

Central Kansas Community Foundation
Scholarship Award Procedures – Effective 2026

Purpose

To establish clear guidelines for awarding scholarships from endowed and expendable funds, ensure consistency and fairness, preserve fund principal, and implement blind application reviews to promote equity.

Award Structure

1. Minimum Award Amount

- All scholarships must be at least \$500.

2. Incremental Award Increases

- Awards will increase in \$250 increments beyond the minimum.
- Acceptable award amounts:
 - \$500, \$750, \$1,000, \$1,250, \$1,500, etc.

3. Multiple Awards per Fund

- A single fund may issue one or more awards based on available spendable balance.
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Spendable Balance Determination

1. Endowed Funds

- Spendable balance will be calculated as of September 30th, annually for the following scholarship cycle.
- This balance determines the total amount available for awards in the next academic year by providing a base spendable balance calculated by a 20-quarter averaging methodology.

2. Expendable Funds

- Distributions follow the same \$250 increment rule with a \$500 minimum.

- Entire expendable balance may be used for scholarships in the current cycle with minimum balance consideration in mind. Minimum balance target is \$5,000. If the fund dips below, you must give a documented plan on growth. These factors regarding the fund shall be noted by staff on saved in the fund details. If funds hover below minimum for several years without gains, a plan to close the fund or merging with other funds may be warranted.
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Scholarship Cycle & Payment

- Application Cycle: January 1 – May 1 annually.
 - Payment Timing:
 - Only one check will be issued in the fall after student due diligence is completed (e.g., enrollment verification, compliance documentation).
 - This ensures accuracy and reduces administrative burden.
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Blind Application Policy

- Effective 2026, all scholarship applications will be reviewed under a blind process:
 - Reviewer panels will not have access to personally identifying information (name, gender, race, etc.).
 - Program Officer will ensure applications are anonymized before committee review.
 - Training will include guidance on blind review procedures.
 - A few preauthorized exceptions have been granted.
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Coordination Responsibilities

- Program Officer:
 - Confirm spendable balances by end of year prior to new year awards.
 - Communicates available award amounts to scholarship committees and affiliate boards before application review begins.
 - Ensure awards comply with minimum and incremental requirements.

- Oversee implementation of blind review process.
 - Document award decisions and fund utilization for audit and reporting.
 - Affiliate Boards & Staff:
 - Collaborate with Program Officer to:
 - Share local scholarship needs and priorities.
 - Participate in reviewer training for blind application process.
 - Ensure compliance with policy and donor intent.
 - CEO & Program Officer:
 - CEO approves final award recommendations.
 - Program Officer ensures coordination across affiliates and adherence to policy.
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Rationale for Policy Decisions

- Principal Preservation:
 - Setting spendable balances annually and limiting awards to available funds ensures long-term sustainability of endowed funds.
- Consistency in Giving:
 - Incremental award structure and minimum thresholds create fairness and predictability for students and donors.
- Administrative Efficiency:
 - One annual payment reduces processing costs and minimizes errors.
 - For awards of \$10,000 or higher two installments would be considered.
- Equity & Transparency:
 - Blind review process eliminates bias and aligns with best practices in scholarship administration.