



2025 Annual Accountability Report

Higher Education Tuition Grants Commission

Agency Code: H060

Table of Contents

Agency's Discussion and Analysis	1
Agency Organization Chart	6
Reorganization and Compliance	7
Strategic Plan Results	9
Strategic Plan Development	13
Budget Data	16
Legal Data	17
Services Data.....	20
Partnerships Data.....	21
Reports Data	24
Submission Form	26

AGENCY NAME:	Higher Education Tuition Grants Commission		
AGENCY CODE:	H060	SECTION:	12

AGENCY'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

The South Carolina Tuition Grants Program, created by the General Assembly in 1970, provides state grant assistance based on documented financial need to help students afford the South Carolina college that best fits their academic goals. The program was specifically designed to narrow the gap between public and independent college tuition, ensuring students have real choice in pursuing higher education.

The Tuition Grants Program is a proven, high-return investment for our state. Independent colleges that participate in the program operate with combined budgets exceeding \$750 million and capital assets of more than \$1 billion. By supporting access to these institutions, the state leverages a \$1.75 billion industry that contributes directly to South Carolina's economy.

Despite receiving less than 5% of the state's total higher education appropriations, South Carolina's independent colleges educate nearly 17% of the state's full-time students and award more than 20% of bachelor's degrees each year. The program also generates substantial cost savings for taxpayers. The average per-student subsidy at public institutions was \$7,529 in FY 2024–25, compared to an average Tuition Grant of \$4,406. That difference saved the State an estimated \$48.5 million last year alone. Since 1970, cumulative cost avoidance from this program exceeds \$1 billion, without even accounting for additional taxpayer costs that would have been required for new public classrooms, residence halls, faculty, and staff.

The Tuition Grants Commission is recognized for its strong customer-service culture and reliable stewardship. Our customers include South Carolina students and families, independent colleges, high schools and counselors, members of the General Assembly, and the many state agencies with which we coordinate daily operations.

Over the past year, the day-to-day operation of the South Carolina Tuition Grants Commission has included:

- Processed over 33,700 applications for Tuition Grant assistance;
- Determined eligibility and financial need using federally approved methodology;
- Issued award notifications and handled appeals;
- Disbursed funds accurately and securely to students' college accounts;
- Provided training to financial aid officers and presidents of independent colleges;
- Distributed program information statewide to high schools, counselors, and the public; and
- Coordinated extensively with partner agencies including the Treasurer's Office, Comptroller General, State Auditor, Executive Budget Office, Department of Education, and the General Assembly.

Through this work, the Commission ensures accountability, efficiency, and accessibility, and continues to help thousands of South Carolina students achieve their educational goals while saving taxpayer dollars and strengthening our state's higher education system.

While much of the Commission's work is reflected in data and performance measures, as outlined in the Strategic Plan Results tab of the agency's data sheet, several other accomplishments from the past year also deserve special recognition:

Direct Student Impact: In the 2024–25 academic year, 12,975 students who demonstrated both financial need and academic ability received the South Carolina Tuition Grant. Since the program's creation in 1970, nearly 525,000 individual grants have helped students pursue their educational and career goals - an investment that continues to strengthen South Carolina's workforce and economy.

AGENCY NAME:	Higher Education Tuition Grants Commission		
AGENCY CODE:	H060	SECTION:	12

FAFSA Completion Portal: In January 2025, the Commission partnered with the SC Department of Education and the SC Commission on Higher Education to launch the state’s first FAFSA Completion Status Information Portal. This secure system gives high school counselors real-time access to FAFSA filing status for their seniors, helping them target outreach to students who need support. During its initial rollout to 40 high schools, participating schools achieved FAFSA completion rates 2% higher than the statewide average. Expansion is planned in the coming year.

Student-Centered Technology: With the implementation of the Commission’s new student information system, students can now securely access award details, manage grant transfers between eligible institutions, and instantly view updated eligibility through the myTG Student Portal. This streamlined process reduces paperwork, speeds up award adjustments, and makes grant information more accessible for students and families.

Legislator Engagement: Each year, the Commission provides legislators with an encrypted listing of Tuition Grant recipients from their districts, along with the total funding amount awarded. This practice highlights the local impact of the program, demonstrates accountability, and expresses appreciation for legislative support. Moving this process fully online has saved time, eliminated costs for CDs and mailings, and has allowed the Commission to track engagement by confirming when files are accessed.

Efficient Stewardship: Of the total state dollars appropriated in FY 2024–25, just 1.4% of the agency’s budget, including salaries, benefits, and information security expenses, was used for administration. The remaining 98.6% of funds were awarded directly to students as need-based Tuition Grants. This ratio underscores the Commission’s commitment to efficiency and maximizing the impact of every taxpayer dollar.

Outside Factors Affecting Measurements

For many years, the Commission has measured success, in part, by tracking the number of students applying for and receiving Tuition Grants. However, these figures are strongly influenced by factors beyond the control of the Commission or any other state agency.

The most significant factor is the natural generational cycle of South Carolina’s high school graduates. The number of college-bound students has been steadily declining in recent years, and these demographic shifts directly affect the pool of potential Tuition Grant recipients. In this environment, the Commission’s focus is on maintaining a strong proportional share of students choosing independent colleges, rather than on continually increasing raw numbers that may be limited by population trends.

Other external events also impact participation. Major disasters such as hurricanes or floods, as well as public health crises like COVID-19, can temporarily disrupt students’ ability to pursue postsecondary education.

In recognition of these realities, the Commission has updated the language and framing of certain performance measures to ensure they more accurately reflect external conditions. This approach preserves accountability and transparency while providing a more reliable picture of the program’s effectiveness in expanding college choice and opportunity for South Carolina students.

Risk Assessment and Mitigation Strategies

The primary risk to the South Carolina Tuition Grants Program is insufficient funding to meet the demonstrated financial need of eligible students. Any reduction in access to Tuition Grants would directly limit higher

AGENCY NAME:	Higher Education Tuition Grants Commission		
AGENCY CODE:	H060	SECTION:	12

education opportunities for thousands of South Carolinians, hinder progress toward the State’s educational attainment goals, and weaken the long-term economic competitiveness of the state.

While ultimate appropriation decisions rest with the General Assembly, the Commission works diligently to mitigate this risk through:

- Transparent reporting of student demand, cost savings to the state, and program impact;
- Responsible stewardship of administrative resources;
- Data-informed projections of future funding needs to assist policymakers in planning for stable support; and
- Collaboration with education partners to maximize FAFSA completion and ensure that every dollar of available aid is leveraged.

These strategies cannot fully eliminate the risk of underfunding, but they strengthen the Commission’s ability to provide accurate information, anticipate trends, and support the General Assembly in making informed decisions that protect student access and the state’s investment in higher education.

Restructuring Recommendations

N/A

Program Needs

The Commission is appreciative of the continued support of the Governor and the General Assembly in maintaining \$10 million in recently allocated Lottery funds for the Tuition Grants Program in the current state budget. This investment has allowed the program to sustain a record-high maximum award of \$4,800 for the 2024–25 academic year.

To maintain this momentum, the Commission will request that this \$10 million increase be moved from Lottery to Recurring Appropriations in the FY 2027 State Budget. Converting these dollars to a stable recurring base will protect the program’s ability to sustain the maximum award, help more students graduate with less debt, and advance the State’s goal of having 60% of adults hold a quality postsecondary credential or degree by 2030.

