

Memorandum: Mandatory Estimated North Star Promise Parameters

To: North Star Promise Campus Administrators

From: Meghan Flores, Director of State Financial Aid Programs

Subject: Mandatory Estimated North Star Promise Parameters for 2026-2027

Date: January 21, 2026

The projected deficit for Fiscal Year 2027 in the State Grant program has a relational impact on the utilization of funds for the North Star Promise program. When funds are insufficient for projected awards in the North Star Promise program, the Office of Higher Education (OHE) is directed by state statute to reduce program expenditures by determining the scholarship amount or number of scholarships awarded. To ensure that North Star Promise spending is within projected available resources, OHE is issuing a mandatory **priority application deadline of June 1, 2026**. Fund requests will be approved in the order received until funds are exhausted. The field that will be used to implement the priority deadline is the “FAFSA Original Application Date”, which is ISIR Field #8 Application Receipt Date. The field that will be used on the Minnesota Dream Act Application is the “Application Date” on the Application Information section of MNAid.

Additionally, to ensure the program continues to spend within available resources, **beginning with the 2026-2027 award year** OHE will implement **two administrative changes** to the program:

- For the purposes of the North Star Promise award calculation, the definition of eligible tuition will **no longer include tuition differentials or tuition surcharges**. Eligible tuition includes resident undergraduate tuition charged to students who began attendance in aid-eligible courses.
- The **definition of family AGI for dependent students will now include both the student and parent AGI combined**. To be eligible for North Star Promise a student must have a family AGI below \$80,000:
 - For dependent students the AGI of the student, their parent(s), and stepparent (if applicable) is used.
 - As a reminder, for independent students the AGI of the student, and their spouse (if applicable) is used.

The Office of Higher Education will provide updated State Grant and North Star Promise spending projections at a public meeting on Tuesday, February 10th at 2pm. Request the meeting invitation by emailing Meghan Flores.

The 2026 legislative session will commence February 17th and is scheduled to adjourn May 18th. Any changes to state financial aid program appropriation or statutory language will be considered prior to OHE issuing final North Star Promise parameters for the 2026-2027 award year.

If you have questions or concerns about the 2026-2027 North Star Promise parameters outlined above, please contact Meghan Flores at Meghan.Flores@state.mn.us. If you have questions or concerns about the 2026-2027 North Star Promise administrative changes, file layout or sending test files, please contact Tara Winchester at Tara.Winchester@state.mn.us.