



Local Scholarship Program

Policy & Procedures

About the Snohomish Education Foundation Local Scholarship Program

The mission of the Snohomish Education Foundation (SEF) is to elevate opportunities and possibilities for students in the Snohomish School District. One primary way of doing this is through its Local Scholarship Program (LSP). The goal of this program is to provide scholarships to as many students across the district as possible.

Scholarship Establishment

To establish a scholarship fund with the Snohomish Education Foundation (SEF), the sponsor must complete the Scholarship Establishment Form and agree to the terms by signing the SEF Scholarship Establishment Form.

A sponsor may choose to establish an endowed scholarship fund with a minimum balance of \$10,000 or greater. Endowed funds are eligible to receive quarterly investment earnings. See details below.

The Executive Director and/or the Scholarship Committee Chair(s) will meet with the sponsors to clarify items on the form and assist in making decisions and explain the process related to the criteria for the award(s).

Upon form completion, the Establishment Form is presented to the Board of Trustees for approval vote to ensure it meets the established SEF scholarship policy, establishment and award criteria guidelines.

The established scholarship will continue annually unless notified otherwise by the scholarship sponsor. Criteria and award amounts will remain the same year after year unless the SEF is notified and a change form is completed indicating the specific changes requested.

Scholarship Funding

SEF does not administer scholarships under \$500.

Scholarships cannot be given directly to a student and must be made payable to the school at which the student has enrolled.

You will receive an invoice annually indicating the balance in the scholarship fund and the funds needed to fully fund the scholarship for the upcoming cycle. All scholarship funds must be deposited with the SEF in full by January 15. Awards not fully funded by this date will not be publicized and will not be awarded until fully-funded.

Payments can be made by check payable to the Snohomish Education Foundation or by credit card at www.snoed.org. Scholarships paid by credit card will be charged the credit card administration fee. There is an optional 3% program support allocation added to your scholarship amount. This additional amount will go into unrestricted funds and will be directed toward scholarship program support.

SEF does not administer renewable or multi-year scholarships. All scholarships administered by SEF are one-time, non-renewable awards.

Funds deposited into scholarship accounts cannot be refunded.

A 3% program support allocation is OPTIONAL for all existing scholarships. This will be calculated based on your award amount and will help with the sustainability of the local scholarship program. All new scholarships in the year 2026 will be asked to pay the 3% program support allocation.

Endowed Funds with a balance of \$10,000 or more will be credited for their prorated share of quarterly investment earnings (interest + dividend income, and investment appreciation or depreciation). If a balance drops below \$10,000, funds are no longer eligible for its prorated share of quarterly investment earnings. Existing endowments will also have a 3% OPTIONAL program support allocation added to its award amount (not fund balance).

To establish an endowment, sponsors should complete the [endowment form](#) provided by SEF and agree to all endowment terms and conditions.

Criteria Guidelines

The selection criteria provide potential applicants with standards used by the SEF Scholarship Committee or person(s) when reviewing applications and/or selecting recipients. The scholarship sponsor may choose any criteria they wish but will not limit eligibility in a way that would be considered discriminatory such as by race, color, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability. You may list priorities and preferences for how you will score and consider applicants in the displayed criteria and any rubrics.

Common criteria and/or eligibility considerations could include any of the following:

- Academic success
- Leadership roles
- Personal character
- School involvement and participation in extra-curricular activities
- Community service or commitment to a certain cause
- Intended major/field of study/career path
- Life experiences/interests
- Financial need
- Work experience and other related/important experiences

After the criteria is set and has been published for a given year, it cannot be changed. Changes may be made to published criteria after the award has been given and prior to scholarship criteria being published the following year. The window to make changes to scholarship criteria is July 1st - December 1st.

Conflict of Interest

Per IRS regulations, the person(s) or committee member(s) that select recipients and/or fund the scholarship cannot be in a position to receive benefit, directly or indirectly for themselves or family members. If a conflict of interest is suspected, the Executive Director of the Snohomish Education Foundation should be contacted immediately at 360.568.5292.

If a conflict of interest is reported, the Executive Director and the SEF Scholarship Committee will make selections.

Selection Process

Scholarship sponsors will be notified by email of availability of applications for review and selection, with instructions for software platform use.

Selections should be made based on unbiased review of all eligible applicants and published scholarship criteria. Selections may be made by sponsors, sponsor selected independent review, or by the Snohomish Education Foundation Scholarship Committee.

All selections must be made by the deadline set each year, typically mid-March. Selections will then be reviewed by the Board of Trustees and approved at the April Board of Trustees Meeting as due diligence to ensure that selections are qualified.

