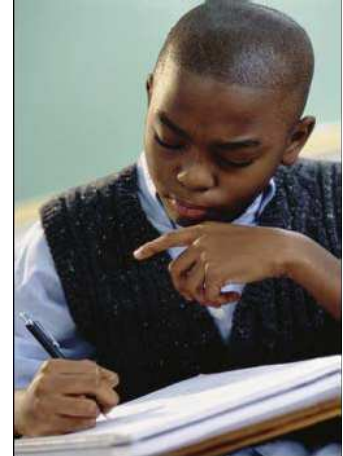


# Federal Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG) and National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent (SMART) Grant Overview

## FEDERAL FINANCIAL AID PROGRAMS “Paying for College in Michigan” Handbook [www.michigan.gov/mistudentaid](http://www.michigan.gov/mistudentaid)

### Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG) Program and National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent (SMART) Grant Programs

The **ACG** and the **SMART Grant** are new financial aid programs established by the federal government to encourage students to take more challenging courses in high school and to pursue college majors in high demand. These grants assist eligible students with education costs for college. Both grants became effective on July 1, 2006, and are available to students enrolled in the 2006-2007 award year.



#### Rigorous Program of Study

To be eligible for either grant, students must complete a “rigorous program of study” in high school. The college or university the student attends is required to certify this information from documentation provided by the high school counselor, academic advisor, or the student. The “rigorous program of study” must be similar to one of the following options:

- **State Scholars Initiative** - This program of study currently offered in Michigan requires at least:
  - Four years of English;
  - Three years of mathematics (including algebra I, algebra II, and geometry);
  - Three years of lab science (biology, chemistry, or physics);
  - Three and one-half years of social studies; and
  - Two years of a language other than English.
- **A set of courses similar to the State Scholars Initiative** - This program of study requires
  - passing grades in the following courses:
  - Four years of English;
  - Three years of mathematics (including algebra I and a higher level course such as algebra II, geometry, or data analysis and statistics);
  - Three years of science (including at least two courses from biology, chemistry, or physics);
  - Three years of social studies; and
  - One year of a foreign language
- **Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) Courses and Test Scores** - This program requires a minimum of:
  - Two AP or IB courses in high school and a minimum passing score on the exams for those classes.
  - A score of three or higher on AP exams and four or higher on IB exams.
- **Michigan Merit Standard Curriculum** - This program requires:
  - Four years of English;
  - Four years of mathematics (including algebra I, algebra II, geometry, and one credit in the senior year);

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- Three years of science (including biology, chemistry, or physics, and one additional science credit);
- Three years of social studies;
- One year of physical education (guidelines to be developed by the Michigan Department of Education);
- One year of visual, performing, or applied arts (guidelines to be developed by the Michigan Department of Education); and
- One online learning experience class.

### **Transfer Student Eligibility**

Transfer students are eligible to receive ACG or SMART Grant funds provided the student meets all eligibility requirements. The institution the student is transferring to may rely on the prior institution's documentation that the student completed a rigorous high school program of study. The student's receipt of an ACG award from a prior institution may be used as documentation.

### **Home Schooled Student Eligibility**

Home schooled students are eligible to be awarded the ACG as long as a rigorous program of study can be documented and the student meets all other eligibility requirements. The same requirements apply to the student's eligibility for receiving the SMART Grant.