

STATE BOARD OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES
Legislative Report for Hurricane Helene Emergency Scholarship Grant Program

Request:

At the request of staff, the State Board of Community Colleges is asked to approve the Hurricane Helene Emergency Scholarship Grant Program report.

Background:

The General Assembly established evaluation criteria for the Hurricane Helene Emergency Scholarship Grant Program. The State Board is required to submit a report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee and the Fiscal Research Division of the General Assembly on the implementation of the program by March 15th. This report details the amount of funds allocated to each institution, the number of emergency scholarship grants awarded to students and the amount of those grants, the use of emergency scholarship grant funds by eligible postsecondary students, and any remaining funds available for awards in subsequent semesters.

The State Board approved allocations of these funds during the November 15, 2024 meeting. Subsequent redistributions of these funds have been approved by system office staff in accordance with State Board Code.

Rationale:

Reviewing and evaluating the Hurricane Helene Emergency Scholarship Grant Program ensures oversight of funds approved by the General Assembly. This information also provides useful information as to potential impacts and needs during any future disasters.

Contact(s):

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AVP, Student Services



Hurricane Helene Emergency Scholarship Grant Program Report

Submitted by the State Board of Community Colleges

2025 General Assembly

Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee and the Fiscal Research
Division of the General Assembly

As Required by Section 4A.6 of Session Law 2024-53

STATE BOARD OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES
Hurricane Helene Emergency Scholarship Grant Program Report for FY 2024-25

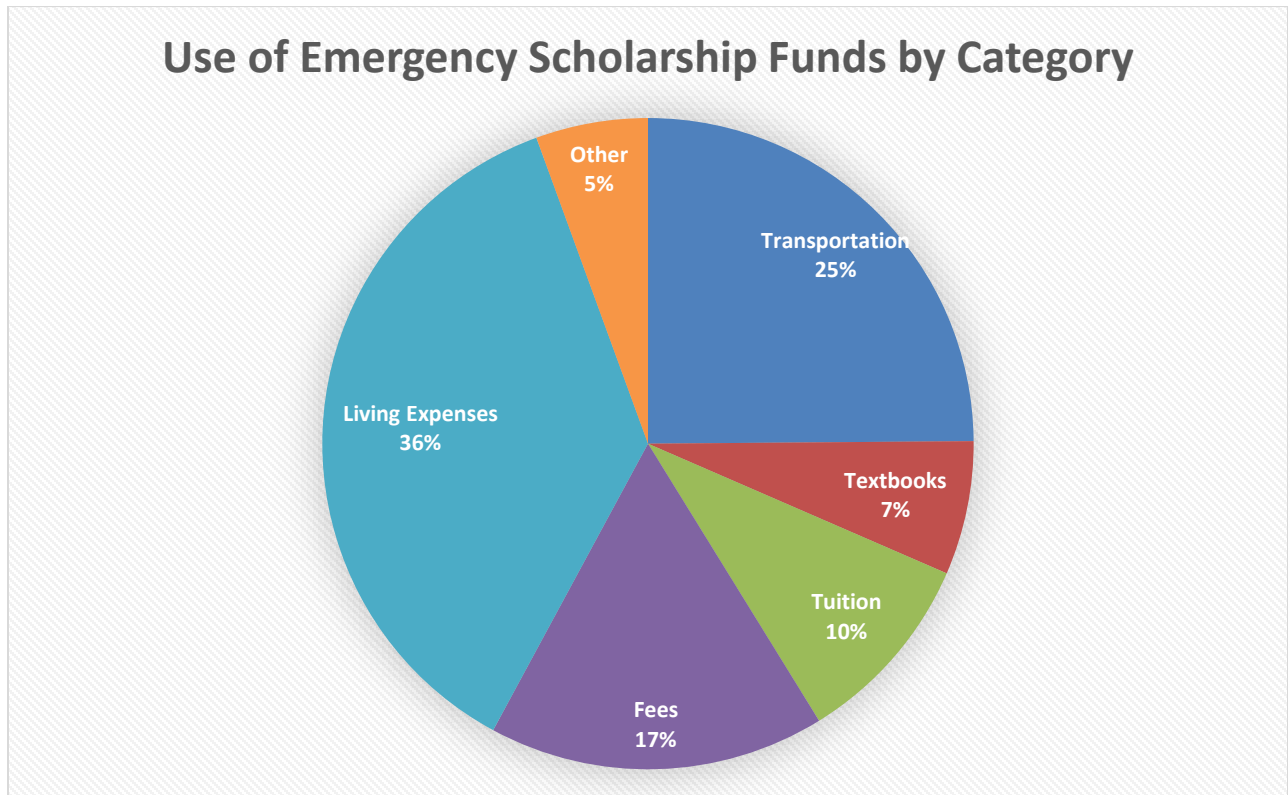
Session Law 2024-53 enacted *The Disaster Recovery Act of 2024 – Part II*. Section 4A.6 established the Hurricane Helene Emergency Grant Program for Postsecondary Students and allocated the sum of ten million five hundred thousand dollars (\$10,500,000) in nonrecurring funds to the State Board of Community Colleges for the purpose of providing emergency scholarship grants to eligible postsecondary students in accordance with the Program. Program funds were established to “provide emergency scholarship grants in an amount up to two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500) per student to eligible postsecondary students who have suffered financial hardship due to the damage and destruction from Hurricane Helene. An emergency scholarship grant shall be used to mitigate the impact of Hurricane Helene on a student so that the student's postsecondary education in a North Carolina institution of higher education continues uninterrupted.” The funds were authorized to be used by recipients for any expenses supporting the student’s continued enrollment, including transportation, textbooks, tuition, fees, and living expenses. Section 4A.6 outlined student eligibility criteria. In addition to these eligibility requirements, colleges were authorized to establish local policies and procedures to prioritize student applications based on their local community needs.

