

BLUE LAKE RANCHERIA **STUDENT HANDBOOK**





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PURPOSE

The Blue Lake Rancheria has consistently placed education as a high priority and emphasized the importance of increasing the number of students entering and completing post-secondary education programs. To this purpose, the Tribal Scholarship Program was established to provide scholarship funds to eligible tribal members who wish to further their education beyond the secondary level.

Since its inception, the Tribal Scholarship Program staff have endeavored to help students have a positive, meaningful college experience leading to the successful completion of a degree. In an effort to accomplish this goal, guidelines are needed to enable students and staff to work together effectively.

The Tribal Scholarship Program provides a copy of this Student Handbook to every scholarship recipient in an effort to ensure that all students understand the policies, procedures, and operation of the program. This handbook is used in conjunction with the official policies and procedures adopted by the Tribal Business Council. The policies and procedures are the regulations under which the Tribal Scholarship Program are governed. This handbook expands on those regulations giving detailed explanations of what is expected of the student and what the student can expect from the Tribal Scholarship Program.

STAFF CONTACTS

Student/Financial Assistance:

Alison Robbins, Executive Director, Tribal Education Agency

Email: TribalEd@bluelakerancheria-nsn.gov

Phone: (707) 668-5101 x 1035

Cellphone: (707) 630-2304



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APPLICATION PROCEDURES

Each student applicant is responsible for submitting the following items for a completed application:

1. Blue Lake Rancheria Student Scholarship Program Application
2. A signed and dated Tribal Scholarship Program Student Pay Back Policy form
3. A letter stating applicant's educational goals and proposed course of study
4. Official sealed high school or college transcript records mailed or emailed directly from the educational institution to:

Blue Lake Rancheria
Attn: Tribal Scholarship Program
P.O. Box 428
Blue Lake, CA 95525

Or the educational institution can email the official transcripts to:

TribalEd@bluelakerancheria-nsn.gov

5. Upon enrollment with an accredited college, university, or vocational school, a class schedule showing the number of units/credits and classes in which the student applicant is enrolled

Applications for Tribal Scholarship Program Awards shall be submitted to the Tribal Education Office by:

Semester Based Educational Institutions

July 1 for the following Fall semester

January 1 for the following Spring semester

June 1 for the following Summer semester

Quarter Based Educational Institutions

December 1 for the following Winter quarter

April 1 for the following Spring quarter

The Education Program Coordinator will respond within ten business days once **all** forms are received. Please note that returning students who have transferred to a different educational institution and/or taken time off from school **must resubmit all** application documents.

AWARDS

Distribution of awards will be prorated based upon a quarter, semester, or other segment for course of study. Grade reports or transcripts for preceding quarter, semester, or other segments of course study must be submitted prior to each disbursement. Undergraduate students must complete 12 units to receive the maximum award; if not, the payment will be prorated according to units being taken. Graduate student full-time enrollment is based upon the individual educational institution's definition of full-time for their program. Part-time, three-quarter time, and full-time awards are issued as follows:

Undergraduate Units enrolled:

- 6-8 = 50%
- 9-11 = 75%
- 12 + = 100%

Students who are enrolled in extension programs, online programs, or external degree programs that meet accreditation shall be eligible for an award provided that the student meets the same requirements as a regularly enrolled student.

Eligible students will be provided financial aid with the limits shown below:

- Two-year degree or certificate program – up to three (3) years of financial support.
- Four-year degree program – up to five (5) years of financial support
- Graduate degree program – however many years that are required to complete degree.
- Extensions of time for degree attainment can be negotiated with the Tribal Scholarship Committee as needed.

When applicable, students may set up an online payment system with their educational institution for payments of books, tuition, housing, or other approved expenses for the use of the Blue Lake Rancheria Finance Office for payment of expenses. **It is the student's responsibility to provide the Blue Lake Rancheria with information pertaining to any expenses needing to be**

paid. The Education Director will deal directly with students, and the educational institution, not parents.

Student scholarship funds are used at the discretion of the student recipient. The following list is an example of what the scholarship funds may be used to pay for:

Direct school related costs: application fees, transcript fees, placeholder fees, annual standard tuition & fees, winter/summer break tuition & fees, additional course & lab fees, online payment fees, school parking permits, textbooks, specialized supplies or software, technology (laptop, iPad, etc.), study abroad program fees, entrance exam & test prep course fees, graduation & diploma fees, graduation robes & regalia.

Indirect school related costs: rent/lease (including security deposit, cleaning/pet fees and application fees, etc.), utilities (water, power, gas, sewer, trash), renter's insurance, and secured parking/parking permits.

Personal Living / Upkeep: Monthly living allowance, travel to and from school and 'home' including moving costs associated with travel to attend school away from 'home' (rental trucks & trailers, airline tickets, luggage fees, etc.)

While this list as attempted to be detailed, it may not be exhaustive or inclusive of all actual costs encountered by scholarship students. Students should use the Scholarship Planning & Tracking Worksheet provided by TEA Staff to keep track of their budgeted vs. actual costs for their individual scholarships.

STIPEND

Amount of stipend payments will be determined by the Tribal Scholarship Committee. To receive monthly stipend payment checks students must:

1. Provide grade reports or transcripts for preceding quarter, semester, or other segments of course study.
2. Provide written current/updated contact information, including phone, cell phone, email, and mailing address.
3. Maintain a 2.5 GPA or above.

Failure on behalf of the student to keep grades and personal information updated may result in a loss of stipend support and/or scholarship award.

Monthly Stipend:

- Community college = \$500
- Technical full time = \$750
- BS/BA = \$750
- Masters = \$1000
- PhD = \$1500

SCHOLARSHIP CAP & PLANNING

Per the Tribal Council decision of August 1 2023, from the beginning of school year 2023-2024, each tribal member will be capped at \$200,000 in scholarship funds. This impacts current students starting immediately going forward, and does not include already expended scholarship funds prior to the start of the 2023-2024 school year. Each student will be provided with a BOE approved scholarship planner and connections to resources for additional scholarships, grants, and loan programs to meet anticipated shortfalls identified by the scholarship planner.

PAY BACK POLICY

Upon approval of an award for the Tribal Scholarship Award Program, the recipient agrees to the following conditions:

1. If the student does not comply with the requirements specified under the policy governing the Tribal Scholarship Program the student will be required to pay back the amount of the award received, including any stipend funds.

Conditions requiring a pay back are based on:

- Failure to attend class(es)
- Failure to complete at least 50% of the classes as a full-time student
- Awards of continuing students who did not complete all units will be prorated, based on units completed, on next award

- Awards of continuing students who did not complete all units will have next award prorated.
 - Maintaining 2.4 GPA or lower
2. The student agrees to pay back the award amount through cash payment, or salary/wage deduction
 3. Any condition resulting in Pay Back procedures deems student ineligible for Tribal Scholarship re-application until account is paid in full.

This contract shall constitute a legally binding agreement between the parties and may be enforced as a debt and brought to the Blue Lake Rancheria Tribal Court for remedy.