

Brown v. Board of Education Scholarship Awards Committee
§ 30-231.1 et seq., Code of Virginia



Frequently Asked Questions

1. What Was the *Brown v. Board of Education* Decision

Before the American Civil War, state laws prohibited the education of African Americans. During Reconstruction after the Civil War, a system of laws, known as "Jim Crow laws," were enacted to continue the rigid system of segregation that pervaded every area of society, including public accommodations, schools, housing, employment, restaurants, religious affiliations, health care services, criminal justice system, and transportation. It was an era of unwritten but strictly enforced social rules that required African Americans to be deferential to whites at all times. These laws and the social order remained unchallenged for decades. However, on May 17, 1954, the United States Supreme Court ruled unanimously in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*, that the doctrine of "separate but equal"—the legal separation of the races—was unconstitutional. Public schools throughout the nation were ordered to desegregate; however, Virginia resisted the court's decision. The resistance lasted 10 years. During this time, public schools were closed in Charlottesville, Norfolk, Prince Edward County, and Warren County for various periods of time. Thousands of African American students and hundreds of white students were denied education and could not graduate.

2. What Is the *Brown* Scholarship Program and Fund

The *Brown v. Board of Education* Scholarship Program and Fund is one of several initiatives resulting from the Commonwealth's two-year long commemoration of the 50th anniversary of *Brown v. Board of Education*. The Program was created by the 2004 Virginia General Assembly to assist persons who were enrolled or eligible to enroll in the public schools of Virginia during Massive Resistance between 1954 and 1964, in jurisdictions in which the public schools were closed to avoid desegregation.

3. Who Is Eligible

You are eligible to apply for a scholarship if you are a current domiciled¹ resident² of the Commonwealth of Virginia as defined by § 23-7.4, **and** if, between 1954 and 1964, you were:

- A student in the public schools of Charlottesville, Norfolk, Prince Edward County, or Warren County when the public schools were closed to avoid desegregation; and
- Unable to begin, continue, or complete your public school education during this time; or
- Relocated within or outside of the Commonwealth to begin, continue, or complete your public school education during these years due to school closings to avoid desegregation; or
- Ineligible to attend a private academy or foundation, in- or out-of-state, established to circumvent desegregation; or
- Unable to pursue postsecondary education opportunities or training because of the inability to obtain a high school diploma or its equivalency.

4. How Can the Scholarship Be Used and For How Long

- Approved transitional education programs—one year
- A scholarship award may be used **only** to pay the costs of tuition and books as permitted by the Committee
- GED Program—one year (GED test only)
- Adult high school diploma—one year (tuition only)
- Career and technical education or training—two years
- College Level Examination Program (CLEP)—one time only payment for program, materials, and exam
- Two-year degree program—two years
- Four-year undergraduate degree program—four years
- Five-year undergraduate degree program—five years
- Summer school—effective 2007 spring semester

¹ You pay Virginia taxes; are registered to vote in Virginia; your car is registered in Virginia; you are licensed to drive in Virginia; your employment is in Virginia.

² You currently live in Virginia full time all the time. You make your residence in Virginia.

5. What Educational Programs Qualify for the Program

- Approved transitional education programs
- Recognized preparation programs for the General Education Development Certificate (GED) and College Level Examination Program (CLEP)
- Adult Basic Education Programs offered by Virginia public schools
- Comprehensive community college programs at Virginia community colleges
- Career and technical education or training programs at Virginia community colleges and licensed nonprofit proprietary schools
- Two-year and four-year undergraduate degree programs at accredited Virginia public and private institutions of higher education
- Certain recognized five-year undergraduate degree programs at accredited Virginia public and private four-year institutions of higher education
- Career and technical education or training programs, and undergraduate degree programs offered through distance-learning by accredited Virginia public and private two-year and four-year institutions of higher education

For purposes of the Brown v. Board of Education Scholarship Program only, an accredited Virginia public or private institution of higher education means a state-supported or private institution of higher education that is formed, chartered, incorporated, or established in Virginia whose main campus is within the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the institution is accredited by a national or regional organization or agency recognized by the United States Secretary of Education for the purpose of ensuring the quality of education or training provided by the institutions of higher education and the higher education programs they accredit.