Of importance to note, approximately 7% of Tuition Grant recipients are adult learners enrolled in non-traditional programs. These grants not only support traditional undergraduates but also strengthen workforce readiness by helping adult students complete degrees and access flexible educational options.

The Commission remains grateful for the investments made during recent years of economic uncertainty and for the increased funding that continues to benefit South Carolina students and families. Stable, recurring support will ensure that this progress continues.

Agency Information Technology and Software System Needs (Program-Related):

The SC Department of Administration has recently informed all agencies participating in enterprise-level Information Technology shared services, including the Tuition Grants Commission, of significant increases related to the services being provided. These include end user services, desktop support, firewall configuration and support, data recovery services, router support, and internet service. The FY25 annual rate paid by the

AGENCY NAME:	Higher Education Tuition Grants Commission		
AGENCY CODE:	H060	SECTION:	12

Tuition Grants Commission to the Department of Administration was \$17,543. Beginning with FY26, the new annual rate for the same services is \$41,939 – an increase of 140%.

The Department of Administration is providing the agency with monthly credits during FY26 to cover the increased charges; however, beginning with FY27, there will no longer be credits available to offset the new charges.

The Tuition Grants Commission’s FY27 budget request will include a request for new recurring dollars in the amount of \$24,500 annually so that the agency can continue funding these critical services moving forward. The agency is required to use shared services, pursuant to Executive Order 2022-03, and is therefore responsible for covering all related charges to continue the use of these services.

Concerns

Disparity of State Funding of Need-based aid versus Merit-based aid: South Carolina has been generous in supporting both need-based and merit-based financial aid. However, a significant imbalance exists in how those dollars are distributed. The result is that many financially needy students, often average academically and therefore, ineligible for merit-based scholarships, continue to face barriers to affording higher education. The SC Tuition Grant and the SC Need-Based Grant, coupled with federal and institutional financial aid, provide these students the opportunity to thrive in college, despite their lack of financial resources.

During the 2023–24 academic year, the state disbursed more than \$475 million in student financial aid across six major programs, serving 143,333 recipients. Of this:

- Students qualifying for merit-based scholarships (Palmetto Fellows, LIFE, HOPE) received \$291 million - 68% of all funds, yet represented only 39% of recipients.
- Students qualifying for need-based aid (SC Tuition Grant, SC Need-Based Grant, Lottery Tuition Assistance) received \$178.7 million - just 32% of total funds yet represented 61% of recipients.

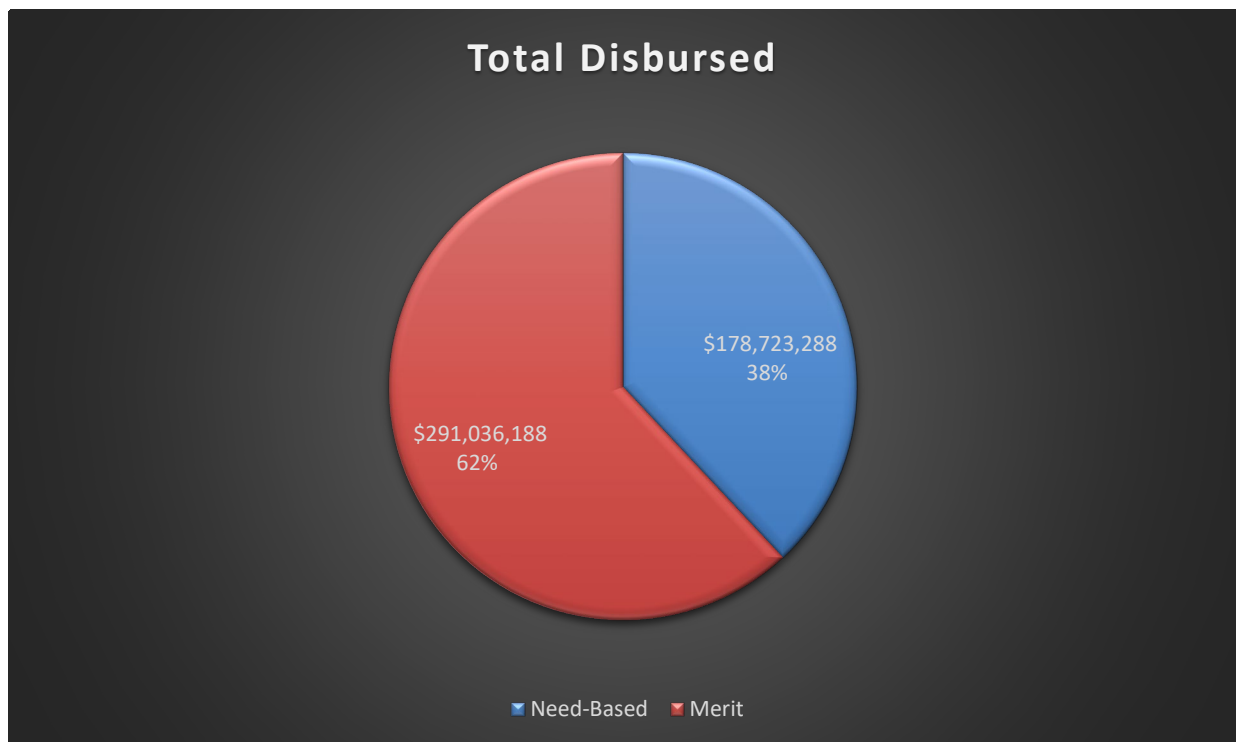
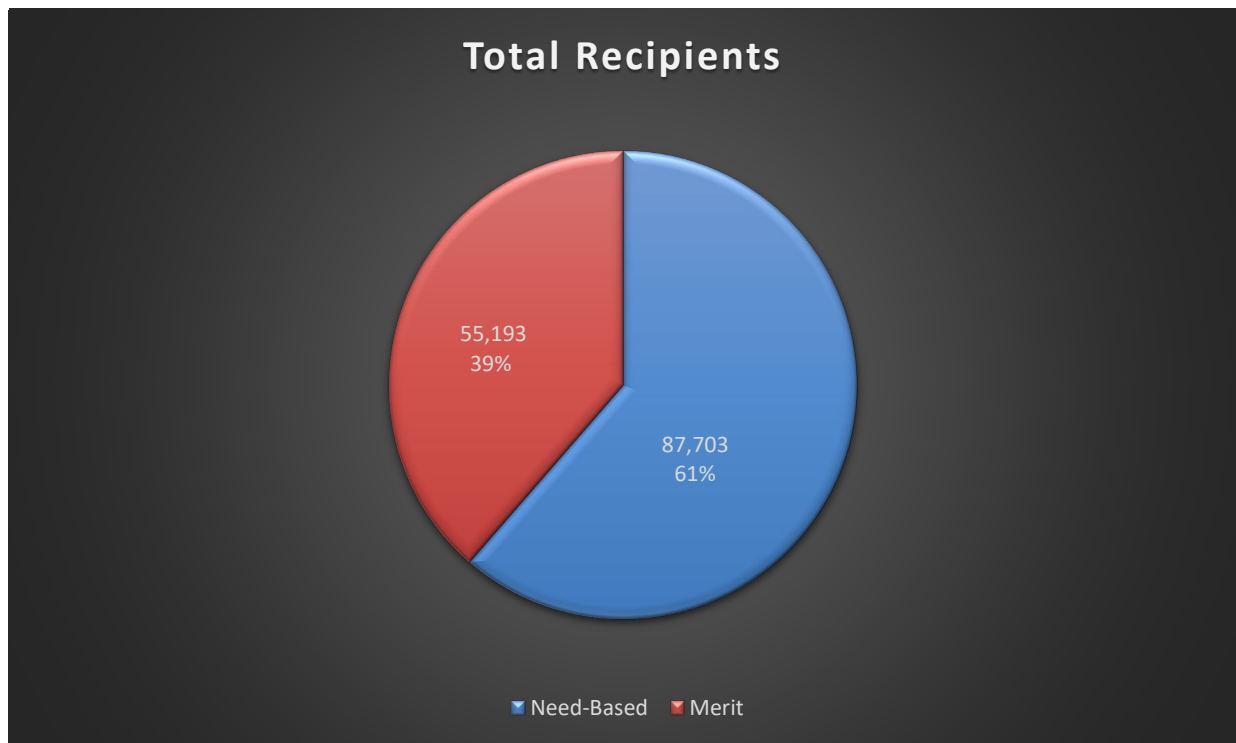
In other words, the funding distribution is essentially reversed: merit recipients, who make up less than two-fifths of students, receive more than two-thirds of the dollars, while need-based recipients, who make up the majority, receive less than one-third of the funding. These figures are displayed in graph format on the next page

