



SC Higher Education Tuition Grants Commission

Providing Opportunity. Promoting Choice.

111 Executive Center Drive
Suite 242
Columbia, SC 29210
(803) 896-1120
info@sctuitiongrants.org

Katherine H. Stevens
Executive Director

REVIEW OF THE 2026-2027 STATE BUDGET REQUEST FOR FUNDING OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA TUITION GRANTS PROGRAM

At the June 2025 South Carolina Tuition Grants Commission Meeting, the Commission approved the budget request to be sent to the State Executive Budget Office for funding of the South Carolina Tuition Grants Program for the 2026-2027 fiscal year. The agency submitted documents in September asking for continued funding of the \$10 million increase for the Tuition Grants Program that began in FY22. The Commission's Budget Request asked for consideration of these funds being moved from Lottery (non-recurring) to General Fund (recurring). In addition, the Budget Request included a \$180,000 General Fund increase to support the agency's personnel needs and to cover a required increase in centralized state Information Technology fees.

Executive Director Katie Stevens met with representatives from the Governor's office and the Executive Budget Office on **October 8, 2025**, to review the request and to discuss the budget request, the impact of the program, and to answer questions.

Governor Henry McMaster released his 2026-2027 Executive Budget in January. The Executive Budget recommended continued funding of the recent increases for both the Tuition Grants Program and CHE's Need-Based Grant Program. The Governor's Executive Budget recommends the funding source for these funds continue to be allocations from the Lottery account. The Executive Budget did not include the recurring funds request for agency operations.

The General Assembly convened in January to begin the legislative year for the State of South Carolina. The South Carolina Tuition Grants Commission appeared before the Higher Education Subcommittee of the House Ways and Means Committee on **January 20, 2026**, in Columbia. The Higher Education Subcommittee is chaired by Representative Nathan Ballentine (Richland/Lexington). He is joined on the subcommittee by Representatives Gilda Cobb-Hunter (Orangeburg/Dorchester) and Bill Taylor (Aiken/Lexington).

The House Ways & Means Committee has approved the recommendations of the Governor and has submitted to the full House a budget which sustains all current Program funds through a combination of General Funds and Lottery appropriations. The full House is scheduled to debate the Budget during the week of **March 9**.

The Commission appeared before the Senate Finance Higher Education Subcommittee on **February 19, 2026**. The Senate Finance Higher Education Subcommittee is chaired by Senator Ronnie Cromer (Newberry/Lexington/Richland). He is joined on the subcommittee by Senators Darrell Jackson (Richland), Tom Young (Aiken), Ross Turner (Greenville), and Tom Corbin (Greenville/Spartanburg). The full Senate Finance Committee is scheduled to meet beginning **April 7, 2026**, while the full Senate is tentatively scheduled to make its recommendations during the week of **April 20, 2026**.