Bay Mills Indian Community
Higher Education Incentive Program

The Bay Mills Indian Community Higher Education Incentive Program is designed to provide financial awards of achievement to tribal members in pursuit of degrees of higher learning. The Program is available for Bay Mills tribal members attending accredited post-secondary institutions providing undergraduate and graduate degrees of study, as well as those institutions providing trade and technical school degrees/certifications. The Higher Education Incentive Program, as follows, is effective beginning January 1, 2014 and replaces existing higher education and vocational training programs and their guidelines that were previously in place under the prior incentive program.

Eligibility
Individuals must meet the following criteria:

Program applicants must be enrolled members of the Bay Mills Indian Community.

Program applicants must attend accredited educational institutions as found on the U.S. Department of Education's Database of Accredited Post-Secondary Institutions and Programs.

Program applicants enrolling in institutions/vocational programs that lead to state licensures, that are not found on the U.S. Department of Education's Database of Accredited Post-Secondary Institutions and Programs may be eligible for program participation upon approval of the Higher Education Department, Education Committee followed by a vote of approval by the Bay Mills Indian Community Executive Council, at a regularly scheduled council meeting.

All applicants must maintain at least a "C" average, which equates to a grade point average of 2.0, or the attended school's definition of satisfactory progress for each registered class.

The program will provide incentive awards for a maximum of 15 credit hours per semester, term, or equivalent educational period.

Basic Program Guidelines
The guiding philosophy of the program is to encourage Bay Mills tribal members to successfully complete higher educational programs of their choice. The following program guidelines are in effect; however the Higher Education Department/Executive Council may modify these guidelines to continue to best meet the needs of the community.

The Higher Education Incentive Program differs from federal financial aid and other scholarship assistance programs. The Program, established by the Bay Mills Indian Community, will provide students attending four (4) year colleges/universities incentive awards of $100.00 per semester credit and those attending two (2) year community colleges $50.00 per semester credit for coursework completed with a minimum grade point average of 2.0 ("C" average) for each registered class, or meets the attended institution's definition of satisfactory progress.

The program will also provide an incentive award of $200.00 per semester credit for graduate students; this only applies to students enrolled and accepted in post-graduate programs/institutions found on the U.S. Department of Education's Database of Accredited Post-Secondary Institutions and Programs.

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Before signing up for the Higher Education Incentive Program students must be enrolled and accepted at a college, university, trade, or technical school of their choice and provide evidence of acceptance, along with an official schedule of enrolled courses for the current semester/term.

**How to Apply**

Eligible applicants are required to complete the Higher Education Incentive Program enrollment application. Requests for applications may be submitted to the Higher Education Department. In order to insure program acceptance, applicants must provide documentation of acceptance at a college, university, trade, or technical school, along with an official copy of a class schedule that identifies the enrolled courses and the number of credit hours being attempted for the current semester/term.

Prior to finalizing an applicant’s acceptance, the Higher Education Department will verify that the applicant’s choice of institution is identified as meeting the accreditation standards of the acceptable accrediting bodies, as found on the U.S. Department of Education’s Database of Accredited Post-Secondary Institutions and Programs.

Students choosing to attend institutions and programs that are accredited by bodies that are not recognized by the U.S. Department of Education’s Database of Accredited Post-Secondary Institutions and Programs will not be eligible to receive Bay Mills Higher Education Incentive Awards. However, those institutions that lead to state licensures may be given consideration if the student can provide institutional information that will satisfy all concerns of the Higher Education Department and the Executive Council of the Bay Mills Indian Community.

Grade reports that satisfactorily meet the requirements of the Higher Education Incentive Program shall receive awards totaling an amount equal to the credits successfully completed for that semester/term (note: awards will be provided for a maximum of 15 credit hours per semester/term). Students may request to have all award installments withheld until the end of the semester/term. Students choosing this option will receive one (1) full award installment upon submission of a final grade report once the Higher Education Office has verified that all program criteria has been successfully met.

Although the tribal member education incentive program is not based on student financial need, applicants need to be aware that guidelines for other forms of financial aid and/or scholarships may require the reporting of the Higher Education Incentive Program Awards to the financial aid office of the school being attended.

