



Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarship

Erin Klarer, VP Government Relations
Interim Joint Committee on Education
June 1, 2021



Program Overview

Allows Kentucky high school students to earn incentive-based awards based on academic performance.

- GPA award for each year of high school
- ACT bonus
- Supplemental AP/IB/CAI awards for low-income students

Following high school graduation, KEES can be used for:

- Postsecondary expenses at a Kentucky college or university; or
- Reimbursement of expenses related to a registered apprenticeship or qualified workforce training program

"In high school, I always worked so hard on ACT scores and GPA in order to raise my KEES! I am thankful that I was able to receive some college payment help based on my hard work!" - Lacey Howard



History

Program established during 1998 Regular Session, Senate Bill 21

Three main policy goals:

1. To incentivize students to work harder in high school
2. To encourage students to stay in Kentucky for postsecondary education
3. To incentivize students to work harder in college

"KEES definitely made me want to try harder to earn more money. Knowing the scholarship was dependent on my grades, it pushed me in high school and that continued on into college."
-Lauren Rafferty



History

Some of the more notable statutory changes since program inception

- 2005 – Postsecondary use expanded to approved out-of-state institutions
- 2008 – Supplemental AP/IB exam awards for low-income students
- 2008 – On track to graduate requirements for postsecondary renewal
- 2013 – Early graduation equivalent award established
- 2017 – Use expanded to allow registered apprentices to receive reimbursement for training expenses from KEES earnings
- 2019 – Use expanded to allow students in qualified workforce training programs to receive reimbursement from KEES earnings

"Like many other residential students across the state, I am so appreciative to receive KEES money. KEES money has assisted me and my family immensely, and it has allowed me to attend the best university in the state!" -Jacob Baird



KEES Award Structure

KY high school students have the opportunity to earn KEES based on academic achievement in grades 9 through 12

Base awards

- Yearly grade point average of 2.50 or higher
- Amounts range from \$125 to \$500 each qualifying year

ACT bonus

- Awarded to students who earn at least one base award
- Based on highest ACT composite score achieved prior to high school graduation
- Ranges from \$36 to \$500 for scores of 15 to 28 (or higher)

KY homeschool and GED graduates earn KEES based on their highest ACT composite score.

"Because of KEES, I took the ACT my freshman year to see what type of score I could get. I also worked hard in school and got good grades to ensure the KEES money." -Erica Lee



KEES AP, IB and CAI Bonus

Students who are eligible for *free or reduced-price lunches*, based on family income, during *any* year of high school, and

Make qualifying scores on Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB) or Cambridge Advanced International (CAI) exams.

Advanced Placement		International Baccalaureate		Cambridge Advanced International	
Exam Score	Bonus Amount	Exam Score	Bonus Amount	Exam Score	Bonus Amount
3	\$200	5	\$200	e	\$200
4	\$250	6	\$250	c or d	\$250
5	\$300	7	\$300	a*, a or b	\$300

"With the help of these funds, I can focus more on excelling on the course-work instead of worrying about how I will pay for my education." - Maiesha Simmons



Award Example

9 th grade GPA	3.50	\$375
10 th grade GPA	4.00	\$500
11 th grade GPA	2.75	\$187
12 th grade GPA	3.30	\$325
Highest ACT score	26	\$428
AP bonus – 6 exam scores = 4		<u>\$1,500</u>
Total KEES high school earnings		\$3,315
Total benefit over four years of college		\$13,260

"I know I speak for many other college students when I say that we are so thankful for this money being used in a very effective way. This money is an investment in the future leaders of Kentucky." - Patrick Adkins



Eligibility Limits

Use of a KEES award is limited to the student reaching the first of three conditions:

- Receipt of KEES funds for eight academic terms; or
- Successful completion of a first bachelor's degree; or
- Five years lapses since the student's high school graduation