*Any selections not made by the deadline will defer to the Snohomish Education Foundation Scholarship Committee for selection.

All scholarship applications and materials submitted are confidential.

Applicant names and contact information will be protected to the best of our ability to ensure student privacy and ensure an equitable selection process.

All scholarship applicants will acknowledge that materials submitted are accurate to the best of their knowledge as part of the submission process.

Recipient Selection

Scholarships can only be awarded to students who have applied. If there is no student qualified for selection in a particular scholarship year, the funds will remain in the sponsor's restricted fund with SEF and will be made available the following year.

A selection of one recipient per award with one alternate recipient is required. If for some reason we can't award your scholarship to your selected applicant, we will award to the alternate. This will happen unless we are directed otherwise by you, the scholarship sponsor.

If there is only one eligible applicant, then an alternate selection is not needed.

With our mission and the goal of the Local Scholarship Program in mind, SEF prioritizes diversifying scholarship distribution across candidates, while still keeping with the integrity of each scholarship criteria, candidate qualifications, and sponsor selections. We will ask sponsor selected scholarships to provide alternates and at times, we may request awarding to an alternate candidate.

Award Distribution

The Snohomish Education Foundation will notify recipients of their award following Board vote and approval at the April board meeting.

Scholarship sponsors will be invited to attend the award ceremonies at AIM, Glacier Peak, and Snohomish High Schools. Sponsors will have the opportunity to meet their recipients.

If the recipient is entering into a post-secondary education program that is not a traditional school and has been awarded a scholarship to support their post-secondary education, the fund distribution will be outlined by SEF and agreed to by the Executive Committee / Board of Trustees to ensure the payments and processes align with IRS regulations and all other policies and procedures.

The Foundation will be responsible for the management and disbursement of the scholarship funds. The Foundation will provide the Donor with an annual update detailing the status of the Fund, the criteria, who was the recipient of the funds and any next steps or changes that need to be made for the next cycle.

Deferral Policy

Scholarship recipients may request a deferral of their award for up to one year, until August 1 of the following year after their graduation. The deferral must be requested through the SEF forms upon graduation from high school.

Deferrals must be for the full scholarship amount; partial deferrals are not permitted. All scholarships associated with a recipient must be deferred in full or not at all.

If SEF does not receive the recipient's post-secondary enrollment information (school name, student ID number and details) through the required forms, the scholarship will automatically be placed in deferred status for one

year. If no enrollment information is provided by August 1 of the following year, the scholarship funds will be released back to SEF and will not be available to the recipient.

Inactive Scholarships

Scholarships with balances under \$500 will be deemed abandoned after a period of two years of inactivity. For scholarships with balances of \$500 or more, after one phone call and one letter to the last known contact and address of the sponsor, are unsuccessful, the account will then be closed and funds will be transferred to the SEF unrestricted general fund.

Scholarships that are unable to be awarded more than three consecutive years will become inactive unless criteria is adjusted to allow the scholarship a better chance to be awarded.

Promotion

Unless requested in writing to SEF, all donations are made public and sponsors and donors will allow photos to announce and promote the scholarship awards.

SEF does promotion of scholarships across its social media channels, on its website, and directly to students via the school career counselors, clubs and organizations affiliated with the high schools. We also will feature scholarships and scholarship sponsors in our newsletters and on our social media throughout the year.

SEF encourages scholarship sponsors to promote their own scholarship(s) however they would like to in order to get in front of as many students and community members as possible. If you tag SEF in your posts, we will also cross-promote these as possible.

Board Member Scholarship Engagement

To ensure fairness, maintain community trust, and comply with IRS guidelines, the Snohomish Education Foundation (SEF) has established the following policy for board member engagement in the scholarship program:

- **Eligibility of Board Members' Family Members**
Immediate family members (children, grandchildren, or other dependents) of SEF Board of Trustees members are not eligible to receive SEF-specific scholarships.
- **Board Member Participation in Selection**
Board members must abstain from participating in scholarship review or selection processes in any year during which they have a graduating senior enrolled in the Snohomish School District.
- **Voting Restrictions**
Board members should abstain from voting on scholarship awards in any cycle where a conflict of interest exists or may be perceived to exist.
- **Committee Membership**
Board members with a conflict of interest, or who have an immediate family member applying for scholarships, may not serve on the scholarship committee or participate in related discussions during that scholarship cycle.

These measures protect the integrity of the scholarship program, preserve public confidence, and ensure all students have fair and equitable access to scholarship opportunities.