

PGCD Scholarship Program Policies

Fund Establishment

1. The Panhandle Groundwater Conservation District (PGCD) Scholarship Fund will provide a scholarship(s) to graduating high school seniors from counties or portions of counties located within the district (Armstrong, Carson, Donley, Gray, Potter, Roberts, and Wheeler). The recipient may attend the college/university of their choice and major in their field of choice.
2. The student applicant is required to attach an essay on the subject of groundwater conservation (subject to change each year) that is more than 500 words, but fewer than 1,000 words in length. The essay must be typed and double-spaced.
3. It is mandatory that the scholarship recipient be enrolled as a full-time student each semester (12 hours minimum for undergraduate studies and 6 hours minimum for graduate studies**) and attend college the fall semester immediately following selection. At the discretion of the Panhandle Groundwater Conservation District Scholarship Selection Committee (Selection Committee), recipients may request a one-time hiatus from academic study up to a maximum of 13 consecutive months and still maintain scholarship eligibility. The student will furnish a written request to the District a minimum of 45 days in advance of the hiatus. The student's written request is subject to approval by the selection committee. Prior to re-enrollment, notification must be given in writing to the District 45 days prior to returning to school. Failure to notify the District of the withdrawal or re-enrollment will result in automatic forfeiture. A student's unpaid award balance may be applied to graduate school if the student finishes undergraduate studies early, provided that the above-identified enrollment and grade criteria are satisfied. The scholarship award will be granted as follows, contingent upon satisfaction of scholarship criteria (GPA, course load, etc.), and paid out over the duration of the college career.

First Place – 4-year college or university - \$2,000 scholarship per year for 4 years (\$8,000 total - \$1,000/semester) or 2 year technical or trade school - \$4,000 scholarship per year for 2 years (\$8,000 total - \$2,000/semester)

Second Place – 4-year college or university - \$1500 scholarship per year for 4 years (\$6,000 total – \$750/semester) or 2 year technical or trade school - \$3,000 scholarship per year for 2 years (\$6,000 total - \$1,500/semester)

Third Place - 4 year college or university - \$1,000 scholarship per year for 4 year (\$4,000 total) or 2 year technical or trade school - \$2,000 scholarship per year for 2 years (\$4,000 total - \$1,000/semester)

Additionally, the selection committee will choose one or more alternates in case an awardee fails to attend school or does not maintain sufficient grades. In that event, the remainder of the scholarship funds will be awarded first to the next eligible awardee or to an alternate (lower-ranking awardees will move up before an alternate is moved into an award position). For instance, if the second-place recipient fails to retain eligibility then the third-place recipient would move up to the second-place recipient and the alternate

would move into the third-place scholarship etc. In the event that an alternate candidate is given the opportunity to receive the PGCD Scholarship, the District will review his/her application and academic standing prior to officially moving him/her into an awardee position.*

4. Applicant should exhibit leadership and community involvement. PGCD will contract an independent consultant to review the applicant's financial documents and rate individuals accordingly. In determining the student's need for the grant, the financial condition will be studied as well as the overall situation and not strictly identified as an individual/family bordering on low income. Student financial obligations are to be considered as well as income.
5. The grant is to be made payable to an accredited college or university of the student's choice to pay tuition first and then reimburse students for book expenses and fees, to the total of the grant. The award will be half each semester upon proof of enrollment and a cumulative GPA of 2.5 criteria being met.
6. The selection committee will review and rank all applications and make the final selection of the top 3 award placements. The award will be announced at the award presentation for the recipient's high school by PGCD.
7. **Applications are due in the office of the Panhandle Groundwater Conservation District for consideration by the deadline set on the application.** Applications received after that date will not be eligible for consideration by the Scholarship Screening Committee.
8. Scholarship grants may be used exclusively for tuition and for fees, books, supplies, and equipment required for courses that comprise a specified program of study or degree plan, or for room and board expenses not to exceed the "cost of attendance," which is determined by the institution financial aid office on a student-specific basis. Costs of attendance include both institution charges and indirect expenses, such as off-campus living and transportation.
9. Scholarship Award disbursements are paid to the education institution for the benefit of the scholarship recipient, provided that the scholarship recipient complies with the terms and conditions of the scholarship as specified in the Scholarship Acceptance Agreement.
10. The Fund Agreement may provide that scholarship grants are awarded for one year or may be renewed for multiple consecutive years.
 - a. For renewable awards, the Fund Agreement may state either: a cumulative total number of years or semesters of consecutive renewal or may state the consecutive renewable terms by the program of study (for those that award grants for undergraduate, graduate, or doctoral studies).

Scholarship Administration

1. The term “Scholarship Awards” refers to grants that pay for individuals to attend secondary school, a public or private college or university, or a vocational school at a “qualified U.S. educational institution” within or outside the State of Texas. A qualified institution is one “that maintains a regular faculty and curriculum and normally has a regularly enrolled body of students in attendance at the place where it carries on its educational activities.”
2. The District appoints all members of the selection committee(s) in January, prior to accepting scholarship applications.
3. All scholarship grants are awarded on an objective and nondiscriminatory basis using a procedure that has been approved in advance by the Board of Directors and that has been designed to ensure that such grants constitute a scholarship or fellowship grant that is to be used for study at a qualified educational institution. The following applicant eligibility applies to any new Scholarship Fund:
 - a. Applicants must be U.S. Citizens or Legal Permanent Residents unless protected under a government program.
 - b. Applicants must complete the District’s General Scholarship Application.
 - c. Applicants must reside or attend school within District boundaries.
4. The following policies apply to scholarship recipients:
 - a. Scholarship recipients must enroll in the fall semester immediately following the award and remain consecutively enrolled for the term of the scholarship.
 - b. Scholarship recipients must maintain full-time enrollment by enrolling in and completing a minimum of 12 credit hours/per semester for undergraduate studies, or 6 credit hours per semester for graduate studies.
 - i. This requirement may be modified in the Scholarship Criteria to accommodate a particular field of study, provided that such varied hours are the same for all students enrolled in the program; or if the Scholarship Fund is intended to benefit a particular class of students whose abilities warrant fewer credit hours.
 - c. Scholarship recipients must send proof of enrollment and also a copy of their cumulative GPA to the District by **September 1st for the Fall Semester and by January 1st for the Spring Semester.**
 - i. Recipients are responsible for informing the District of payment deadlines, and if a deadline is missed because the recipient failed to send enrollment verification and GPA, the District is not liable for a missed payment. Payments will not be sent until the above information is received.

5. The District reserves the right to withdraw its Scholarship Awards under certain circumstances, including but not limited to:
 - a. The Scholarship Recipient's failure to comply with the Scholarship Acceptance Agreement;
 - b. If a Scholarship Recipient receives sufficient other scholarships and grants to fulfill the "cost of attendance" at the student's chosen educational institution, as determined by the institution's financial aid office, the District may withdraw the scholarship and may award it to an alternate recipient. (Clarification: financial aid office determines student's financial need and potential "over-award" status)
 - c. If no payment can be made during an academic year (such as in the case of "over-funding"). In this situation, the award (including any renewability provision) will be withdrawn and granted to an alternate.
 - d. Recipient must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA as specified in the Scholarship Acceptance Agreement. In no case shall the cumulative GPA be less than 2.5.

Recipient must attend the college/university as specified in the Scholarship Acceptance Agreement unless a change of school is specifically permitted by the terms of the Scholarship Fund.