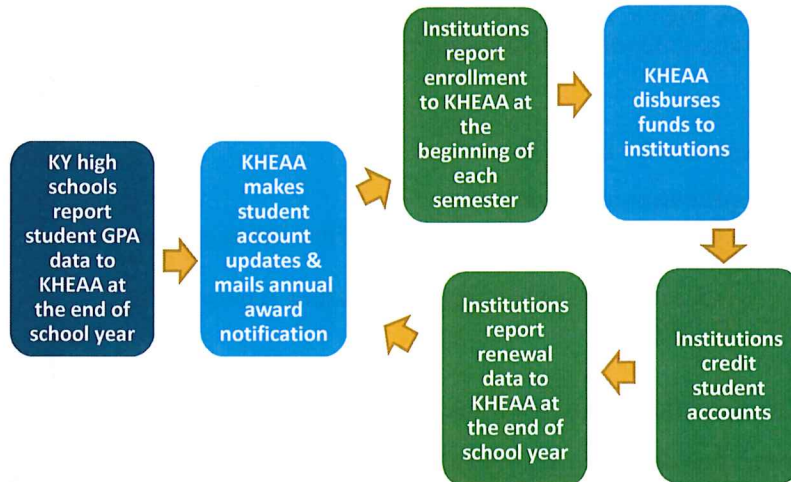
Length of time may be extended under certain circumstances:

- Active duty service in the U.S. Armed Forces
- Serious or extended illness or injury of the student
- Natural disasters that render a student unable to attend classes

"I was very stressed that UK was going to be out of my league, coming from a one income family. Receiving these additional funds did help put my mind at ease." -Savannah Lee



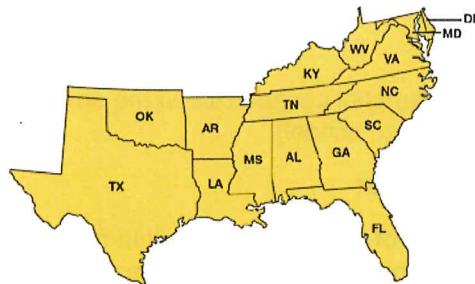
Reporting & Disbursement



"I would not have been able to go to Murray without the KEES scholarship. It allowed me to be independent, I didn't have to take out student loans and work multiple jobs while trying to work towards my degree." -Ashley Wiseman

Out of State Use

If an undergraduate program of study is not available at a public institution in Kentucky, KEES may be used at an out-of-state public institution that participates in the Academic Common Market program for Southern Region Education Board member states.



"The KEES funds helped me feel more accomplished about the hard work I put in during high school. Countless students have had a lot of weight taken off of their shoulders thanks to KEES." -Brian Allen

Postsecondary Renewal

Once KEES use begins, students must achieve postsecondary academic standards to renew their award eligibility each year

First year

- Cumulative GPA of 2.5 or above

Second and subsequent years

- Full award – Cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher *OR* on track to graduate with a cumulative GPA between 2.50 and 2.99
- 50% award reduction – Not on track to graduate with a cumulative GPA between 2.50 and 2.99

Any year

- Loss of award – Cumulative GPA below 2.50

Reduced or lost awards may be regained at the end of the next academic year

"I received KEES money while attending the University of Pikeville. The funds helped me stay in state to attend a private university." -Rachel Lucas



KEES Reimbursement Options

High school graduates participating in an approved **registered apprenticeship** or **qualified workforce training program** may request reimbursement of approved expenses from their KEES earnings

- Items like equipment, required tools, licensure, uniforms, tuition, travel to/from worksite

Annual reimbursement amount cannot exceed the annual KEES award amount (total earned in high school)

Automatic renewal each year

Good for up to four years of reimbursement within five years of high school graduation, or completion of training program, whichever is first

"It's a great lesson for someone going to college and on their own for the first time. KEES has assisted me in receiving an education, which will help me be a productive member of my family and community now and in the future." -Holdan Markland



Funding Source



Net revenue from the Kentucky Lottery funds KEES as well as the state's need-based grant programs



- A total of \$3.8 billion has been disbursed in the form of grants and scholarships since 1999
- 1 in 5 Kentuckians have benefited from the Lottery-funded programs
- KEES alone has provided \$1,749,022,100 to help nearly 911,000 high school graduates with their postsecondary education expenses

"These funds have been an amazing help. Because of them, I don't have to worry about financing my undergraduate career. Graduate/medical school is a great expense, so KEES money has alleviated some of the stress that I have about investing in my higher education." -Kristine Herrera