The State Board of Community Colleges was tasked with allocating funds to affected colleges and eligible students attending unaffected colleges. In November 2024, funds were allocated to the fourteen affected community colleges located in counties that were designated under a major disaster declaration by the President of the United States under the Stafford Act (P.L. 93-288) as a result of Hurricane Helene. Subsequently, funds were allocated to colleges based on the level of impact in the college’s service area and the size of the student body attending the respective college. The System Office retained fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) in Emergency Scholarship Grant funds to allocate to students living in a county impacted by Hurricane Helene but who are attending a community college other than the fourteen affected community colleges.

Catawba Valley Community College voluntarily returned its full three hundred sixty-seven thousand five hundred sixteen-dollar (\$367,516) emergency scholarship grant allotment to the System Office. The funds were subsequently reallocated to colleges as outlined in Attachment A.

Attachment A provides a breakdown by college of the allocations, number of recipients, total amounts awarded, and the remaining funds available. Of the \$10,500,000 allocated funds, nearly \$6,500,000 had been awarded to affected students as of February 3, 2025. No funds were returned due to funds reimbursed to institutions due to coverage of losses by alternative funds. Over 6,303 students received funds to assist with hurricane-related expenses, enabling them to continue their education. Colleges continue to receive student applications and award grants. Section 4A6(i) authorizes colleges to use the remaining funds presented in Attachment A for awards in subsequent semesters.

As the chart below shows, 36% of funds awarded thus far have been to cover living expenses, 25% of the funds were used to cover transportation expenses, 17% was used for fees associated with college course enrollment, 10% was used for college tuition, and 7% was used for textbooks. The final 5% of the funds were used for other expenses such as childcare, relocation, and replacements of food, clothing, and computers.



Use of Emergency Scholarship Funds by Category in Dollars						
Transportation	Textbooks	Tuition	Fees	Living Expenses	Other	Total Expenditures
\$ 1,590,945	\$ 424,978	\$618,798	\$ 1,067,413	\$ 2,337,404	\$356,146	\$ 6,395,684

**Hurricane Helene Emergency Scholarship Grant Program Report
As of February 3, 2025**

College	Initial Allocation	Reallocation	Adjusted Allocation	Funds Spent	Funds Remaining	#Students Served
Asheville-Buncombe TCC	\$3,270,578	\$96,509	\$3,367,087	\$2,067,550	\$1,299,537	2,972
Blue Ridge CC	1,757,799	51,869	1,809,668	1,284,000	525,668	931
Caldwell T&CC	266,124	7,853	273,977	182,700	91,277	114
Catawba Valley CC	367,516	(367,516)	NA	NA	NA	NA
Cleveland	254,120	7,499	261,619	0	261,619	0
Gaston	471,294	13,907	485,201	17,991	467,210	46
Haywood CC	734,897	21,685	756,582	756,582	0	385
Isothermal CC	165,696	4,889	170,585	170,585	0	241
Mayland CC	609,794	17,994	627,788	181,850	445,938	83
McDowell TCC	925,730	27,317	953,047	196,034	757,013	633
Southwestern CC	221,883	6,547	228,430	156,296	72,134	183
Tri-County	93,844	2,769	96,613	96,613	0	48
Western Piedmont CC	1,061,202	31,314	1,092,516	999,463	93,053	475
Wilkes CC	249,523	7,364	256,887	249,000	7,887	166
System Office	50,000	70,000	120,000	37,020	82,980	26
Total	\$10,500,000		\$10,500,000	\$6,395,684	\$4,104,316	6,303