**Award Schedule**

The Higher Education Incentive Program awards shall be allocated in two (2) award installments. The first installment will equal one third (1/3) of the full semester/term incentive award amount, with the calculation being made from the credits/clock hours shown on the official course schedule provided by the student/applicant. Students will receive the final award installment, equaling the remaining two thirds (2/3) of the total semester award, upon receipt of a grade report for the semester/term and reconciliation by the Higher Education Department of the initial schedule received and the submitted grade report to insure that program guidelines have been successfully completed.

For applicants enrolled in educational institutions that operate by clock hours attended, one 15 credit semester/term is equivalent to 450 clock hours. Thus, 30 clock hours are equal to one semester credit hour, which in turn equals an award amount of $100. An award installment equal to one third (1/3) of the full incentive award amount, calculated by the number of credits/clock hours attempted, will be provided at the beginning of the semester/term/course. The final award, an amount equaling the remaining two thirds (2/3) of the full incentive award amount, will be provided upon receipt of a grade report for the semester/term/clock.
hours completed and reconciliation by the Higher Education Department of the initial schedule and the submitted grade report to insure that all program guidelines have been successfully completed.

Students participating in the Higher Education Incentive Program that do not achieve a grade point average of 2.0 or better for each credit hour attempted, or meet the equivalent mark of satisfactory progress established by the institution being attended, will have the appropriate amount deducted from the final award installment. Any deductions that may be necessary will be identified by the Higher Education Department during the initial schedule final grade report reconciliation process. In addition, the student agrees to reimburse Bay Mills Indian Community (BMIC) for funds due back for failure to achieve the 2.0 GPA, for all classes the award was based on. The student further authorizes deductions to repay the excess award received via automatic deductions from any and all funds, present or future, due from arising from payroll or other sources provided by BMIC.

The following examples examine three scenarios that students may encounter. Each scenario is meant to provide a more thorough understanding of Higher Education Incentive Program calculations under the various circumstances.

Example A: A student attempts 15 credit hours for a semester. 15 credit hours with Higher Education Incentive Program Award support of $100 per credit hour will provide a total award of $1500 for that semester. The student will receive an installment at the beginning of the semester totaling $500 (one third of the overall amount of $1500). Upon completion of the semester the student will be eligible to receive the remaining award installment of $1000, as long as all program guidelines have been successfully completed.

Example B: A student attempts 15 credit hours for a semester. 15 credit hours with Higher Education Incentive Program Award support of $100 per credit hour will provide a total incentive award of $1500 for that semester. The student will receive an award installment at the beginning of the semester totaling $500 (one third of the overall amount of $1500). Upon completion of the semester the student, as required by the program, turns in a grade report that shows that only 9 of the 15 credits attempted met the program requirements. Under this scenario, 9 successfully completed credit hours have a Higher Education Incentive Program award value of $900 for the whole semester/term. This amount, $900 will be the amount that will be used to determine the final award installment for the semester/term. Having already, received an initial installment of $500, this amount will be subtracted from the amount of credits successfully completed that semester, which in this example are 9 credit hours with the award value of $900. With that, the final award installment for the semester will be $400 (9 credits @ $100 per credit hour $900 minus the $500 initial installment). In this example the student remains in good standing with the Higher Education Incentive Program and will maintain eligibility for the following semester/term.

Example C: A student attempts 15 credit hours for a semester, which has a full semester Higher Education Incentive Program Award of $1500. The student will receive the first award installment at the beginning of the semester/term equal to one third of the full semester value ($500). At the end of the semester the student turns in a grade report that shows that only 3 of the 15 credits were successfully completed. When recalculated, the total semester/term award support will be $300 (3 credit hours @ $100 per credit hour). Following this instance, the student received an initial one third award installment of $500 because the student's intent was to successfully complete 15 credit hours. When the grade report showed that only 3 credit hours met program criteria, the incentive award recalculation for the full semester changed to $300. This means that the student received more award support in the initial one third award amount than the final overall semester/term calculation supported (3 credits @ $100 per
credit hour = $300, minus the $500 initial award -$200). Thus, the student will be responsible for reimbursing the Bay Mills Indian Community Higher Education Incentive Program $200 in order to remain in good standing with the program and maintain eligibility for the following semester/term.