This disparity is particularly stark at South Carolina’s HBCUs. Among Tuition Grant recipients at those institutions, nearly two-thirds (65.4%) receive only the Tuition Grant and no merit-based scholarships. These students depend almost entirely on the Tuition Grant and other programs based on financial need to pursue their education.

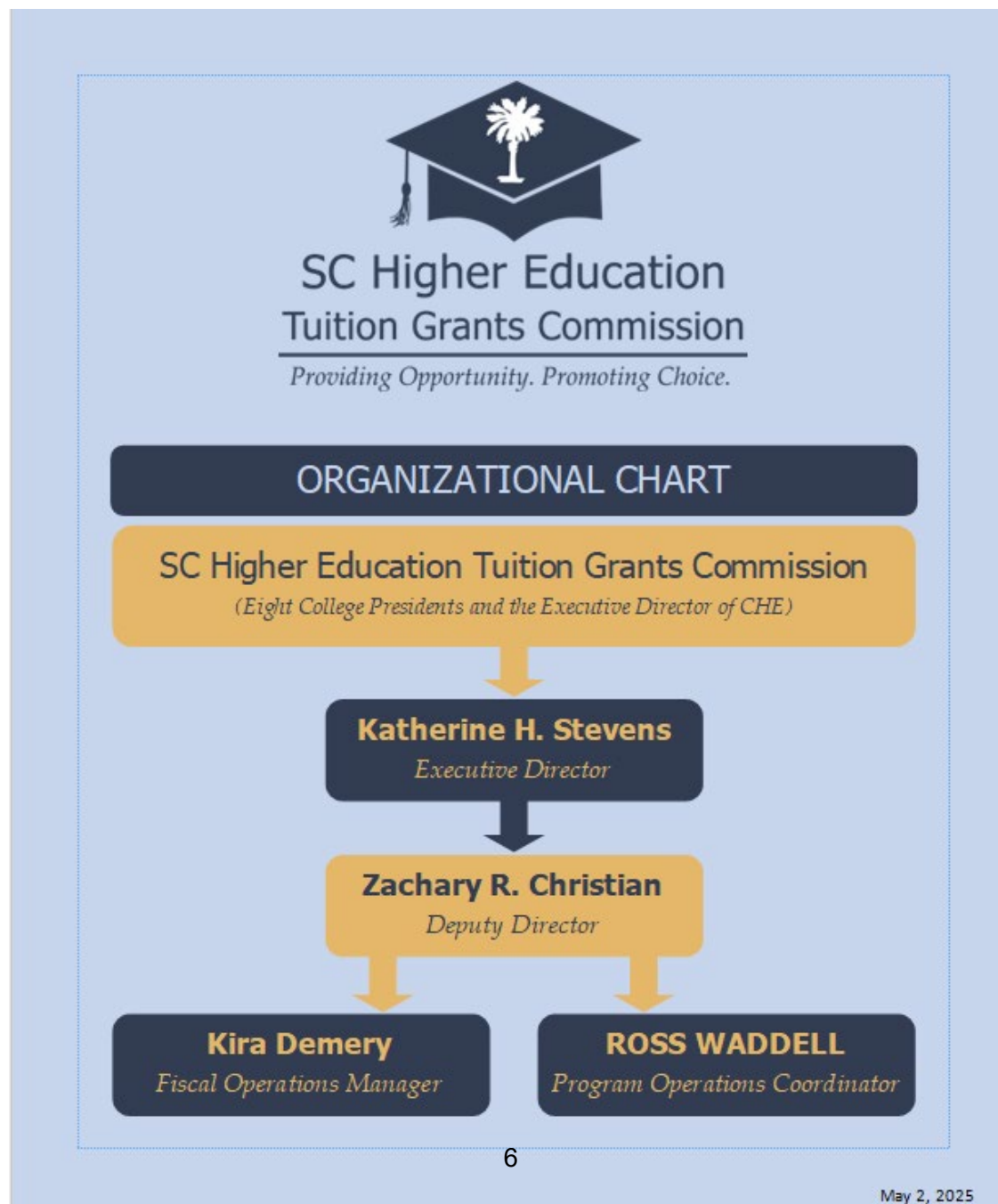
The Tuition Grants Commission strongly believes that South Carolina’s investment in higher education must reflect not only academic achievement but also financial need and student potential. Expanding and sustaining support for need-based programs ensures that hardworking students from all backgrounds, regardless of test scores or GPAs, can access higher education, graduate with less debt, and contribute meaningfully to the state’s workforce and economy.

AGENCY NAME:	Higher Education Tuition Grants Commission		
AGENCY CODE:	H060	SECTION:	12

2023-2024 Academic Year State Aid Program Merit/Need Breakdown



AGENCY NAME:	Higher Education Tuition Grants Commission		
AGENCY CODE:	H060	SECTION:	12



2025

Reorganization and Compliance

as submitted for the Accountability Report by:

H060 - HIGHER EDUCATION TUITION GRANTS COMMISSION

Primary Contact

First Name	Last Name	Role/Title	Email Address	Phone
Katie	Stevens	Executive Director	katie@sctuitiongrants.org	803-896-1121

Secondary Contact

First Name	Last Name	Role/Title	Email Address	Phone
Zachary	Christian	Deputy Director	zachary@sctuitiongrants.org	803-896-1122

Agency Mission

Adopted in:

2023

The mission of the South Carolina Higher Education Tuition Grants Commission is to provide access and opportunity for more South Carolinians to pursue a postsecondary education by providing need-based tuition grants to students who choose an independent higher education.

