

Fiscal Year 2023

Gap Tuition Assistance Program Legislative Report



Department of Education

State of Iowa
Department of Education
Grimes State Office Building
400 E. 14th Street
Des Moines, IA 50319-0146

Administration

McKenzie Snow, Director and Executive Officer
of the State Board of Education

Division of Higher Education

Bureau of Community Colleges and Postsecondary Readiness

Jeremy Varner, Bureau Chief
Amy Gieseke, Section Chief
Paula Nissen, Administrative Consultant
Vladimir Bassis, Administrative Consultant

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Overview of the Gap Tuition Assistance Program

The Gap Tuition Assistance Program (Gap) was established in 2013 by the Iowa Legislature to provide funding to community colleges and their students for need-based tuition assistance allowing for the completion of continuing education certificate training programs connected to in-demand occupations ([Iowa Code section 260I](#)).

Eligibility Criteria

Applicant must demonstrate capacity to achieve the following outcomes:

- The ability to complete an eligible certificate program
- The ability to enter a postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree program for credit
- The ability to gain full-time employment
- The ability to maintain full-time employment over time

Applicants may be found eligible for partial or total tuition assistance. Only an applicant eligible to work in the United States shall be approved for tuition assistance under this program.

Eligible Costs

Costs of a program eligible for coverage by tuition assistance shall include but are not limited to:

- Tuition
- Direct training costs and support services
- Required books and personal protective equipment for the program
- Fees, including those for industry testing services and background check testing services
- Personal support appropriate for short-term programs such as:
 - Childcare while in training
 - Transportation assistance to and from training
 - Uniform/shoes for occupation related to training
- Upgraded/new program-specific equipment

Costs of providing direct staff support services include, but are not limited to: marketing, outreach, application, interview and assessment processes. Eligible costs for this purpose shall be limited to twenty percent of any allocation of monies to the two smallest community colleges, ten percent of any allocation of moneys to the two largest community colleges and fifteen percent of any allocation of moneys to the remaining eleven community colleges. Community college size shall be determined based on the most recent three-year rolling average full-time equivalent enrollment.

Eligible Programs

Programs and their participants that meet the following criteria shall be eligible for assistance under the program:

- The program is aligned with a certificate, diploma, or degree for credit, and does any of the following:

- Offers a state, national, or locally recognized certificate
- Offers preparation for a professional examination or licensure
- Provides endorsement for an existing credential or license
- Represents recognized skill standards defined by an industrial sector
- Offers a similar credential or training
- The program offers training or a credential in an in-demand occupation within one of the following industry sectors:
 - Information technology
 - Health care
 - Advanced manufacturing
 - Transportation and logistics
 - Any other industry designated as in-demand by a regional advisory board

Requirements for Participation

An applicant for Gap tuition assistance under this program will be required to complete an application to determine the applicant's readiness to complete an eligible certificate program.

A participant in an eligible certificate program who receives tuition assistance will be required to do all of the following:

- Maintain regular contact with staff members for the certificate program to document the applicant's progress in the program
- Sign a release form to provide relevant information to community college faculty or case managers
- Discuss with staff members for the certificate program any issues that may impact the participant's ability to complete the certificate program, obtain employment, and maintain employment over time
- Attend all required courses regularly
- Meet with staff members for the certificate program to develop a career pathway plan

Gap Financial Reporting, FY23

Iowa's community colleges continued to make significant progress implementing Gap funds, in coordination with the final year of grant funding through the Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER II) Fund, authorized under the federal Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSA). This report only identifies the allocations, expenditures and participation for Gap funds and does not include funds expended as a part of the GEER II Gap expansion program.

Allocations, Expenditures and Carryover, FY23

In FY23, community colleges received a state appropriation of \$2,000,000 to implement Gap. In addition to this annual appropriation, \$437,989 of funding carried forward from FY22 into FY23, for a total of \$2,437,989. Table 1 documents the allocations, expenditures and carryover for FY23 by community college.