The Higher Education Incentive Program will not provide awards for repeating classes for which incentive awards were already received, as outlined in the Higher Education Incentive Program Award Repayment section below.

Students with questions about award calculations are encouraged to contact the Higher Education Department.

Higher Education Incentive Program Award Repayment
Students/Applicants are responsible for providing class schedules and grade reports to the Higher Education Department. Failure to provide the necessary documentation to meet program guidelines will result in incentive awards being withheld and program participation benefit suspension until the proper documents are provided.

Students required to reimburse the program have two weeks from the date on the notice of ineligibility, sent by the Higher Education Department, to make arrangements for award repayment. Students will authorize automatic payroll deductions and/or the reduction of any other funds provided by Bay Mills Indian Community that are due to the student, if timely arrangements are not made or maintained. Bay Mills Indian Community will utilize all methods available to collect this debt, including the initiation of legal proceedings which will be filed in a court of competent jurisdiction, determined by whether or not the student's permanent address is within the exterior boundaries of the Bay Mills Indian Community.

Students required to reimburse the Bay Mills Indian Community Higher Education Incentive Program (Example C) will not be eligible to receive further incentive awards until all outstanding obligations have been repaid and a one year period of ineligibility has elapsed. The one year period of ineligibility will begin when the entire outstanding balance due has been successfully recovered.

Higher Education Incentive Program Award Distribution
Higher Education Incentive Program Awards will be mailed, unless alternative arrangements have been made with the Bay Mills Indian Community Accounting Department, by the student. Awards that are mailed will be sent to the permanent address provided on the application. Students are responsible for providing correct mailing information and for insuring that any information changes that may affect the student's current application are provided to the Higher Education Department.

Student Choice of Institution
The Bay Mills Indian Community Higher Education Incentive Program will provide awards for students attending various two (2) and four (4) year institutions, as well as trade and technical programs.

When attending two (2) year Associate Degree level institutions, students will be provided with 66 credit hours of Higher Education Incentive Program Awards to complete one (1) associates degree.

When attending four (4) year colleges/universities, students will be provided with 140 credit hours of Higher

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Education Incentive Program Awards to complete one (1) Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science degree in the student’s choice of study.

When attending graduate school students can complete one (1) Master of Arts or Master of Science degree, if students choose to pursue their education further the incentive program will cover one (1) Doctorate degree.

**Education Office Student File Audit Request**
Students who are unaware of their credit status and where they fall within the program guidelines may contact the Higher Education Department and request that an audit of their student file be performed. Along with the audit request the student shall include a $15 check/money order/receipt of payment from the Bay Mills Indian Community Accounting Department for fees for processing the audit request. Upon completion, the Higher Education Department will provide the information to the student via the form of communication requested in the audit request.

**Student Transfers**
Students transferring between institutions will continue to be afforded awards and the Higher Education Department will take into account that a credit for credit transfer may not always be afforded. Under such circumstances a student switching institutions may not receive full credit for credit transfer for the entire 66 credits achieved at the two year institution. If, for example, 60 of the 66 credits transfer, the student will receive incentive awards for the additional 80 credit hours needed to complete the 140 credit hours in pursuit of a B.A. or B.S. degree.

Students are responsible for providing the Higher Education Department with the necessary credit transfer audit materials so that issues with credit for credit transfers can be taken into account. If credit transfer information is not provided upon the changing of institutions, the Higher Education Department will maintain Higher Education Incentive Program Award calculations as though all credits have been successfully transferred and will continue to provide incentive awards up to the allotted 140 credit hours.

**Notices of Eligibility**
Any Student failing to meet program criteria will receive a notice from the Higher Education Department detailing the deficiencies and the necessary actions needed for the student to regain program eligibility. Until such time that all outstanding obligations are met, program participation benefits shall be suspended.

**Reminder**
All outstanding balances at attended institutions are the sole responsibility of the student.

I, __________________________________________________________________________ (print full name) have read, understand, and accept the terms of the Higher Education Incentive Program policy and guidelines.

Signature: __________________________

Date: __________________________

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