

November 1, 2023

The Honorable Gene Pelowski Jr., Chair  
Higher Education Finance and Policy  
491 State Office Building  
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear Representative Pelowski:

Enclosed is the latest projections report for the Minnesota State Grant program as required by *Minnesota Statute* 136A.121. By law, updates occur on November 1 and February 15 of each fiscal year. Information on enrollments and tuition and fee changes were provided by public and private institutions.

*Fiscal Years 2022-2023*

State Grant spending totaled \$202.135 million for fiscal year 2022, and State Grant spending totaled \$214.407 million for fiscal year 2023, for a biennial total of \$416.543 million. This compares to base resources of \$418.024 million for the biennium. The projected difference between base resources and total spending is positive \$1.481 million, or 0.4% below available resources.

*Fiscal Years 2024-2025*

The spending projection for fiscal year 2024 is \$234.744 million, and the spending projection for fiscal year 2025 is \$231.360 million. Total spending for the biennium is projected to be \$452.574 million. This compares to base resources of \$458.911 million for the biennium. The projected difference between base resources and total spending is positive \$6.337 million, or 1.4% below available resources.

Projections for fiscal year 2025 include the estimated impact of the FAFSA Simplification Act passed by Congress in December 2021. This legislation includes major changes to the federal needs analysis, renames the Expected Family Contribution (EFC) to the Student Aid Index (SAI), and significantly modifies the awarding formula for the federal Pell Grant. These changes are expected to go into effect for fiscal year 2025 (2024-2025 academic year), and are projected to have a significant impact on State Grant spending. Current estimates use draft reference tables published as of November 1, 2023.

The report can be viewed online at <http://www.ohe.state.mn.us/mPg.cfm?pageID=1553>. Feel free to contact myself or the report authors if you have questions or would like more information.

Sincerely,



Dennis Olson  
Commissioner

Enclosure

cc: Rep. Dan Wolgamott, Vice Chair  
Rep. Greg Davids  
Rep. Ginny Klevorn  
Rep. Kristin Robbins  
Sydney Spreck  
Ken Savary

Rep. Marion O'Neill  
Rep. Jessica Hanson  
Rep. Joe McDonald  
Rep. Peggy Scott  
Owen Wirth  
Legislative Reference Library

Rep. Nathan Coulter  
Rep. Kim Hicks  
Rep. Mohamud Noor  
Rep. Samantha Vang  
Nathan Hopkins  
Avery Turman

November 1, 2023

The Honorable Omar Fateh, Chair  
Higher Education Committee  
95 University Avenue W  
Minnesota Senate Building, Room 3219  
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear Senator Fateh:

Enclosed is the latest projections report for the Minnesota State Grant program as required by *Minnesota Statute* 136A.121. By law, updates occur on November 1 and February 15 of each fiscal year. Information on enrollments and tuition and fee changes were provided by public and private institutions.

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Sincerely,



Dennis Olson  
Commissioner

Enclosure

cc: Senator Aric Putnam, Vice Chair  
Senator Erin Murphy  
Sam Parmekar  
Avery Turman  
Joan White

Senator Zach Duckworth  
Senator Clare Oumou Verbeten  
Erik Olson  
Legislative Reference Library

Senator Robert Farnsworth  
Senator Jason Rarick  
Senator Robert Kupec  
Sydney Spreck

# **Minnesota State Grant & North Star Promise Projections**

**Fiscal Years 2022-2023 and 2024-2025**

November 1, 2023

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State Grant Research Manager

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[nicole.whelan@state.mn.us](mailto:nicole.whelan@state.mn.us)**About the Minnesota Office of Higher Education**

The Minnesota Office of Higher Education is a cabinet-level state agency providing students with financial aid programs and information to help them gain access to postsecondary education. The agency also serves as the state's clearinghouse for data, research and analysis on postsecondary enrollment, financial aid, finance and trends.

The Minnesota State Grant Program is the largest financial aid program administered by the Office of Higher Education, awarding up to \$224 million in need-based grants to Minnesota residents attending eligible colleges, universities and career schools in Minnesota. The agency oversees other state scholarship programs, tuition reciprocity programs, a student loan program, Minnesota's 529 College Savings Plan, licensing and early college awareness programs for youth.