Agency Vision

Adopted in:

2023

Providing opportunity and promoting choice while supporting South Carolina's postsecondary attainment goals

Recommendations for reorganization requiring legislative change:

None

Agency intentions for other major reorganization to divisions, departments, or programs to allow the agency to operate more effectively and efficiently in the succeeding fiscal year:

None

Significant events related to the agency that occurred in FY2025

Description of Event	Start	End	Agency Measures Impacted	Other Impacts
No significant changes or events occurred in FY25 that affected any of the agency's performance measures				

Is the agency in compliance with S.C. Code Ann. § 2-1-220, which requires submission of certain reports to the Legislative Services Agency for publication online and the State Library? (See also S.C. Code Ann. § 60-2-20).		Yes
Reason agency is out of compliance: (if applicable)		
Is the agency in compliance with various requirements to transfer its records, including electronic ones, to the Department of Archives and History? See the Public Records Act (S.C. Code Ann. § 30-1-10 through 30-1-180) and the South Carolina Uniform Electronic Transactions Act (S.C. Code Ann. § 26-6-10 through 26-10-210).		Yes
Does the law allow the agency to promulgate regulations?		Yes
Law number(s) which gives the agency the authority to promulgate regulations:	59-113-10	
Has the agency promulgated any regulations?		No
Is the agency in compliance with S.C. Code Ann. § 1-23-120 (J), which requires an agency to conduct a formal review of its regulations every five years?		Yes
(End of Reorganization and Compliance Section)		

Strategic Plan Results

FY2025

as submitted for the Accountability Report by:

H060 - HIGHER EDUCATION TUITION GRANTS COMMISSION

- Goal 1** Provide increased state economic benefits and a more educated citizenry by enabling more South Carolinians to obtain a college education by providing financial assistance in the form of need-based state tuition grants to qualified South Carolina residents electing to attend on a full-time basis certain eligible accredited South Carolina independent junior and senior colleges.
- Goal 2** Provide protection of agency information and data.
- Goal 3** Support statewide efforts to provide information and guidance concerning higher education funding options to college-going populations.

Perf. Measure Number	Description	Base	Target	Actual	Value Type	Desired Outcome	Time Applicable	Calculation Method	Data Source	Data Location	Stakeholder Need Satisfied	Primary Stakeholder	State Funded Program Number Responsible	Notes
1.1 Gain maximum usage of the available independent college facilities located in South Carolina by assisting eligible students afford the cost of the independent colleges and thereby help in the educating of our state citizenry. State Objective: Education, Training, and Human Development														
1.1.1	Maintain the processing of an appropriate number of grant applications, based on predicted student enrollment targets, to provide aid assistance to eligible college students	31,981	30,000	33,736	Count	equal to or greater than	State Fiscal Year	Total applications received from federal processor	Agency Student Information System, Updated Daily	Tuition Grants Commission Server/Internal Records	Determination of eligibility for need-based financial assistance to attend college	South Carolina residents indicating possible enrollment at an eligible independent institution of higher education located in South Carolina	0510.000000.000; 9802.010000.000	Exceeds target value
1.1.2	Provide funding to a number of Tuition Grant recipients based on enrollment data, not to fall 5% below prior year number of recipients	12,473	11,500	12,975	Count	Maintain range	State Fiscal Year	Total eligible applications processed by Commission	Agency Student Information System, Updated Daily	Tuition Grants Commission Server/Internal Records	Financial assistance applied to tuition and fee charges, enabling the eligible South Carolina resident to attend the college or university of their choice	South Carolina residents attending eligible independent institutions of higher education in South Carolina who meet all eligibility and enrollment criteria to receive the Tuition Grant	0510.000000.000; 9802.010000.000	Exceeds target value
1.2 Help offset the higher education costs of attending South Carolina independent colleges for South Carolina students just as the state offsets the higher education costs of state residents attending South Carolina public colleges. State Objective: Education, Training, and Human Development														

Perf. Measure Number	Description	Base	Target	Actual	Value Type	Desired Outcome	Time Applicable	Calculation Method	Data Source	Data Location	Stakeholder Need Satisfied	Primary Stakeholder	State Funded Program Number Responsible	Notes
1.2.1	Increase the value of the Maximum Tuition Grant Award	\$4,800	\$4,800	\$4,800	Dollar Amount	equal to or greater than	State Fiscal Year	Dollar amount of Maximum Tuition Grant Award. Calculated based on prior year awards, projected next year awards, and projected appropriations	Commission Meeting Decision in March	Tuition Grants Commission Server/Internal Records; Most recently approved Commission Meeting Minutes also available on Tuition Grants Commission website	Financial assistance applied to tuition and fee charges, enabling the eligible South Carolina resident to attend the college or university of their choice	South Carolina residents attending eligible independent institutions of higher education in South Carolina who meet all eligibility and enrollment criteria to receive the Tuition Grant	0510.000000.000; 9802.010000.000	Equals target value
1.2.2	Increase the value of the average Tuition Grant Award	\$4,391	\$4,400	\$4,406	Dollar Amount	equal to or greater than	State Fiscal Year	Total dollars disbursed by total recipients	Agency Student Information System, Updated Daily	Tuition Grants Commission Server/Internal Records	Financial assistance applied to tuition and fee charges, enabling the eligible South Carolina resident to attend the college or university of their choice	South Carolina residents attending eligible independent institutions of higher education in South Carolina who meet all eligibility and enrollment criteria to receive the Tuition Grant	0510.000000.000; 9802.010000.000	Exceeds target value
1.3 Preserve the dual system of public and independent college higher education in South Carolina which provides healthy competition between the two sectors. State Objective: Education, Training, and Human Development														
1.3.1	Maintain a proportional percentage, within 5% of prior year totals, of SC resident FTEs attending eligible independent colleges	16.28%	14%	16%	Percent	Maintain range	State Fiscal Year	Total number of full-time enrolled South Carolina resident students attending eligible independent colleges by total number of full-time enrolled South Carolina resident students attending all institutions of higher education in the state	Enrollment reports obtained from CHE (specifically "Fall XXXX Undergraduate Headcount Enrollment by Geo Origin and Enrollment Status)	Commission on Higher Education Server/Internal Records	Provides evidence supporting the need for the state to continue providing need-based financial assistance to college students choosing to attend an eligible independent college or university	South Carolina residents attending eligible independent institutions of higher education in South Carolina who meet all eligibility and enrollment criteria to receive the Tuition Grant	0510.000000.000; 9802.010000.000	Exceeds target value