6. What Type of Education Can I Receive with a Scholarship

Eligible Virginians may use the award to:

- Attend transitional education programs (adult basic education) that prepare them for success in GED and adult high school diploma programs
- Obtain the General Education Development (GED) certificate
- Obtain the adult high school diploma
- Enroll in career or technical education or training programs at approved institutions
- Earn College Level Examination Program (CLEP) credit
- Earn an undergraduate degree from an accredited two-year public or private Virginia institution of higher education
- Earn an undergraduate degree from an accredited four-year public or private Virginia institution of higher education

7. What Type of Educational Programs Do Not Qualify

- Graduate programs
- Doctoral programs
- Professional schools
- Theological schools and Seminaries
- Private career and technical education schools
- For-profit proprietary schools
- Out-of-state schools, including those with campuses in Virginia
- Out-of-state schools' online programs
- Correspondence schools
- Avocational Interests

8. When Must Scholarship Recipients Notify the Committee

A scholarship recipient must notify the Committee if:

- He decides not to attend school at all
- He decides not to attend school in the academic year in which he received the award
- He decides to transfer from one school to another
- He decides to withdraw from school

9. When and How May Scholarship Awards Be Used

The maximum annual award per term is set by the *Brown v. Board of Education* Scholarship Awards Committee. Scholarship awards generally include an allowance for textbooks. Scholarships may be used **only** at approved educational programs during the academic year in which they are awarded. Scholarships may be used only to cover the costs of tuition and textbooks and materials "required" or deemed by the professor or instructor as necessary to satisfy the requirements of the course. At this time, although computers are not covered by the award, discs, flash drives, etc. "required" by the professor or instructor are covered expenses. However, no scholarship may be used to defray the costs of fees and assessments, transportation, room and board, related supplies incidental to matriculation in an educational program, food, or personal items and expenses.

10. Will Tuition and Textbooks Be Covered for Students Who Simply "Show Up" at a Program or Institution

The Committee will not be responsible for the costs of tuition or textbooks of any person who presents himself at an institution or program and who has not applied for a scholarship through the required application process, has not received a scholarship from the Committee, and has not been admitted to the institution or program.

11. May I Use the Scholarship to Attend Summer School

Yes. However, prior to enrolling in summer school a student must notify the Committee of his plans to enroll in summer school. You must indicate your intention to enroll in summer school on the scholarship application or renewal form, or by notifying the Committee in writing by May 1 of the academic year in which you plan to enroll in the summer semester of an approved education program.

12. What Is an Academic Year

"Academic year" means consecutive fall, spring, and summer terms of an academic or school year.

13. May I Transfer to Another Program or Institution

Yes. Scholarship recipients who desire to transfer to another institution or program must (i) notify the Committee and the program or institution in which he is enrolled currently of his intention to transfer before doing so, (ii) submit a copy of his admission letter from the new institution to the Committee, and (iii) file a new scholarship acceptance form with the Committee for the program or institution into which he has transferred. Funds will not be disbursed for any recipient who has not complied with this process.

14. Can I Withdraw from the Program and Be Reinstated

Yes. A scholarship recipient may withdraw from the Program for good cause. A recipient who withdraws from the Program and the educational program in which he is enrolled due to extenuating circumstances, (e.g., illness, injury, family or personal emergency, relocation, employment requirements, etc.), may be re-admitted to the Program. Requests for readmission to the Program will be considered and approved by the Committee on a case by case basis. A recipient may seek readmission by submitting a written statement that explains the extenuating circumstances which necessitated his withdrawal and request the reinstatement of the scholarship. The Committee reserves the right to require the recipient to reapply for the scholarship award.