**About This Report**

This is a legislative-mandated report. As requested by Minnesota Statutes, section 3.197, this report cost approximately \$\_\_\_\_\_ to prepare, including staff time.

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# Executive Summary

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This report presents actual spending for the Minnesota State Grant program for the 2022-2023 biennium and projected spending for the 2024-2025 biennium as of November 1, 2023, as required by state law. Projections are the result of a full simulation of the State Grant model. This model projects State Grant spending for fiscal years 2024 and 2025. It uses fiscal year 2023 actual spending data and award parameters in law as of November 1, 2023 along with information on enrollment and tuition and fee changes provided by institutional representatives and the percent change in wages. Discussion of the assumptions used in the spending projections starts on page five of this report.

## **The results of the projections are:**

- Fiscal years 2022-2023: State Grant spending totaled \$202.136 million for fiscal year 2022, and State Grant spending totaled \$214.407 million for fiscal year 2023, for a biennial total of \$416.543 million. This compares to base resources of \$418.024 million for the biennium. The projected difference between base resources and total spending is positive \$1.481 million, or 0.4% below available resources.
- Fiscal years 2024-2025: The spending projection for fiscal year 2024 is \$221.214 million, and the spending projection for fiscal year 2025 is \$231.360 million. Total spending for the biennium is projected to be \$452.574 million. This compares to base resources of \$458.911 million for the biennium. The projected difference between base resources and total spending is positive \$6.337 million, or 1.4% below available resources.

Projections for fiscal year 2025 include the estimated impact of the FAFSA Simplification Act passed by Congress in December 2019. This legislation includes major changes to the federal needs analysis, renames the Expected Family Contribution (EFC) to the Student Aid Index (SAI), and significantly modifies the awarding formula for the federal Pell Grant. These changes are expected to go into effect for fiscal year 2025 (2024-2025 academic year), and are projected to have a significant impact on State Grant spending. Current estimates use draft reference tables published as of November 1, 2023.

# Fiscal Years 2022 and 2023 – Actual Spending

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This report presents actual Minnesota State Grant program spending for fiscal years 2022 and 2023 and spending projections for fiscal years 2024 and 2025 as of November 1, 2023. State law requires spending projection updates to occur by November 1 and February 15 of each fiscal year. Information on enrollment and tuition and fee changes was provided by institutional representatives on October 13, 2023.

The projections contained in this report are the result of a full simulation of the State Grant model. This model projects State Grant spending for fiscal years 2024, and 2025 using fiscal year 2023 actual spending data and award parameters in law as of November 1, 2023; information on enrollment and tuition and fee changes provided by institutional representatives; and the percent change in wages. Discussion of the assumptions used in the spending projections starts on page five.

State Grant spending totaled \$202.136 million for fiscal year 2022 and \$214.407 million for fiscal year 2023, for a biennial total of \$416.543 million. This compares to base resources of \$418.024 million for the biennium. Base resources include transfers of \$2.05 million from the State Grant to other financial aid programs. These transfers reduced overall funds available to the State Grant program. Overall, the difference between base resources and total spending is positive \$1.481 million or 0.4% below available resources.

**Table 1: Spending versus Resources FY2022-2023 (in millions)**

	<b>FY2022</b>	<b>FY2023</b>	<b>Biennium</b>
Base resources	\$210.037	\$207.987 <sup>i</sup>	\$418.024
Spending	<u>+(202.136)</u>	<u>+(214.407)<sup>ii</sup></u>	<u>+(416.543)</u>
Difference between resources and spending	\$7.901	\$(6.420)	\$1.481 0.4% below appropriations

<sup>i</sup> Base resources for fiscal year 2023 include transfers of \$2.05M to other financial aid programs. <sup>ii</sup> Preliminary

## Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025 – Spending Projection

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The spending projection for fiscal year 2024 is \$221.214 million, and the spending projection for fiscal year 2025 is \$231.360 million. Total spending for the biennium is projected to be \$452.574 million. This compares to base resources of \$458.911 million for the biennium. The projected difference between base resources and total spending is positive \$6.337 million, or 1.4% below available resources.

The changes modeled are the Office’s best estimates as of November 1, 2023, and are subject to change, based on updated information on enrollment, tuition, family incomes, federal law, federal funding, and changes to the federal need analysis.

