion and fall funding.

**OCT:** Submission of late applications for CSKT Higher Education Scholarships will close on October 31<sup>st</sup>.

**NOV & DEC:** Apply to each school for admission application and financial aid forms. Determine which documents are required.

Begin the 2026-2027 FAFSA process for the upcoming year. This will be based off the 2024 tax information.

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov), which determines eligibility for the Pell Grant, will be available for the 2026-2027 year. If the school you are applying to does not have electronic data processing, it may take up to six weeks before your FAFSA is processed and returned. Students under the age of 24 must report your parent's income unless you are married, have children, or are a documented unaccompanied youth.

**DEC & JAN:** Students need to submit final fall term grades to the CSKT Scholarship Officer. Final fall grades must be received before your next term's funding will be released to your school. This will also be based off your academic standing at that time. Final fall grades do not have to be official. You will also need to submit your next term's schedule for credit verification.

**FEB-MAY:** Tribal Higher Education Scholarship applications are available from the Tribal Education Department or <https://cskt.org/education/higher-education/>. Students need to continue gathering and submit all required documents for their Higher Education Scholarship file.

**MAR & APR:** Students need to submit final winter quarter grades and spring schedule to the CSKT Scholarship Officer. Grades need to be received before your next term's funding will be released to your school. This will also be based off your academic standing at that time. Final winter quarter grades do not have to be official.

**MAY: 2026-2027 Higher Education scholarship applications are due Friday, May 1, 2026.**

For students who apply after the May 1<sup>st</sup> deadline date, their applications will be marked as LATE and kept on file. We cannot guarantee any funding to late applicants, but if we have available funding later in the year, the late applications will be reviewed and a decision will be made to assist with funding. Funding for late applications may not be available for the fall term. Late applications will be accepted through October 31<sup>st</sup>.

**MAY & JUNE:** Students need to submit final spring term grades to the CSKT Scholarship Officer. These grade reports do not have to be official.

**JULY: Student Agreement Form** packets are sent out to all students who applied for the Higher Education Scholarship. This packet will inform students of their file completion and missing documents and your award amount, if available. The Student Agreement Form should be returned to the CSKT Scholarship Officer by **August 7<sup>th</sup>**. Call your financial aid office to verify you have completed all your internal financial aid paperwork to assure they can complete and send the Financial Needs Analysis form back to the Tribal Education Department. It is the student's responsibility to follow through with Part 2 of the Financial Needs Analysis form.

**AUGUST:** All additional paperwork must be submitted to the CSKT Scholarship Officer by **Friday, August 7, 2026** to receive your funding in a timely manner to start school.

If you have any questions or need clarification, call Miranda Burland, CSKT Scholarship Officer at (406)675-2700 ext. 1074 or email [Miranda.Burland@cskt.org](mailto:Miranda.Burland@cskt.org).