15. How Will I Receive Scholarship Funds

The *Brown v. Board of Education* Scholarship Program is state financial aid. Scholarship funds are disbursed on behalf of the recipient directly to the approved education program (i.e., institution or program) in which he is enrolled. **No funds are ever sent to recipients.** Funds will not be disbursed under any circumstance until:

- the student's application is complete, including date of birth, social security number, mailing address, name of school closed, last grade attended, and signature
- the student has submitted evidence of his current Virginia domicile and residency
- the student has submitted a copy of his admission letter from or verification of his enrollment in an approved education program
- the student has submitted the signed acceptance form, indicating that he accepts the scholarship
- the student has submitted a copy of his transcript from the previous academic year, if requesting scholarship renewal to attend an institution of higher education
- the student has submitted a copy of the Literacy Certificate, if enrolled in a transition education program and requesting scholarship renewal to enroll in a GED or adult education program
- the student has submitted evidence of his completion of the GED program or adult education program, if requesting scholarship renewal to pursue higher education
- the student has submitted his CLEP scores, if requesting a scholarship or scholarship renewal and the student has elected to enroll in an institution of higher education through CLEP
- the institution or program has verified the student's enrollment to the State Council of Higher Education

16. Are Scholarship Funds Guaranteed

No. Scholarship funds cannot be guaranteed for the succeeding year for any person who has been awarded a scholarship and who elects not to enroll in an approved education program during the academic year in which the award was made.

17. How May I Become Eligible for Future Awards

A scholarship recipient may be eligible for renewal of the award if he:

- Maintains Virginia domicile and residency
- Evidences satisfactory academic achievement and progress toward program completion
- Maintains continuous enrollment in an approved education program until graduation or program completion
- Applies for scholarship renewal

However, an award will be cancelled and the renewal of the award will be denied for any student who is the subject of any disciplinary proceeding resulting in his suspension, expulsion, discharge, or withdrawal, whether voluntary or involuntary, due to (i) violation of institution and program policies governing the use and possession of alcohol, or the use, sale, possession, or distribution of controlled substances and paraphernalia, or (ii) a criminal indictment or conviction.

18. What Are Transition Education Programs and Services

Transition programs and services are compensatory education programs. All applicants who possess minimum basic reading, comprehension, writing, and computational skills are required to complete a transitional education program or participate in such services, and receive "Literacy Certification," before enrolling in a GED or adult high school diploma program. Transitional education programs may include remediation, acceleration, and fundamental basic life skills to equip and enable applicants to benefit from the General Education Development (GED) certificate preparation program and adult high school diploma program, and to transition successfully to postsecondary programs.

19. What Is College Level Examination Program (CLEP)

The College Level Examination Program (CLEP) is a program of examinations in undergraduate college courses that test a person's college level knowledge gained through course work, independent study, cultural pursuits, travel, special interests, military service schools, and professional development. This program can help shorten the amount of time needed to complete a degree. A recipient who elects to utilize CLEP in seeking admission to an institution of higher education or a degree must submit his test scores to the Committee in addition to the institution to which he seeks admission. The award may be used to cover the costs of the CLEP examinations and preparation materials.

20. May I Earn More Than One Undergraduate Degree or a Graduate or Professional Degree

No student may use scholarship funds to obtain multiple baccalaureate degrees, except such degrees that are pursued concurrently. No student may use scholarship funds to obtain a graduate or professional degree.

21. Who Is Entitled to a Scholarship

No one is entitled to a scholarship award. The *Brown v. Board of Education* Scholarship Program was established by the General Assembly as a means of restoring a "public education," to persons who were denied an education during Massive Resistance (1954-1964) when public schools were closed to avoid desegregation after the 1954 Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* by offering K-12 and postsecondary educational opportunities. The scholarship program is not reparation and should not be construed as such. Further, Virginia law implementing the Program does not create any legally enforceable right or entitlement on the part of any person or any right or entitlement to participation in the Program.

22. Are My Descendants Eligible to Use the Award

No. The *Brown v. Board of Education* Scholarship Program is designed to provide educational opportunities to persons who were "**directly**" affected by public school closings during Massive Resistance, and who were unable either to begin, continue, or complete their public education during this period. It is acknowledged that, in the many years preceding Massive Resistance, public education for African Americans throughout the Commonwealth was grossly inferior, dismal, and replete with inequities and indignities. Massive Resistance deprived many Virginians—African American and white—of an education when the public schools were closed. Although this tragic course of events may have precipitated generational repercussions, nevertheless, the progeny of the persons affected by school closings were not denied an education in Virginia's public schools. Therefore, the purpose of the Scholarship Program is **not** reparation. The *sole and only* purpose of the Scholarship Program is "*restoration of education*" to those who were "directly" affected.