**Table 2: Spending Forecast versus Resources FY2024-2025 (in millions)**

	FY2024	FY2025	Biennium
Base resources	\$234.744	\$224.167	\$458.911
Spending projection	<u>+(221.214)</u>	<u>+(231.360)</u>	<u>+(452.574)</u>
Difference between resources and spending	\$13.530	\$(7.193)	\$6.337 1.4% below appropriations

Projections for fiscal years 2024 and 2025 include changes made to State Grant program parameters during the 2023 Minnesota Legislative session. These changes include:

- Beginning fiscal year 2024:
  - Increasing the Living and Miscellaneous Expense allowance (LME) to 115% of the poverty guideline
  - Moving the State Grant application deadline to June 30 of the fiscal year for which the student is applying for financial aid
- Beginning fiscal year 2025:
  - Increasing lifetime eligibility for the Minnesota State Grant to 180 credits of grant receipt (previously 120 credits of postsecondary enrollment)
  - Modifying the State Grant award calculation for part-time students so that the student’s family contribution is prorated by credits of enrollment in the same way that the State Grant budget is prorated
  - Technical changes to align with changes to the federal needs analysis
  - Lowering the minimum credit requirement for State Grant eligibility from three credits to one credit

Additionally, projections for fiscal year 2025 include the estimated impact of the FAFSA Simplification Act passed by Congress in December 2019. This legislation includes major changes to the federal needs



analysis, renames the Expected Family Contribution (EFC) to the Student Aid Index (SAI), and significantly modifies the awarding formula for the federal Pell Grant. These changes are expected to go into effect for fiscal year 2025 (the 2024-2025 academic year), and are projected to have a significant impact on State Grant spending. Current estimates use draft reference tables published as of November 1, 2023. These estimates are subject to change, pending further federal guidance, and assumes the current implementation in the 2024-2025 academic year.

# Assumptions

The Minnesota State Grant spending projection for each fiscal year relies on a series of adjustments and the program parameters shown in Table 3.

**Table 3: Minnesota State Grant Award Parameters**

	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025
	ACTUAL	ACTUAL	ACTUAL	PROJECTED
Living and Miscellaneous Expense Allowance	\$10,530	\$11,418 <sup>i</sup>	\$12,576	\$13,040 <sup>ii</sup>
Assigned Student Responsibility	50%	50%	50%	50%
<b>Tuition and Fee Maximums</b>				
Students in Two-Year Programs	\$6,287	\$6,484	\$6,580	\$6,580 <sup>ii</sup>
Students in Four-Year Programs	\$15,368	\$16,106	\$16,654	\$16,987 <sup>ii</sup>
Federal Pell Grant Maximum	\$6,495	\$6,895	\$7,395	\$7,395 <sup>ii</sup>
Rationing Surcharge on Assigned Family Responsibility	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>Proration for the Assigned Family Responsibility</b>				
Dependent Students (Parent Contribution)	79%	79%	79%	79%
Independent Students with Dependents (Student Contribution)	71%	71%	71%	71%
Independent Students without Dependents (Student Contribution)	35%	35%	35%	35%

<sup>i</sup> Increased under OHE authority in statute (Minnesota Statute 136A.121 Subd. 7(a)); <sup>ii</sup> Estimated

## Federal Poverty Guidelines - Living and Miscellaneous Expense Allowance

The Living and Miscellaneous Expense allowance (LME) is benchmarked to an amount equal to the Federal Poverty Guidelines for a single person household living in the contiguous 48 states for a nine-month period. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services issues Federal Poverty Guidelines annually on January 31. Under Minnesota law, the LME is equal to the Federal Poverty Guidelines plus 15 percent. Table 4 displays the annual figures for the Living and Miscellaneous Expense allowance.

LME estimates will be updated in the February 15, 2024 projections report, following updates to the Federal Poverty Guidelines.

