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Commissioner

Joseph E. Ribsam, Jr.
Director

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

DIVISION FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

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November 9, 2020

Honorable Representative Lucy Weber, Chairman
Health and Human Service Oversight Committee
Room 302, State House
Concord, NH 03301

Honorable Representative Patrick Long, Chairman
Children and Family Law Committee
Room 206, Legislative Office Building
Concord, NH 03301

Re: Report on the RSA 187-A: 20-b, Tuition Waiver Program for Foster and Adopted Children

Dear Committee Members,

In 2007, Senate Bill 168 (Chapter Laws 2007, 366:1) established a tuition waiver program for foster and adopted children. That legislation requires the Department to report annually to the Health and Human Services Oversight Committee and to the Children and Family Law Committee on the status of the program. Accordingly, please accept the following as the Division's report on the current status of the program:

The University System of New Hampshire (USNH) and the Community College System of New Hampshire (CCSNH) continued to manage the Tuition Waiver Program. The application process for this academic year started in October of 2020 with the application being posted on the DCYF website and the websites of participating schools. The New Hampshire Higher Education Assistance Foundation (NHHEAF) Center for College Planning continues to be a resource for foster care youth, caregivers and DCYF who had questions about how to navigate the college admissions, application and financial aid process. NHHEAF met with youth and caregivers upon request and provided quarterly presentations to youth at the Sununu Youth Services Center.

This year, there were forty six certified applicants for the Tuition Waiver Program. By comparison there were thirty seven applicants in 2019 and forty two in 2018. Fifteen waiver slots were awarded for the USNH schools and fifteen for the CCSNH schools. One youth dropped out of a CCSNH school and their slot was filled by another applicant.

DCYF and the USNH and Community College system have continued to maintain regular contact in support of the Tuition Waiver Program. This has included both systems recording educational outcomes of waiver recipients that attended their institutions. The chart below consists of the fifty six tuition waiver recipients that attended a USNH school since 2012, the first year waiver applicants gave written permission for their educational outcomes to be obtained by DCYF, through the Fall of 2020. Fifty-four percent of waiver recipients have either graduated or continued to work towards graduation.

USNH

Graduated	20	36%
No longer enrolled/ did not graduate	21	37%
Still enrolled	10	18%
Newly enrolled	5	9%
Total	**56**	**100%**

The chart below consists of the seventy three waiver recipients that attended a CCSNH school from 2012 through May of 2020. Thirty five percent of those waiver recipients have either graduated or continue to work towards graduation. DCYF attempted to contact all past CCSNH waiver recipients and from that effort learned that one additional youth graduated from a USNH school.

CCSNH

Graduated/Certificate	7	10%
No longer enrolled/ did not graduate	48	65%
Still enrolled	18	25%
Total	**73**	**100%**

DCYF continues to explore ways to increase academic achievement among waiver recipients in order to raise graduation rates. That includes supporting for HB 1582 (2020) effective July 28, 2020 which expanded opportunities by allowing waiver recipients to attend part-time at the discretion of DCYF. This has allowed more students to stay in the program as some young adults need a more a more gradual transition from being in DCYF care to meeting the demands of college.

DCYF reached out to the institutions that participate in the Tuition Waiver Program and requested a summary of on campus supports and resources provided to waiver recipients. The information was shared with students attending those schools and this process will continue until all the information is collected and distributed. DCYF has continues to have conversations about ways to maximize the success of waiver recipients and is in the process of planning on meeting on that topic to occur later this year. All participating colleges will be invited to attend. Plymouth State University, which has a peer mentoring program that matches incoming first year students in need including those in foster care with an upper classman will be asked to present this promising program at the meeting. We are also discussing the opportunity to have campus support services reach out to incoming waiver recipients, with their permission, in an effort to expand support provided to this population.

A complete breakdown of the applicants and recipients of the Tuition Waiver Program for Foster and Adopted Children Program is available on pages 3-8 of this document.

As always, please feel free to contact me with any additional questions you may have regarding the status or implementation of this program.

Very truly yours,

Joseph E. Ribsam, Jr.
Director

Cc Beth Dorian, Community College System of NH
Kara-Lee Bean, University System of NH

