



## **CRRSAA Grants to Students Proposal**

The CRRSAA Act (Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act) provides financial aid grants to current Ridgewater students (including students exclusively enrolled in online courses) to help support any component of the student's cost of attendance or to help cover any expenses due to coronavirus, such as health care (including mental health care) or child care. In making financial aid grants to students, the College is required to focus primarily on providing assistance to students with exceptional need, such as students who receive Pell Grants.

**Total CRRSAA Student Grant Funds Available to Ridgewater College:     \$975,458**

Only students actively enrolled in Spring Semester 2021 qualify for the CRRSAA grants. Funding will be allocated through the following distribution strategies:

**PANDEMIC RELIEF (NEED-BASED/PELL ELIGIBLE) GRANTS: Approximately \$601,200 (62% of total funds available)**

All Pell Grant-eligible students enrolled at Ridgewater College who meet the federal program eligibility requirements and are enrolled Spring Semester 2021 will **receive an award of \$600**.

**PANDEMIC RELIEF (EFC BELOW \$15,000) GRANTS:                     Approximately \$157,650 (16%)**

All students that are not Pell-eligible but have an EFC (Expected Family Contribution) of \$15,000 or less and are enrolled Spring Semester 2021 will receive grants as follows:

**EFC (\$5,501-\$10,000):             \$450 per student**

**EFC (\$10,001-\$15,000):         \$300 per student**

**CRRSAA FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS: Approximately \$216,608 (22%)**

Financial assistance grants will be awarded to individual students through a simple application process initiated by each student. The grants are intended to help cover cost of attendance or personal costs that arise due to coronavirus, such as increased food or housing costs, health care (including mental health care) and childcare, or lost income due to the coronavirus. Grants are limited to a **maximum of \$1,000 per student**.

**COMMUNICATION STRATEGY**

The College will engage with Student Senates on both campuses to get their input regarding our processes for disbursing the CRRSAA funds. Also, within 7 business days of the approval of the college's plan by the system office, the College will engage in a rigorous communication strategy to reach all current students. Information will be sent to the college community through several email communications and utilizing Star Alert text messaging. In addition to these direct forms of communication, the College will also post CRRSAA student grant information on the College website and on a variety of social media platforms.

Re: Coronavirus Response Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA) Funding

The purpose of this letter is to outline the process of the Student Senate's consultation in terms of allocating CRRSAA funds and highlighting the draft of the proposal. Both the Willmar and Hutchinson campus Senates were involved in the consultation meetings on the days of February 10<sup>th</sup>, in which the students were introduced to the CRRSAA funds, and February 22<sup>nd</sup>, where the students were briefed in full detail. Attending the first meeting were administration members and student representatives accompanied by their advisors; attending the second meeting were the Student Senators along with their advisors, and Dan Holtz, the Vice President of Finance and Operations, accompanied by Heidi Olson, Dean of Students. Additional information was given to the advisors and students were given the opportunity to ask questions and receive any further information. Students were given a PowerPoint and a draft document on the proposal prior to the final drafting of the proposal and were given the chance to add additional input and insert any concerns or opinions.

The proposal for allocating CRRSAA aid funding was explained by Dan Holtz, including the amount allocated for aid; the percentage of funds being given to Pell-Eligible, Expected Family Contribution (EFC), and Financial Assistance Grants; along with the method with which they will be dispersed. The differentiation was made between the CARES Act versus the CRRSAA Act, the difference being that CRRSAA is focused on helping students with exceptional need, and therefore includes online students and has an emphasis on Pell-eligible students. In terms of the Financial Assistance Grant, it was explained that the application process will be simplified application, taking into account the needs of students. Students will be informed over all platforms of social media in addition to Star Alert text messaging and emails.

Both the Willmar and Hutchinson Student Senates are in support of the process for allocating CRRSAA funds, the simplified application process, and the method of student communication. We were briefed in full detail and given the opportunity to provide input and have conversations about the funds that allowed both sides to tailor to the needs of the student body.

If you have any questions regarding the CRRSAA funds consultation process at Ridgewater College, feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,

Emily Storm (2020-2021 Ridgewater College Hutchinson Student Senate President)

Hafsa Gedi (2020-2021 Ridgewater College Willmar Student Senate President)

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