**Table 4: Federal Poverty Guidelines**

	<b>FY2022</b>	<b>FY2023</b>	<b>FY2024</b>	<b>FY2025</b>
<b>Poverty Guidelines Year</b>	2021	2022	2023	2024
	ACTUAL	ACTUAL	ACTUAL	PROJECTED
Federal Poverty Guidelines – 1 person in family/household, 48 contiguous states	\$12,880	\$13,590	\$14,580	\$15,119 <sup>ii</sup>
Poverty Guideline Increase %	0.94%	5.51%	7.28%	3.70%
Multiplier for 9-month time period	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75
Inflator in Minnesota law	0.09	0.09	0.15	0.15
Living and Miscellaneous Expense Allowance	\$10,530	\$11,418 <sup>i</sup>	\$12,576	\$13,040 <sup>ii</sup>

<sup>i</sup> Increased under OHE authority in statute (Minnesota Statute 136A.121 Subd. 7(a)); <sup>ii</sup> Estimated

## Change in Wages

The State Grant spending projection incorporates data about changes in wages of Minnesota tax filers. Estimated changes in wages are derived from year-over-year changes in the Employment Cost Index. Current assumptions appear in Table 5.

**Table 5: Change in Annual Wages, Minnesota**

	<b>FY2022</b> tax year 2019	<b>FY2023</b> tax year 2020	<b>FY2024</b> tax year 2021	<b>FY2025</b> tax year 2022
One-Year Change in Average Wages	2.8%	3.1%	2.4%	5.8%

## Enrollment Assumptions

The State Grant spending projection also incorporates estimated changes in the number of Minnesota resident undergraduates enrolling at each institution. Table 6 shows information about enrollment changes for fiscal years 2023 to 2025. Overall enrollment changes serve to estimate changes in the number of Minnesota resident aid applicants. The Office revises enrollment assumptions as new enrollment data become available. A change in total enrollment of plus or minus one percentage point annually changes projected State Grant spending by an estimated \$2.0 million. Most institutions experienced enrollment declines in fall of fiscal year 2023.

**Table 6: Enrollment Assumptions**

	FY2022	FY2023	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025
	Fall 2021	Fall 2022	Fall 2023	Fall 2023	Fall 2024
System	Actual	Actual	Projected	Actual	Projected
Minnesota State Colleges	-6.4%	-1.8%	-0.9%	1.2%	0.9%
Minnesota State Universities	-5.5%	-4.3%	-1.1%	-0.3%	1.7%
University of Minnesota Twin Cities	1.30%	0.2%	0% to 2%	-0.5%	0% to 2%
University of Minnesota Crookston, Duluth & Morris	-4.05%	-5.7%	0% to 2%	-2.6%	0% to 2%
Private Not-for-Profit Institutions	-3.6%	-3.4%	0.0%	-0.2%	0.0%
Private For-Profit Institutions	-6.0%	-20.0%	-2.0%	-27.4%	3.0%

## Pell Grant Changes in Law

The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023 increased the Pell Grant maximum to \$7,395, which has a direct impact on State Grant spending. The Office will continue to monitor Congressional activity regarding funding of the federal Pell Grant program, and future projections will include updated Pell Grant amounts.

The State Grant award formula maintains a dollar for dollar relationship with the student’s Pell Grant, and increases or reductions in the federal Pell Grant amounts will impact State Grant spending. Table 7 lists the current federal Pell Grant award parameters.

**Table 7: Federal Pell Grant Award Parameters**

	<b>FY2022</b>	<b>FY2023</b>	<b>FY2024</b>	<b>FY2025</b>
	ACTUAL	ACTUAL	PROJECTED	PROJECTED
Pell Grant Minimum Award	\$650	\$690	\$750	\$750
Pell Grant Maximum Award	\$6,495	\$6,895	\$7,395	\$7,395
Award Formula: Expected Family Contribution (EFC)	Maximum Pell - EFC	Maximum Pell - EFC	Maximum Pell - EFC	See Table 7a
Qualifying EFC	\$0-\$5,846	\$0-\$6,206	\$0-\$6,656	Varies

