

ACTION
November 12, 2025

HIGHER EDUCATIONAL AIDS BOARD BOARD

REPORT #26-11

26-27 WI Grant Formula Universities of WI Request



Office of the President

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October 13, 2025

Via electronic mail

Tammie DeVooght
Executive Secretary
Higher Educational Aids Board
4822 Madison Yards Way, Seventh Floor
PO Box 7885
Madison, WI 53707-7885

Dear Executive Secretary DeVooght:

Thank you for the opportunity to forward the Universities of Wisconsin's recommendation on the 2026-27 Wisconsin Grant formula. This recommendation is based on input from UW Financial Aid Directors.

The UWs' recommendation for the 2026-27 formula is to distribute grants using the following criteria. The formula would include a student budget of the average annual tuition and fees for the comprehensive universities, which is approximately \$9,250. The rationing factor would allow a maximum award of \$3,700 or 40% of the student budget. The maximum federally accepted definition of need would be \$6,750. The minimum grant would be \$1,000.

The UWs' recommendation also includes a second tier if funds are available. The second tier would expand the federally accepted definition of need to \$10,000 and students would be awarded the minimum of \$1,000, as noted above.

The Universities of Wisconsin continue to use the institutional allocation approach that was initially implemented during 2011-12.

The Wisconsin Grant formula continues to strike the difficult balance between funding as many eligible students as possible while still providing grants in meaningful amounts that will help low-income students access a UW education. While our historical goal has been to award 50 percent of the average tuition and fees at the comprehensives, financing for the Wisconsin Grant has not kept pace with tuition rates. We acknowledge that this formula falls below this goal, but the Universities of Wisconsin would have considerable waitlists at the \$4,625 (50 percent) amount. We believe the suggested formula uses the state's investment in the most effective manner.

I want to offer my appreciation to the HEAB staff for their hard work and support of the Wisconsin Grant Program. I look forward to hearing your final decision following the meeting of the Higher Educational Aids Board on October 24, 2025.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jay Rothman", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jay Rothman
President, Universities of Wisconsin

cc: Regents
Chancellors
Cabinet
Financial Aid Officers
Sydney Brennan, Student Representative on HEAB Board

**PROPOSED RECOMMENDED 2026-2027 FORMULA
WISCONSIN GRANT
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN SYSTEM**

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Recommendation of the University of Wisconsin System President Jay Rothman:

$(\$9,250 - \text{SAI}) \times 40\% = \text{Award}$

$(\text{Student Budget} - \text{Student Aid Index}) \times \text{Student Award Percentage} = \text{Award}$

Maximum Award: \$3,700

Tier 2 if funds are available SAI of \$6,750 to \$10,000 = award of \$1,000

Other Information:

2026-2027	Appropriation	\$65,862,000
2025-2026	Appropriation	\$63,783,600
2024-2025	Appropriation	\$61,894,100
2023-2024	Appropriation	\$61,894,100
2022-2023	Appropriation	\$61,894,100
2021-2022	Appropriation	\$61,894,100
2020-2021	Appropriation	\$61,894,100
2019-2020	Appropriation	\$61,894,100
2018-2019	Appropriation	\$61,894,100

Current Formula – 25-26:

$(\$8,750 - \text{SAI}) \times 40\% = \text{Award}$

$(\text{Student Budget} - \text{Student Aid Index}) \times \text{Student Award Percentage} = \text{Award}$

Maximum Award: 3,500 Minimum Award: \$1,000

Tier 2 if funds are available - EFC of \$6,250 to \$10,000 the award would be \$1,000.

Current Year Spending: All the 2025-2026 funds will be spent.