



TO: NYSFAAA Members

FROM: NYSFAAA Government Relations Committee

DATE: April 24, 2024

RE: FY 2025 Enacted Budget: Higher Education

On April 19, 2024, Governor Kathy Hochul and legislative leaders announced an agreement on a \$237 billion budget on New York State's Fiscal Year ("SFY") 2025, covering 2024-25. The total spending plan is an increase of \$4 billion from the Governor's original spending plan proposed in January (\$233 billion).

NYSFAAA's Government Relations Committee would like to thank everyone who participated in our advocacy efforts this year. NYSFAAA focused on supporting the Legislature's #TurnOnTheTAP campaign that advocated for significant changes to the TAP program as well as other NYSFAAA priorities. We hosted legislative meetings with key stakeholders, participated in public hearings and submitted comments where appropriate. There is a lot to celebrate in this year's budget and our efforts really paid off!

Following is an overview of the higher education portion of the final enacted budget:

The final budget includes \$ 1.03 billion in total appropriations for HESC.

Tuition Assistance Program (TAP)

The final budget includes \$959.7 million, an increase of \$55.7 million from the Executive budget.

These funds also include funding to continue the Excelsior Scholarship program, the Enhanced Tuition Awards program, part-time TAP (including non-degree workforce programs), and funding for incarcerated individuals.

The final budget includes many of the TAP reforms that the Legislature included in their #TurnOnTheTAP campaign which include:

- **Increased Maximum Income Thresholds**
 - The final budget includes language that would increase the maximum TAP income threshold for Dependent students from \$80,000 to \$125,000
 - Independent students without tax dependents (single) from \$10,000 to \$30,000; for Independent students with a tax dependent (married) from \$40,000 to \$60,000. (ELFA, Part X)
- **Part-Time TAP for Student Attending Proprietary Colleges.**
 - The final budget includes language that would make part-time TAP available to students enrolled in a degree- granting institution of higher education. Previously, the program only applied to students attending SUNY, CUNY and an independent college or university.
- **Increased minimum awards.**
 - The final budget includes language that increases the minimum TAP award from \$500 to \$1,000.
- **All of the TAP reforms take effect on July 1, 2024.**

The final budget also includes the following provisions:

- **SUNY/CUNY 2020/Tuition Assistance Program Tuition Credit**
 - The final budget includes language to extend the TAP tuition credit and other remaining portions of the NY-SUNY/CUNY 2020 Challenge Grant Program that would otherwise expire on July 1, 2024 for 3 years.
- **HESC Overpayment Hold Harmless**
 - The final budget does not include language that was advanced by the Senate and Assembly in their One House budgets to prevent HESC from seeking reimbursement for the TAP overpayment from 20, 21, and 22.
- **BUNDY Aid**
 - The final budget includes \$22.3 million, a reduction of \$13.1 million from the SFY 24 budget. The final budget also includes amendments to the program that would limit eligibility to private colleges and universities with endowment assets of less than \$750 million based on the most recent academic year data collected by IPEDS. Further, the Executive budget includes language that would limit the aide appropriated in each year's budget, with aid to each institution reduced proportionally as necessary to fit with the annual budget allocation. This would take effect July 1, 2024. (ELFA, Part D)

- **Higher Education Opportunity Programs.**
 - The final budget includes \$49 million, an increase of \$2.1 million from the Executive budget.

- **FAFSA COMPLETION FOR ALL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS**
 - The final budget includes language to require high school seniors or their parent or guardian to certify they have either completed and submitted the FAFSA or Dream Act application or completed a waiver form indicating they are aware of the FAFSA, but have chosen not to complete it. School districts would be required to obtain the information and to annually report to SED the number of seniors enrolled, the number certifying complete of the FAFSA or Dream Act application, and the number completing the waiver. School districts will also be required to inform seniors of available state-sponsored financial aid for college and to provide access or referrals to FAFSA completion. This takes effect on August 15, 2024.

The NYSFAAA Government Relations Committee looks forward to continuing to advocate on behalf of our institutions and the students we serve. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to the committee co-chairs.

- Christopher Barto – LIM College, Vice President of Government Relations and Community Affairs – Cbarto@LIMCollege.org
- Donna Stelling-Gurnett – Association of Private Colleges, President – Dgurnett@apc-colleges.org