**Table 7a. FY 2025 Pell Grant Thresholds for Award Amounts Under the FAFSA Simplification Act**

<b>Dependency Status</b>	<b>Single Parent Status</b>	<b>Receives Maximum Pell Grant</b>	<b>Receives Greater of Minimum Pell Grant or Maximum Pell Grant-SAI</b>	<b>IF SAI&lt;=90% of Maximum Pell Grant, Receives Maximum Pell Grant - SAI</b>
Dependent	Single Parent	AGI Less than 225% of FPG <sup>i</sup>	226%-325% of FPG	326%+ of FPG
Dependent	Not a Single Parent	Less than 175%	176%-275%	276%+
Independent	No Dependents	Less than 175%	176%-275%	276%+
Independent	With Dependents, Single Parent	Less than 225%	226%-400%	401%+
Independent	With Dependents, Not a Single Parent	Less than 175%	176%-350%	351%+

<sup>i</sup>Pell funding level eligibility is determined using Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) as a Percentage of Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPG)

## Tuition and Fee Increases

The Office gathered information about tuition and fee increases for fiscal year 2025 from institutional and system representatives. Table 8 details actual and estimated tuition and fee increases for State Grant calculations as reported by institutions for use in spending projections. For fiscal years 2022 and 2023, some Minnesota State institutions implemented a tuition reset as authorized in state law, resulting in tuition and fee increases that exceed the maximum set in law.

**Table 8: Annual Changes in Minnesota Resident Undergraduate Tuition and Fee Rates<sup>ii</sup>**

	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025
System	Actual	Actual	Actual	Projected
Minnesota State Colleges	3.9%	3.0%	0.8%	0.0%
Minnesota State Universities	7.1% <sup>i</sup>	4.5% <sup>i</sup>	0.5%	0.0%
University of Minnesota	1.7%	4.1%	3.4%	0% to 4%
Private Not-for-Profit Institutions <sup>iii</sup>	1.8%	4.0%	3.7%	3.0%
Private For-Profit Institutions <sup>iii</sup>	1.5%	4.3%	4.2%	4.0%

<sup>i</sup> Unadjusted for tuition reset authorized in state law. Actual percent change in average tuition and fees charged for all terms of the 2021-2022 academic year. May differ from published rate changes.

<sup>ii</sup> Tuition estimates for Minnesota State Colleges and Universities reflect estimates made by OHE for use in cost projections for State Grant and other financial aid programs.

<sup>iii</sup> Tuition and fees exceed the annual tuition and fees maximums currently established in law for determining State Grant awards.

## Federal Need Analysis

The forecasted spending model for the Minnesota State Grant incorporates all changes passed by Congress or made by the U.S. Department of Education to the federal need analysis as of November 1, 2023. The U.S. Department of Education releases annual updates to the tables in the statutory “Federal Methodology Need Analysis” used to determine a student’s EFC.

# North Star Promise Program

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The 2023 Minnesota State Legislature passed legislation that included the creation of the North Star Promise program. This tuition- and fee-free pathway to higher education for eligible Minnesota residents at eligible institutions as a “last-dollar” program by covering the balance of tuition and fees remaining after other scholarships, grants, stipends and tuition waivers have been applied.

To be eligible to participate in the program, the student must:

- Be a Minnesota resident
- Have a family Adjusted Gross Income\* (AGI) as reported on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or Minnesota Dream Act Application below \$80,000.
- Attend a Minnesota public higher education institution or Tribal College
- Not be in default on a state or federal student loan
- Be enrolled taking at least one credit
- Meet Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) standards
- Have not already earned a baccalaureate degree
- Be enrolled in a program or course of study that applies to a degree, diploma, or certificate

This program is currently in the implementation phase, and will be available to students beginning in the 2024-2025 academic year. In addition to the last-dollar grant, students receiving federal Pell Grants may be eligible to receive additional funding (North Star Promise Plus award) at a level to be determined by the Office and dependent on available funding. At this time, the Office has not determined what that funding level will be. Table 9 shows projected spending for the program for Fiscal Year 2025.

**Table 9: North Star Promise Program Projected Awards, Fiscal Year 2025**

System	Projected Student Count	Projected Average Award	Projected Total Awards
Minnesota State Colleges	6,300	\$1,370	\$8,655,500
Minnesota State Universities	4,100	\$2,360	\$9,678,200
University of Minnesota	4,900	\$3,260	\$15,992,900
Tribal Institutions	20	\$1,720	\$34,300
Total	15,400	\$2,230	\$34,360,900

## Next Report

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The next report on Minnesota State Grant spending is due to the Legislature by February 15, 2024.