Perf. Measure Number	Description	Base	Target	Actual	Value Type	Desired Outcome	Time Applicable	Calculation Method	Data Source	Data Location	Stakeholder Need Satisfied	Primary Stakeholder	State Funded Program Number Responsible	Notes
1.3.2	Maintain an appropriate percentage of SC FTEs, based on predicted student enrollment targets, attending eligible independent colleges receiving a Tuition Grant	74%	70%	75%	Percent	Maintain range	State Fiscal Year	Total number of South Carolina Tuition Grants recipients by total number of full-time, in-state undergraduate students attending eligible independent colleges	Combined CHE and Tuition Grants Commission Data, Updated Annually	Commission on Higher Education Server/Internal Records and Tuition Grants Commission Server/Internal Records	Financial assistance applied to tuition and fee charges, enabling the eligible South Carolina resident to attend the college or university of their choice	South Carolina residents attending eligible independent institutions of higher education in South Carolina who meet all eligibility and enrollment criteria to receive the Tuition Grant	0510.000000.000; 9802.010000.000	Exceeds target value
1.4 Attract SC residents into the SC independent college sector to save State tax dollars that would have to be appropriated at a higher dollar value via the automatic subsidy to those students if they migrated into the SC public college system. State Objective: Education, Training, and Human Development														
1.4.1	By effective administration of the Tuition Grants Program, continue to save the State tax dollars that would otherwise subsidize the public college sector by providing need-based financial assistance, at a lower amount than the average public college subsidy, to eligible students attending independent institutions of higher education.	\$39,140,274	\$15,000,000	\$48,552,450	Dollar Amount	Maintain range	State Fiscal Year	Average subsidy per public college (obtained by CHE) minus average TG per recipient times number of TG recipients	Combined CHE and Tuition Grants Commission Data, Updated Annually	Commission on Higher Education Server/Internal Records and Tuition Grants Commission Server/Internal Records	Promote sound fiscal stewardship of state funds that would otherwise be allocated at a higher rate to South Carolina residents attending public institutions of higher education	South Carolina taxpayers	0510.000000.000; 9802.010000.000	Exceeds target value
2.1 Ensure compliance with State and Federal PII and data security requirements by utilizing all available security and encryption mechanisms and by ensuring all software applications maintain current software updates and security patches. State Objective: Maintaining Safety, Integrity and Security														
2.1.1	Number of security incidents resulting in compromised data	0	0	0	Count	Maintain range	State Fiscal Year	Count of SOC notifications that show compromised data, confirmed by Department of Technology Operations.	Notification Emails to Agency from Security Operations Center (SOC)	Security Operations Center records and agency emails, if applicable	Prevention of identity theft and compromised personal data	Students attending universities located in South Carolina, and all South Carolina residents who completed a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) through the US Department of Education, regardless of college location or enrollment status	0100.010000.000	Equals target value

Perf. Measure Number	Description	Base	Target	Actual	Value Type	Desired Outcome	Time Applicable	Calculation Method	Data Source	Data Location	Stakeholder Need Satisfied	Primary Stakeholder	State Funded Program Number Responsible	Notes
2.2	Provide information security training for agency personnel and track completion rates to ensure all staff members receive training.								State Objective: Maintaining Safety, Integrity and Security					
2.2.1	Percentage of agency personnel completing information security training	100%	100%	100%	Percent	Maintain range	State Fiscal Year	# of employees who have completed all required Information Security Training / total # of employees	Agency Training Records	MySCLearn ing through SCEIS	Prevention of identity theft and compromised personal data	Students attending universities located in South Carolina, and all South Carolina residents who completed a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) through the US Department of Education, regardless of college location or enrollment status	0100.010000.000	Equals target value
3.1	Increase awareness of Tuition Grants Program and financial aid application process by participating in a variety of outreach opportunities.								State Objective: Government and Citizens					
3.1.1	Maintain the target number of outreach events and activities (minimum of 10) attended by staff, including high school counselor workshops, financial aid nights, and other events in which information concerning the Tuition Grants Program and the application process can be provided.	14	10	10	Count	equal to or greater than	State Fiscal Year	Count of events	Agency Tracking Records	Tuition Grants Commission Server/Internal Records	Provides critical information concerning the Tuition Grant and other financial aid programs, and the financial application process to South Carolina residents intending to obtain a postsecondary credential or degree and other interested parties in support of that population	South Carolina residents intending to obtain a postsecondary credential or degree; K-12 Guidance/School Counselors; College Admissions and Financial Aid Personnel	0100.010000.000	Equals target value

FY2026

Strategic Plan Development

as submitted for the Accountability Report by:

H060 - HIGHER EDUCATION TUITION GRANTS COMMISSION

Goal 1 Provide increased state economic benefits and a more educated citizenry by enabling more South Carolinians to obtain a college education by providing financial assistance in the form of need-based state tuition grants to qualified South Carolina residents electing to attend on a full-time basis certain eligible accredited South Carolina independent junior and senior colleges.

Goal 2 Provide protection of agency information and data.

Goal 3 Support statewide efforts to provide information and guidance concerning higher education funding options to college-going populations.

Perf. Measure Number	Description	Base	Target	Value Type	Desired Outcome	Time Applicable	Calculation Method	Data Source	Data Location	Stakeholder Need Satisfied	Primary Stakeholder	State Funded Program Number Responsible	Notes
1.1	Gain maximum usage of the available independent college facilities located in South Carolina by assisting eligible students afford the cost of the independent colleges and thereby help in the educating of our state citizenry.								State Objective: Education, Training, and Human Development				
1.1.1	Maintain the processing of an appropriate number of grant applications, based on predicted student enrollment targets, to provide aid assistance to eligible college students	33,736	30,000	Count	equal to or greater than	State Fiscal Year	Total applications received from federal processor	Agency Student Information System, Updated Daily	Tuition Grants Commission Server/Internal Records	Determination of eligibility for need-based financial assistance to attend college	South Carolina residents indicating possible enrollment at an eligible independent institution of higher education located in South Carolina	0510.000000.000; 9802.010000.000	
1.1.2	Provide funding to a number of Tuition Grant recipients based on enrollment data, not to fall 5% below prior year number of recipients	12,975	12,400	Count	Maintain range	State Fiscal Year	Total eligible applications processed by Commission	Agency Student Information System, Updated Daily	Tuition Grants Commission Server/Internal Records	Financial assistance applied to tuition and fee charges, enabling the eligible South Carolina resident to attend the college or university of their choice	South Carolina residents attending eligible independent institutions of higher education in South Carolina who meet all eligibility and enrollment criteria to receive the Tuition Grant	0510.000000.000; 9802.010000.000	
1.2	Help offset the higher education costs of attending South Carolina independent colleges for South Carolina students just as the state offsets the higher education costs of state residents attending South Carolina public colleges.								State Objective: Education, Training, and Human Development				