23. Is the Scholarship Program Solely for African Americans

No. Any Virginian who meets the eligibility requirements, regardless of race, may apply for the scholarship. During Massive Resistance, thousands of students, both African American and white, were affected by the school closings and were unable to obtain an education.

24. Is the Scholarship Program Solely for Persons in Prince Edward County

No. Eligible Virginians, wherever they may currently reside in Virginia, may apply for the scholarship. Public education was a wretched dehumanizing experience for all African Americans in Virginia in the centuries leading to *Brown*, and students throughout the Commonwealth were affected by Massive Resistance, which was instituted by the state in defiance of the Supreme Court decision in *Brown*. As a result, other localities also closed the public schools to avoid desegregation at any cost.

25. How Is Information Disseminated About the Program

Regular informational and training sessions concerning Virginia law and Committee policies governing the *Brown v. Board of Education* Scholarship Program shall be held for applicants and participating schools and institutions annually. Informational brochures regarding the Program shall also be developed and distributed to all applicants, schools, and institutions, and to the public upon request.

26. May Persons Other Than the Applicant Sign the Application

- All applications must be "signed" by the applicant
- Applications received after the March 1 deadline of any year will be considered in the next application cycle

27. How Do I Apply

- Obtain and return a completed application form together with all documentation requested by the **March 1, 2008 deadline**
- Submit requested documentation verifying current Virginia domicile and residency
- Provide all information requested on application regarding date of birth, social security number, and last grade and school attended
- Apply for admission to the approved education program or institution of your choice
- Submit, after admission to the program or institution, a copy of your admission letter

28. I Have Received a Scholarship. How Do I Renew It

- Obtain and return a completed renewal application by the **March 1, 2008 deadline**
- Affirm current Virginia domicile and residency
- Submit a copy of your transcript of the 2007 fall semester together with the renewal application, and a copy of your final transcript of the 2007-2008 academic year **no later than June 1, 2008**

All application and renewal forms must be returned by **March 1, 2008. No application postmarked after March 1, 2008, deadline will be accepted. As an option**, applicants may fax the completed application form to Mrs. Brenda Edwards at (804) 371-0169, **no later than 5:00 p.m. on March 1, 2008.**

29. Disclaimer

The Committee will make awards each year to eligible students, to the extent that sufficient funds are available to administer the *Brown v. Board of Education* Scholarship Program.

30. Where Can I Obtain an Application Packet

The application packet may be obtained upon request from Mrs. Brenda Edwards at the address below. It is also available online and at designated sites throughout the Commonwealth.

Online access via General Assembly's website

<http://dls.state.va.us/brown.htm>

Application Packets are available at the following distribution sites

Charlottesville

Charlottesville City Hall
7th and Market Streets
Charlottesville, VA 22902

Norfolk

Norfolk City Hall
810 Union Street
Norfolk, VA 23501

Prince Edward County

The Farmville Herald
114 North Street
Farmville, VA 23901

Warren County

Warren County School Board Office
210 North Commerce Avenue
Front Royal, VA 22630

Prince Edward County

The Eggleston Company
914 South Main Street
P.O. Box 581
Farmville, VA 23901

Southside Virginia Community College

200 Daniel Road
Keysville, Virginia 23947

Robert Russa Moton Museum

900 Griffin Boulevard
Farmville, VA 23901

***Additional distribution sites are being added in Hampton Roads and the Richmond metropolitan area**

31. Where Do I Send My Completed Application

Mrs. Brenda H. Edwards
Division of Legislative Services
General Assembly Building, 2nd Floor
910 Capitol Street ♦ Richmond, VA 23219
(804) 786-3591 phone ♦ (804) 371-0169 fax
bedwards@leg.state.va.us