Number of Students who applied for Waiver	Number of Students who received and used the Waiver	Number of students who did not receive the Waiver	Reasons for students to not receive the Waiver
2008 Spring Semester			
11	4	7	3 were no longer enrolled in college 2 had sufficient financial assistance from grants or scholarships 2 did not complete the Federal Financial Application for Student Assistance (FAFSA) as required by the Postsecondary Education Commission.
2008-2009 Fall/Spring Semesters			
34	13 (3 for Spring '09 Semester only.)	21	7 were no longer enrolled in college 9 had sufficient financial assistance from grants or scholarships 2 did not complete the Federal Financial Application for Student Assistance (FASFA)* 2 missed the deadline for completing the application 1 was already 23 at the time of application
2009-2010 Fall/Spring Semesters			
56	20	36	While a complete breakdown regarding those who did not receive the waiver is unavailable the majority of non-recipients were determined by the college to which they applied, to be missing required financial documentation.
2010-2011 Fall/Spring Semesters			
53	20*	33	The waivers were provided to the youth with the greatest level of financial need. Other reasons for a youth not to receive the waiver included being able to access adequate financial resources from other sources, opting not to attend college or not attend a NH state school or being determined by the college to which they applied, to be missing required financial documentation. *Two students dropped out of college after the semester started. These waiver slots will be filled for the spring of 2011 through an application process currently underway.
2011-2012 Fall/Spring Semesters			
38	20*	18	The waivers were provided to the youth with the greatest level of financial need. Other reasons for a youth not to receive the waiver included being able to access adequate financial resources from other sources or opting not to attend college or not attend a NH state school. *One student is scheduled to graduate in December of this year. This will create a waiver slot for the Spring semester that will be awarded to one of the 18 youth who had applied but did not receive a waiver.

Number of Students who applied for Waiver	Number of Students who received and used the Waiver	Number of students who did not receive the Waiver	Reasons for students to not receive the Waiver
2012-2013 Fall/Spring Semesters			
35	20*	15	The waivers were provided to the youth with the greatest level of financial need. Other reasons for a youth not to receive the waiver included being able to access adequate financial resources from other sources or opting not to attend college or not attend a NH state school. *One student is scheduled to graduate in December of this year and another student has dropped out. This has created two waiver slots for the Spring semester that will be awarded to one of the 15 youth who had applied but did not receive a waiver.
2013-2014 Fall/Spring Semesters			
38	20*	18	The waivers were provided to the youth with the greatest level of financial need. Other reasons for a youth not to receive the waiver included being able to access adequate financial resources from other sources or opting not to attend college or not attend a NH state school. *Three waiver recipients did not utilize the waiver either because they decided not to attend college or were not full time students, which is a requirement. The three slots were filled by selecting new recipients from a pool of alternate candidates.
2014-2015 Fall/Spring Semesters			
40	20*	20	The waivers were provided to the youth with the greatest level of financial need. Other reasons for a youth not to receive the waiver included being able to access adequate financial resources from other sources or opting not to attend college or not attend a NH state school. *Three waiver recipients did not utilize the waiver either because they decided not to attend college or were not full time students, which is a requirement. The three open slots were subsequently filled by other applicants.
2015-2016 Fall/Spring Semesters			
43	20*	23	The waivers were provided to the youth with the greatest level of financial need. Other reasons for a youth not to

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			receive the waiver included being able to access adequate financial resources from other sources or opting not to attend college or not attend a NH state school. *Five waiver recipients did not utilize the waiver either because they decided not to attend college or were not full time students, which is a requirement. The five open slots were subsequently filled by other applicants.
2016-2017 Fall/Spring Semesters			
44	22*	22	The waivers were provided to the youth with the greatest level of financial need. Other reasons for a youth not to receive the waiver included being able to access adequate financial resources from other sources or opting not to attend college or not attend a NH state school. *Four students are splitting two waiver slots. This is due to one student graduating early and another student opting not to start college until the spring semester.
2017-2018 Fall/Spring Semesters			
53	21*	32	The waivers were provided to the youth with the greatest level of financial need. Other reasons for a youth not to receive the waiver included being able to access adequate financial resources from other sources, opting not to attend college or not attend a NH state school and the lack of additional waiver slots as the program is capped at 20 per year. *One student awarded the waiver choose not to attend school so that slot was filled by another student.
2018-2019 Fall/Spring Semesters			
42	20*	22	The waivers were provided to the youth with the greatest level of financial need. Other reasons for a youth not to receive the waiver included opting not to attend college or not attend a NH state school, being unable to attend full time, having been determined as not having made satisfactory academic progress by the college they previously attended and the lack of additional waiver slots as the program is capped at 20 per year. *Three students awarded the waiver dropped out of school and a fourth opted to enter the military instead. These open slots were subsequently filled by four other students.

Number of Students who applied for Waiver	Number of Students who received and used the Waiver	Number of students who did not receive the Waiver	Reasons for students to not receive the Waiver
2019-2020 Fall/Spring Semesters			
37	30*	7	All applicants that attended a NH State school were able to receive a waiver slot due to the increase from twenty to thirty slots. The seven students who did not receive a waiver opted not to go to college or did not enroll full time which is a requirement. *Four students awarded the waiver dropped out of school, one opted to attend a private online school instead and one opted not to attend college.
2020-2021 Fall/Spring Semesters			
46	30*	16	The waivers were provided to the youth with the greatest level of financial need. Other reasons for applicants not receiving a waiver included opting not to attend college or not to attend a NH state school, having been determined as not making satisfactory academic progress, and the waiver slots being capped at 30 per year. *One applicant awarded the waiver opted not to attend school and that slot was filled by another applicant.