Table 1. Gap Tuition Assistance Program Allocation, Expenditures and Carryover by College, FY23*

College	Allocation & Carryover FY 2023	Expenditures	Carryover
Northeast Iowa	\$109,640	\$ 97,471	\$ 12,169
North Iowa Area	\$165,484	\$ 59,907	\$105,577
Iowa Lakes	\$100,926	\$ 86,068	\$ 14,858
Northwest Iowa	\$ 96,828	\$ 15,074	\$ 81,754
Iowa Central	\$113,337	\$113,337	\$ 0
Iowa Valley	\$ 94,300	\$ 87,872	\$ 6,428
Hawkeye	\$144,469	\$144,469	\$ 0
Eastern Iowa	\$170,819	\$140,001	\$ 30,818
Kirkwood	\$569,616	\$520,616	\$ 49,000
Des Moines Area	\$336,022	\$336,022	\$ 0
Western Iowa Tech	\$110,985	\$110,985	\$ 0
Iowa Western	\$120,711	\$113,541	\$ 7,170
Southwestern	\$ 71,286	\$ 35,759	\$ 35,527
Indian Hills	\$148,909	\$148,909	\$ 0
Southeastern	\$ 84,657	\$ 80,688	\$ 3,969
Total	\$2,437,989	\$2,090,719	\$347,270

* Totals may vary throughout this report due to rounding methods.

Eligible Expenditures, FY23

Of the total available funds, colleges spent \$2,090,719 on tuition and books, equipment, fees and testing and program staff support services (Table 2). It should be noted that a portion of the funds carried forward may already be apportioned to active students who are currently participating in, or waiting to participate in, an approved training program. No funding is used for indirect expenses related to college administration.

Table 2. Gap Expenditures by College, FY23*

College	Tuition & Books	Equipment	Fees, Assessment & Testing	Staff Support Services	Total Expenditures
Northeast Iowa	\$97,471	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$97,471
North Iowa Area	\$38,942	\$3,675	\$961	\$16,329	\$59,907
Iowa Lakes	\$73,772	\$0	\$1,230	\$11,066	\$86,068
Northwest Iowa	\$9,390	\$0	\$0	\$5,684	\$15,074
Iowa Central	\$94,411	\$0	\$1,925	\$17,001	\$113,337
Iowa Valley	\$59,384	\$10,403	\$4,087	\$14,036	\$87,872
Hawkeye	\$115,613	\$669	\$2,974	\$25,212	\$144,469
Eastern Iowa	\$116,090	\$0	\$2,952	\$20,959	\$140,001
Kirkwood	\$431,598	\$10,234	\$27,989	\$50,794	\$520,616
Des Moines Area	\$335,455	\$0	\$567	\$0	\$336,022
Western Iowa Tech	\$100,882	\$9,548	\$555	\$0	\$110,985
Iowa Western	\$81,928	\$7,510	\$5,996	\$18,107	\$113,541
Southwestern	\$19,500	\$715	\$675	\$14,869	\$35,759
Indian Hills	\$95,862	\$759	\$32,864	\$19,423	\$148,909
Southeastern	\$70,363	\$0	\$0	\$10,324	\$80,688
Total	\$1,740,642	\$43,495	\$82,777	\$223,805	\$2,090,719

* Totals may vary throughout the report due to rounding methods.

Gap Enrollment and Completion, FY23

Applicants and Participant Counts, FY23

There were 2,876 individuals who applied for Gap funding (Table 3). Of these applicants, 2,239 were approved and either started their program, or were waiting to participate. Participant numbers vary based on applicant qualifications, funding availability, program start dates and program capacity. The numbers associated with these counts should not be compared to previous year as they oftentimes cross fiscal years for reporting.

Table 3. Gap Applicants and Approved Participants by College, FY23*

College	Number of Applications	Number of Approved Participants	Waiting to Participate
Northeast Iowa	135	55	44
North Iowa Area	62	33	13
Iowa Lakes	58	43	3
Northwest Iowa	7	5	5
Iowa Central	61	84	84
Iowa Valley	53	48	53
Hawkeye	62	33	13
Eastern Iowa	90	62	14
Kirkwood	219	190	293
Des Moines Area	1,432	259	259
Western Iowa Tech	67	53	120
Iowa Western	84	73	109
Southwestern	83	24	107
Indian Hills	111	32	46
Southeastern	352	41	41
Total	2,876	1,035	1,204

* Each training program has individual requirements and timelines for completion. Participant and completer numbers include both long- and short-term programs. It is the individual college's choice which of these programs will be supported by Gap funds, and this will reflect larger or smaller participant and completer data, depending on the program and time to completion. Additionally, participants and completers can be reflected in different fiscal years due to length of program (FY 23 Participants and Completers by Program).

