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## BUDGET UNIT BRIEF – FY 2026

Fiscal Services Division

July 1, 2025



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Ground Floor, State Capitol Building

Des Moines, Iowa 50319

515.281.3566

### Gap Tuition Assistance Fund — Skilled Worker and Job Creation Fund (SWJCF)

#### Purpose

The Gap Tuition Assistance Fund appropriation provides funding to community colleges for need-based tuition assistance to enable applicants to complete continuing education certificate training programs for in-demand occupations.

#### Eligibility

Financial need criteria include the following factors:

- The applicant's family income for the 12 months prior to the date of application.
- The applicant's family size.
- The applicant's county of residence.

Applicants must demonstrate:

- 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.

Gap Tuition Assistance cannot be provided to an applicant who is eligible for funding from any other public or private source.

#### Eligible Costs

Gap Tuition Assistance may be used for tuition, direct training costs, required books and equipment, and fees for industry testing services and background check services.

A portion of the appropriation may also be used by the community colleges to provide direct staff support services, including marketing; outreach; and application, interview, and assessment processes. The total available for these purposes is limited to 20.0% of any allocations to the two smallest community colleges, 10.0% to the two largest, and 15.0% to the remaining colleges.

#### Funding

The Gap Tuition Assistance Program was first funded in FY 2013 with a General Fund appropriation. Since 2014, the Program has received an annual appropriation from the Skilled Worker and Job Creation Fund. The appropriation is administered by the Department of Education and allocated to the community colleges using the formula established in statute for the annual General Aid appropriation.

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#### More Information

Iowa Skilled Worker and Job Creation Fund:

[educate.iowa.gov/higher-ed/community-colleges/iowa-skilled-worker-job-creation-fund](http://educate.iowa.gov/higher-ed/community-colleges/iowa-skilled-worker-job-creation-fund)

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The annual appropriation is not subject to reversion to the State General Fund but instead funds remain in the Gap Assistance Tuition Fund to be used for the Program. Annual awards for the Gap Tuition Assistance Program cannot exceed \$2.0 million.

**Related Statutes and Administrative Rules**

Iowa Code chapter [260I](#)

Iowa Administrative Code [281—25](#)

**Budget Unit Number**

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