Perf. Measure Number	Description	Base	Target	Value Type	Desired Outcome	Time Applicable	Calculation Method	Data Source	Data Location	Stakeholder Need Satisfied	Primary Stakeholder	State Funded Program Number Responsible	Notes
1.2.1	Increase the value of the Maximum Tuition Grant Award	\$ 4,800	\$ 5,000	Dollar Amount	equal to or greater than	State Fiscal Year	Dollar amount of Maximum Tuition Grant Award. Calculated based on prior year awards, projected next year awards, and projected appropriations	Commission Meeting Decision in March	Tuition Grants Commission Server/Internal Records; Most recently approved Commission Meeting Minutes also available on Tuition Grants Commission website	Financial assistance applied to tuition and fee charges, enabling the eligible South Carolina resident to attend the college or university of their choice	South Carolina residents attending eligible independent institutions of higher education in South Carolina who meet all eligibility and enrollment criteria to receive the Tuition Grant	0510.000000.000; 9802.010000.000	
1.2.2	Increase the value of the average Tuition Grant Award	\$ 4,406	\$ 4,500	Dollar Amount	equal to or greater than	State Fiscal Year	Total dollars disbursed by total recipients	Agency Student Information System, Updated Daily	Tuition Grants Commission Server/Internal Records	Financial assistance applied to tuition and fee charges, enabling the eligible South Carolina resident to attend the college or university of their choice	South Carolina residents attending eligible independent institutions of higher education in South Carolina who meet all eligibility and enrollment criteria to receive the Tuition Grant	0510.000000.000; 9802.010000.000	
1.3 Preserve the dual system of public and independent college higher education in South Carolina which provides healthy competition between the two sectors. State Objective: Education, Training, and Human Development													
1.3.1	Maintain a proportional percentage, within 5% of prior year totals, of SC resident FTEs attending eligible independent colleges	0.1645	15	Percent	Maintain range	State Fiscal Year	Total number of full-time enrolled South Carolina resident students attending eligible independent colleges by total number of full-time enrolled South Carolina resident students attending all institutions of higher education in the state	Enrollment reports obtained from CHE (specifically "Fall XXXX Undergraduate Headcount Enrollment by Geo Origin and Enrollment Status)	Commission on Higher Education Server/Internal Records	Provides evidence supporting the need for the state to continue providing need-based financial assistance to college students choosing to attend an eligible independent college or university	South Carolina residents attending eligible independent institutions of higher education in South Carolina who meet all eligibility and enrollment criteria to receive the Tuition Grant	0510.000000.000; 9802.010000.000	
1.3.2	Maintain an appropriate percentage of SC FTEs, based on predicted student enrollment targets, attending eligible independent colleges receiving a Tuition Grant	0.75	0.7	Percent	Maintain range	State Fiscal Year	Total number of South Carolina Tuition Grants recipients by total number of full-time, in-state undergraduate students attending eligible independent colleges	Combined CHE and Tuition Grants Commission Data, Updated Annually	Commission on Higher Education Server/Internal Records and Tuition Grants Commission Server/Internal Records	Financial assistance applied to tuition and fee charges, enabling the eligible South Carolina resident to attend the college or university of their choice	South Carolina residents attending eligible independent institutions of higher education in South Carolina who meet all eligibility and enrollment criteria to receive the Tuition Grant	0510.000000.000; 9802.010000.000	

Perf. Measure Number	Description	Base	Target	Value Type	Desired Outcome	Time Applicable	Calculation Method	Data Source	Data Location	Stakeholder Need Satisfied	Primary Stakeholder	State Funded Program Number Responsible	Notes
2.1	Ensure compliance with State and Federal PII and data security requirements by utilizing all available security and encryption mechanisms and by ensuring all software applications maintain current software updates and security patches. State Objective: Maintaining Safety, Integrity and Security												
2.1.1	Number of security incidents resulting in compromised data	0	0	Count	Maintain range	State Fiscal Year	Count of SOC notifications that show compromised data, confirmed by Department of Technology Operations.	Notification Emails to Agency from Security Operations Center (SOC)	Security Operations Center records and agency emails, if applicable	Prevention of identity theft and compromised personal data	Students attending universities located in South Carolina, and all South Carolina residents who completed a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) through the US Department of Education, regardless of college location or enrollment status	0100.010000.000	
2.2	Provide information security training for agency personnel and track completion rates to ensure all staff members receive training. State Objective: Maintaining Safety, Integrity and Security												
2.2.1	Percentage of agency personnel completing information security training	1	1	Percent	Maintain range	State Fiscal Year	# of employees who have completed all required Information Security Training / total # of employees	Agency Training Records	MySCLearnin g through SCEIS	Prevention of identity theft and compromised personal data	Students attending universities located in South Carolina, and all South Carolina residents who completed a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) through the US Department of Education, regardless of college location or enrollment status	0100.010000.000	
3.1	Increase awareness of Tuition Grants Program and financial aid application process by participating in a variety of outreach opportunities. State Objective: Government and Citizens												
3.1.1	Maintain the target number of outreach events and activities (minimum of 10) attended by staff, including high school counselor workshops, financial aid nights, and other events in which information concerning the Tuition Grants Program and the application process can be provided.	10	10	Count	equal to or greater than	State Fiscal Year	Count of events	Agency Tracking Records	Tuition Grants Commission Server/Internal Records	Provides critical information concerning the Tuition Grant and other financial aid programs, and the financial application process to South Carolina residents intending to obtain a postsecondary credential or degree and other interested parties in support of that population	South Carolina residents intending to obtain a postsecondary credential or degree; K-12 Guidance/School Counselors; College Admissions and Financial Aid Personnel	0100.010000.000	

2025

Budget Data

as submitted for the Accountability Report by:

H060 - HIGHER EDUCATION TUITION GRANTS COMMISSION

State Funded Program No.	State Funded Program Title	Description of State Funded Program	(Actual) General	(Actual) Other	(Actual) Federal	(Actual) Total	(Projected) General	(Projected) Other	(Projected) Federal	(Projected) Total
0100.010000.000	Administration	Director Salary, Classified Personnel Salary, Admin Operating Expenses, Lottery Admin Allowance	\$ 696,922.87	\$ 69,740.84	\$ -	\$ 766,663.71	\$ 723,341.00	\$ 70,000.00	\$ -	\$ 793,341.00
0510.000000.000	Tuition Grants	Recurring State Appropriations for Tuition Grants, Interest Earnings, and Children's Education Endowment Funds, all used specifically to fund Tuition Grants for students	\$ 27,118,121.00	\$ 6,227,100.00	\$ -	\$ 33,345,221.00	\$ 33,345,221.00	\$ 13,998,326.00	\$ -	\$ 41,556,950.00
9500.050000.000	State Employer Contributions	Agency's portion of employer benefits expenses	\$ 134,462.17	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 134,462.17	\$ 139,719.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 139,719.00
9802.010000.000	Tuition Grants	Annual Lottery Allocation received by the Tuition Grants Commission to disburse to eligible students as Tuition Grants	\$ -	\$ 23,983,479.00	\$ -	\$ 23,983,479.00	\$ -	\$ 19,930,000.00	\$ -	\$ 19,930,000.00
9832.02000X000	Capital Reserve	Capital Reserve Funds allocated to the agency to support the purchase of a new Student Information System; These funds were spent for that purpose in FY24 and will not be renewed	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -

2025		<u>Legal Data</u> as submitted for the Accountability Report by: H060 - HIGHER EDUCATION TUITION GRANTS COMMISSION				
Law number	Jurisdiction	Type	Description	Purpose the law serves:	Notes:	Changes made during FY2025
59-112-10	State	Statute	State Residency Statute followed to determine residency eligibility as required by 59-113-20(a)	Requires a manner of delivery		No Change
59-112-100	State	Statute	State Residency Statute followed to determine residency eligibility as required by 59-113-20(a)	Requires a manner of delivery		No Change
59-112-20	State	Statute	State Residency Statute followed to determine residency eligibility as required by 59-113-20(a)	Requires a manner of delivery		No Change
59-112-30	State	Statute	State Residency Statute followed to determine residency eligibility as required by 59-113-20(a)	Requires a manner of delivery		No Change
59-112-40	State	Statute	State Residency Statute followed to determine residency eligibility as required by 59-113-20(a)	Requires a manner of delivery		No Change
59-112-50	State	Statute	State Residency Statute followed to determine residency eligibility as required by 59-113-20(a)	Requires a manner of delivery		No Change
59-112-60	State	Statute	State Residency Statute followed to determine residency eligibility as required by 59-113-20(a)	Requires a manner of delivery		No Change
59-112-70	State	Statute	State Residency Statute followed to determine residency eligibility as required by 59-113-20(a)	Requires a manner of delivery		No Change