Enrollment, FY23

In FY23, 1,401 students (duplicated count) enrolled in a Gap-approved program, for a total of 124,338.4 contact hours. The career and technical education (CTE) programs with the highest enrollment were nursing assistant/aide and patient care (425 students), truck and bus driver/commercial vehicle operator (335 students), emergency medical technician (EMT paramedic) (91 students) and welding technology (82 students). Table 4 lists the top 15 Gap-eligible programs statewide.

Table 4. Gap-Eligible Programs with Top 15 Enrollment, FY23

Gap-Eligible Program	Student Enrollment
Nursing assistant/aide and patient care	425
Truck and bus driver/commercial vehicle operator and instructor	335
Emergency medical technology/technician (EMT paramedic)	91
Welding technology	82
Business administration and management, general	58
Business/office automation/technology/data entry	54
Phlebotomy technician/phlebotomist	46
Dog/pet/animal grooming	39
Medical insurance coding specialist/coder	18
Computer and information systems security/auditing/information assurance	16
Administrative assistant and secretarial science, general	15
Medication aide	13
Allied health diagnostic, intervention and treatment professions	12
Logistics, materials and supply chain management	12
Sterile processing technology/technician	10

Gap Noncredit Awards, FY23

A Gap award signifies completion of a CTE program approved for Gap funding, by a student who received such funding. During FY23, Gap students earned a total of 4,455 awards. These students may have enrolled in the current year or in previous years, based on the length of the program. (Often, programs will overlap fiscal years for reporting, since the programs are noncredit and flexible.) Similar to the top program enrollment, the programs with the highest number of awards were nursing assistant/aide and patient care (3,844 awards), truck and bus driver/commercial vehicle operator (227 awards) and emergency medical technician/EMT paramedic (57 awards). The programs with the highest number of awards are listed in Table 5.

Table 5. Gap Tuition Assistance Eligible Programs with Highest Number of Awards, FY2023

Gap-Eligible Program	Awards
Nursing assistant/aide and patient care	3,844
Truck and bus driver/commercial vehicle operator and instructor	227
Emergency medical technology/technician (EMT paramedic)	57
Medication aide	40
Phlebotomy technician/phlebotomist	40
Dog/pet/animal grooming	31
Business administration and management, general	27
Industrial mechanics and maintenance technology	24
Welding technology/welder	21
Administrative assistant and secretarial science, general	17
Medical insurance coding specialist/coder	15
Computer and information systems security/auditing/information assurance	13
Heating, air conditioning, ventilation and refrigeration maintenance technology/technician	10
Cooking and related culinary arts, general	9
Health/health care administration/management	9

Industry Awards by Program, FY23

In addition to Gap awards, noncredit programs also lead students toward earning local or national industry-stackable credentials throughout their career pathway. Often these credentials are awarded by third-party organizations. The Department is currently identifying these credentials and issuing organizations, with a goal of implementing reporting in FY24.

In FY23, 529 Gap students completed a program that leads to a local or national industry credential. Table 6 shows that the highest number of students were in the following program areas: truck and bus driver/commercial vehicle operator (292 students), nursing assistant/aide and patient care (151) and emergency medical technician/EMT paramedic (84).

Table 6. Top 15 Gap Programs Leading to Industry Credentials, FY23

Gap-Eligible Program	Students
Truck and bus driver/commercial vehicle operator and instructor	292
Nursing assistant/aide and patient care	151
Emergency medical technology/technician (EMT paramedic)	84
Allied health and medical assisting services, other	57
Welding technology	18
Dog/pet/animal grooming	14
Medical insurance coding specialist/coder	14
Phlebotomy technician/phlebotomist	12
Teacher assistant/aide	9
Health/health care administration/management	8
Information technology	7
Electrocardiograph technology/technician	6
Occupational safety and health technology/technician	5
Logistics, materials and supply chain management	4
Medical/clinical assistant	4

Gap Impact and Outcomes

The Department provides data on Gap student outcomes related to further education and employment one year following program year completion. Gap student outcomes for FY22 can be found on the Department's website at: <https://educateiowa.gov/adult-career-comm-college/community-colleges/iowa-skilled-worker-and-job-creation-fund/gap-tuition-assistance-program>.