Law number	Jurisdiction	Type	Description	Purpose the law serves:	Notes:	Changes made during FY2025
59-112-80	State	Statute	State Residency Statute followed to determine residency eligibility as required by 59-113-20(a)	Requires a manner of delivery		No Change
59-112-90	State	Statute	State Residency Statute followed to determine residency eligibility as required by 59-113-20(a)	Requires a manner of delivery		No Change
59-113-10	State	Statute	Establishment of the Higher Education Tuition Grants Commission including the make up of the Commission and authority to administer Chapter 113.	Report our agency must/may provide		No Change
59-113-20	State	Statute	Establishes qualifications of applicants for grants.	Report our agency must/may provide		No Change
59-113-30	State	Statute	Establishes students covered by the chapter and the amount of grants.	Report our agency must/may provide		No Change
59-113-40	State	Statute	Indicates purpose of grants.	Report our agency must/may provide		No Change
59-113-45	State	Statute	Disbursement requirements for grants and authority to earn interest for grants from State Appropriations.	Report our agency must/may provide		No Change
59-113-47	State	Statute	Mid-year budget reduction exemption.	Funding agency deliverable(s)		No Change
59-113-50	State	Statute	Defines eligible institutions of higher learning for use of the grant.	Report our agency may/must provide		No Change
59-143-30	State	Statute	Directs that a portion of funds be directed to the Tuition Grants Program	Report our agency must/may provide		No Change

Law number	Jurisdiction	Type	Description	Purpose the law serves:	Notes:	Changes made during FY2025
P117.97 (H. 5100, 2024-2025 General Appropriations Bill; Proviso 117.97)	State	FY24-25 Proviso	Proviso governing data breach notification	Requires a manner of delivery	Previous Proviso (H. 4300, 2023-2024 General Appropriations Bill; Proviso 117.98)	Amended Proviso Number Only
P117.102 (H. 5100, 2024-2025 General Appropriations Bill; Proviso 117.102)	State	FY24-25 Proviso	Proviso governing data agency Information Technology and Information Security plan submission	Requires a manner of delivery	Previous Proviso (H. 4300, 2023-2024 General Appropriations Bill; Proviso 117.104)	Amended Proviso Number Only
P117.96 (H. 5100, 2024-2025 General Appropriations Bill; Proviso 117.96)	State	FY24-25 Proviso	Proviso governing information security	Requires a manner of delivery	Previous Proviso (H. 4300, 2023-2024 General Appropriations Bill; Proviso 117.97)	Amended Proviso Number Only
H. 5100, 2024-2025 General Appropriations Bill; Section 3 - H660	State	FY24-25 Proviso	Proviso governing Lottery funds use.	Report our agency must/may provide	Previous Proviso (H. 4300, 2023-2024 General Appropriations Bill; Section 3 H660)	Amended Proviso Number Only
Higher Education Act of 1965 as amended (HEA) (20 U.S.C. § 1001g; 34 CFR Part 600)	Federal	Statute	Federal statute authorizing the FAFSA as a common application for need analysis and determination of eligibility for aid programs	Requires a manner of delivery		No Change

2025

Services Data

as submitted for the Accountability Report by:

H060 - HIGHER EDUCATION TUITION GRANTS COMMISSION

Description of Service	Description of Direct Customer	Customer Name	Others Impacted by Service	Division or major organizational unit providing the service.	Description of division or major organizational unit providing the service.	Primary negative impact if service not provided.	Changes made to services during FY2025	Summary of changes to services
The Tuition Grant is a state-funded grant based on financial need for eligible college students who choose to attend an independent college in South Carolina	General Public/Tuition Grant Recipients: Avg. Age=21; Minimum Age=16; Maximum Age=71; Dependent=85%, Independent=15%; Traditional=92.9%, Non-Traditional=7.1%; Freshman=31%, Sophomores=25%, Upperclass=44%	Tuition Grant Recipients	General Public	Tuition Grants	The agency's responsibility is to administer a state need-based grant program for state residents attending in-state independent higher education institutions. Program is designed to assist students to afford to attend the institution that best meets their academic needs by helping offset tuition differences between public and independent institutions and to provide full use of all higher education facilities in the state. (Mandated at SC Code 59-113-10 through 50)	The most negative impact on the public would be to reduce access to and affordability of higher education for eligible independent college students and their families. This would hinder the State's goals to increase the educational level of its citizens and would result in a further negative impact on the economic future of the State.	No Change	No major change to report; however, grade levels were previously broken down to show percentages of juniors and seniors. Beginning with the 2024-2025 FAFSA (which serves as the application for the Tuition Grant), junior and senior level enrollment has been redefined as "upperclass." Junior and senior levels are now combined into one percentage based on this update.

2025	<u>Partnerships Data</u> as submitted for the Accountability Report by: H060 - HIGHER EDUCATION TUITION GRANTS COMMISSION		
Type of Partner Entity	Name of Partner Entity	Description of Partnership	Change to the partnership during the past fiscal year
Higher Education Institute	22 Eligible SC Independent Colleges	Assists with determination of student eligibility including enrollment and academic eligibility and disburses Tuition Grant funds to recipients	No Change
K-12 Education Institute	All SC High Schools	Distribute Program information and assist students with applications	No Change
Professional Association	CACRAO	Provides opportunities for Program communication to college admissions personnel and high school counselors	No Change
State Government	SC Department of Education (K-12)	Provides data to assist with the FAFSA Completion Status Information Portal to provide an opportunity for public high school counselors to access FAFSA filing status information for their senior class	No Change
State Government	Commission on Higher Education	Provides data to assist with program administration; Original recipient of Children's Education Endowment Funds, of which the Tuition Grants program receives a percentage	No Change

Type of Partner Entity	Name of Partner Entity	Description of Partnership	Change to the partnership during the past fiscal year
State Government	Department of Technology Operations	Provides agency-wide desktop computer support and secure server environment for agency data; Provides critical security patches and updates to ensure secure computer operations	No Change
State Government	Division of Information Security	Assists agency personnel with security-related procedures and provides cybersecurity training for agency employees	No Change
State Government	Enterprise Privacy Office	Assists agency personnel with training and guidance on privacy assessments and protection of sensitive data housed by the agency	No Change
State Government	General Assembly	Provides 100% of Program funding	No Change
Professional Association	NASSGAP	Provides professional training and advocates for State financial aid programs in Washington, DC and nationwide	No Change
Professional Association	SCASFAA	Provides professional training and assistance for employees and provides public information on the Program to high schools and colleges state-wide	No Change

Type of Partner Entity	Name of Partner Entity	Description of Partnership	Change to the partnership during the past fiscal year
Non-Governmental Organization	SCICU	Advocates for Independent Higher Education in South Carolina including federal and state financial aid, assists with communications to students	No Change
Non-Governmental Organization	SCISA	Advocates for Independent K-12 Education in South Carolina, assists with communications to students	No Change
K-12 Education Institute	Spartanburg Academic Movement/Spartanburg County School District	The partner entities provided high school cohort data to the Tuition Grants Commission, allowing agency to provide student-level FAFSA completion data to assist with awareness of aid programs and access to higher education opportunities	Remove
Federal Government	U. S. Department of Education-Federal Student Aid Office	Provides applications for students and assists with determination of financial need	No Change
State Government	Comptroller General's Office	Works with agency to process expenditures efficiently, allowing student grant payments to be sent expeditiously	Add
Professional Association	NASFAA	Provides professional training and leadership development opportunities for agency staff; Advocates for Federal and State financial aid programs in Washington, DC and nationwide	Add

2025

Reports Data

as submitted for the Accountability Report by:

H060 - HIGHER EDUCATION TUITION GRANTS COMMISSION

Report Name	Law Number (if applicable)	Summary of information requested in the report	Date of most recent submission DURING the past fiscal year	Reporting Frequency	Type of entity/entities	Method to access the report	Direct access hyperlink or agency contact (if not provided to LSA for posting online)	Changes to this report during the past fiscal year	Explanation why a report wasn't submitted
Agency Accountability Report	§1-1-810	The report "must contain the agency's or department's mission, objectives to accomplish the mission, and performance measures that show the degree to which objectives are being met." Agencies must "identify key program area descriptions and expenditures and link these to key financial and performance results measures."	September 2024	Annually	Governor or Lt. Governor AND Legislative entity or entities	Provided to LSA for posting online	Provided to LSA for posting online	No Change	
Agency Annual Report	§59-113-10	Provide the Governor, General Assembly, and other interested parties with general Commission and Program information, including annual statistics relating to tuition grant recipients	January 2025	Annually	Governor or Lt. Governor AND Legislative entity or entities AND South Carolina state agency or agencies	Available on agency's website	https://sctuitiongrants.org/about-us/	No Change	
Annual Survey Report on State-Sponsored Student Financial Aid		State Aid Awarded	April 2025	Annually	Other	Available on another website	https://www.nassgapsurvey.com/survey_reports.aspx	No Change	
Audit & Certification Agency Quarterly Procurement Report	§11-35-2440	Reports agency's procurement activity (or certification of no activity) for the following procurement types: Sole Source, Emergency, Applied Preferences, Unauthorized, 10% Rule, and Trade-in	June 2025	Quarterly	South Carolina state agency or agencies	Electronic file available upon request	Agency Contact: Zachary Christian	No Change	
CAFR Year-End Reports	§11-7-20(b)	Reports financial information about the agency's operations during the year and describes its financial position at the end of each fiscal year	October 2024	Annually	South Carolina state agency or agencies	Available on another website	https://cg.sc.gov/financial-reports/annual-comprehensive-financial-reports-acfrs	No Change	
Debt Collection Report	Proviso 117.33	Confirmation that agency has no outstanding debt due to the agency	January 2025	Annually	South Carolina state agency or agencies	Electronic copy available upon request	Agency Contact: Katie Stevens	No Change	
Deficit Monitoring	Proviso 117.76	Monitoring of General and Other Funds expenditures and revenues to avoid an overall agency deficit	June 2025	Monthly	South Carolina state agency or agencies	Hard copy available upon request	Agency Contact: Katie Stevens	No Change	

Report Name	Law Number (if applicable)	Summary of information requested in the report	Date of most recent submission DURING the past fiscal year	Reporting Frequency	Type of entity/entities	Method to access the report	Direct access hyperlink or agency contact (if not provided to LSA for posting online)	Changes to this report during the past fiscal year	Explanation why a report wasn't submitted
Division of Human Resources	Annual Appropriations Act; §9-1-1140 and 9-11-50 (Retirement Incentive); §8-11-192 (Furlough); §8-1-170 (Group Productivity Incentive); §8-11-770 (Leave Transfer); §1-1-970 (Organizational Chart)	Annual reporting of information as required by the General Appropriations Act and SC Code of Laws	August 2024	Annually	South Carolina state agency or agencies	Electronic copy available upon request	Agency Contact: Zachary Christian	No Change	
Lottery Expenditures by County		Number of Tuition Grant recipients residing in each county, and the amount of lottery funding each recipient received as a portion of their overall Tuition Grant	June 2025	Annually	South Carolina state agency or agencies	Electronic copy available upon request	Agency Contact: Zachary Christian	No Change	
Lottery Expenditures by Institution		Number of Tuition Grant recipients, listed by institution, and the amount of lottery funding each recipient received as a portion of their overall Tuition Grant	June 2025	Annually	South Carolina state agency or agencies	Electronic copy available upon request	Agency Contact: Zachary Christian	No Change	
Small & Minority Business Contracting and Certification MBE Quarterly Progress Report	§11-35-5010	Measures agency's progress toward Small & Minority Business Utilization Plan Goals	March 2025	Quarterly	South Carolina state agency or agencies	Electronic copy available upon request	Agency Contact: Zachary Christian	No Change	
State Agency Annual Recycling Report	§44-96-60	Reports on agency's recycling efforts, providing number of pounds recycled in the following categories: mixed recyclables, paper, and toner	September 2024	Annually	South Carolina state agency or agencies	Available on another website	https://des.sc.gov/community/recycling-waste-reduction/state-agency-recycling-responsibilities	No Change	
State Agency Travel Report	Proviso 117.26	Provides a summary describing the type and purpose of agency's travel for the prior fiscal year	August 2024	Annually	South Carolina state agency or agencies	Available on another website	https://cg.sc.gov/financial-reports/travel-reports	Add	
Tuition Grant Recipients		Provides CHE with a listing of Tuition Grant recipients, by semester, at each participating institution; Aggregate information used by CHE to report total need-based expenditures through the Children's Educational Endowment fund	April 2025	Twice a year	South Carolina state agency or agencies	Electronic copy available upon request	Agency Contact: Katie Stevens	Add	

AGENCY NAME:	Higher Education Tuition Grants Commission		
AGENCY CODE:	H060	SECTION:	12

2025 Accountability Report

SUBMISSION FORM

I have reviewed and approved the data submitted by the agency in the following templates:

- Data Template
 - Reorganization and Compliance
 - FY2025 Strategic Plan Results
 - FY2026 Strategic Plan Development
 - Legal
 - Services
 - Partnerships
 - Report or Review
 - Budget
- Discussion Template
- Organizational Template

I have reviewed and approved the financial report summarizing the agency's budget and actual expenditures, as entered by the agency into the South Carolina Enterprise Information System.

The information submitted is complete and accurate to the extent of my knowledge.

AGENCY DIRECTOR <i>(SIGN AND DATE):</i> <i>(TYPE/PRINT NAME):</i>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="text-align: center; flex-grow: 1;"> SIGNATURE ON FILE </div> <div style="text-align: right;"> Signature Received: 09/02/2025 </div> </div> <hr style="border: 0.5px solid black; margin-top: 10px;"/> <div style="text-align: center;"> Katherine Stevens, Executive Director </div>
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BOARD/CMSN CHAIR <i>(SIGN AND DATE):</i> <i>(TYPE/PRINT NAME):</i>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="text-align: center; flex-grow: 1;"> SIGNATURE ON FILE </div> <div style="text-align: right;"> Signature Received: 09/02/2025 </div> </div> <hr style="border: 0.5px solid black; margin-top: 10px;"/> <div style="text-align: center;"> Boone J. Hopkins </div>
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