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What is the STAR Scholarship & STAR Transfer Program?

Q: What is the Chicago STAR Scholarship and what does it cover?

A: The Chicago STAR Scholarship is a merit-based scholarship at City Colleges of Chicago (CCC) that will cover all your tuition, books, and class materials, not already covered by financial aid, for CCC courses on an approved academic pathway. If you are not eligible to file for financial aid (via FAFSA) or if you are not awarded financial aid, STAR scholarship waivers cover your CCC-approved expenses.

Q: What type of scholarship is the Chicago STAR Scholarship?

A: The Chicago STAR Scholarship is a “last dollar” scholarship. This means that all other available financial aid sources (Pell, etc.) must be used first before any STAR Scholarship funding may be used. Students that are eligible for federal financial aid must use that aid before any STAR scholarship funds are released. Students cannot save their Pell and use STAR Scholarship funding instead. Pell must be fully used before STAR funding is used.

Q: How long does the Chicago STAR Scholarship last?

A: The Chicago STAR Scholarship is good for up to 3 years or until completion of an associate degree awarded by City Colleges of Chicago, whichever comes first. The 3-year duration begins with the fall semester following the STAR Scholarship recipients' high school graduation. The 3-year duration does not change, regardless of when a STAR Scholar actually begins using the scholarship benefits.

Q: Certain academic disciplines have certification exams that are not part of the academic program, but are highly recommended for working in the career field. Will certification exams be covered by the STAR Scholarship?

A: No. If the certification exam is not included in the actual CCC academic program, it will not be covered by STAR Scholarship funding.

Q: What is the STAR Scholarship Transfer Program?

A: Four-year colleges and universities have committed to providing scholarships and other benefits to Chicago STAR Scholars. Participating institutions will offer STAR Scholars recruiting and advising support while they're still at CCC, invitations to university events, and academic financial support after transfer from CCC, if the STAR Scholarship recipient meets the respective institution's academic and scholarship requirements. Further information is available from the [Chicago STAR Scholarship webpage](#).

Who Is Eligible & How to Apply

Q: Who is eligible for the Chicago STAR Scholarship?

A: Any Chicago public or charter high school graduate who applies within one year of their high school graduation, who is completion-ready, meaning they have an ACT score of 17 or higher in math and English or earns an SAT score of 460 in writing and 440 in math (if SAT is taken before March 1, 2016, 410 in writing and 400 in math), a 3.0 GPA or greater at high school graduation on a 4.0 scale, and enrolls in one of CCC's pathways, is eligible for the STAR Scholarship for up to three years after CPS graduation or until completion of a CCC associate degree, whichever comes first. This includes undocumented and international students. Home schooled and GED students are ineligible for the STAR scholarship. Additional requirements to be awarded the STAR Scholarship are that: (1) you must give your consent (or denial) to share your contact and student data with STAR Transfer Program colleges and universities offering transfer programs especially for Chicago STAR Scholarship recipients, and that (2) you must file for and complete the FAFSA process or complete an online certification form indicating you are ineligible to apply for financial aid (3) Must be on an approved CCC academic pathway.

Q: Do I have to live in the City of Chicago to be awarded the scholarship?

A: No. There are no residency requirements to apply for, receive, or retain the Chicago STAR Scholarship following a student's CPS high school graduation.

Q: Is the Chicago STAR Scholarship based on financial need?

A: No. The Chicago STAR Scholarship is not a needs-based scholarship. While there is a requirement for all STAR Scholarship applicants to file for financial aid, unless they are ineligible to do so, eligibility for the scholarship is not based on the assets and income of the prospective student nor that of his or her family.

Q: When and how do I apply for the Chicago STAR Scholarship?

A: New incoming students apply for the Chicago STAR Scholarship through their student portal after they are admitted as a CCC student by completing the CCC application (apply.ccc.edu) when they are a high school senior or graduate. Students are requested to identify if they are a Chicago public or charter high school attendee by providing their CPS graduation High School and CPS ID number within the STAR Scholarship application. Applying for the Chicago STAR Scholarship requires that students authorize the release of their CPS student data and transcripts to CCC to complete the eligibility screening process. The STAR Scholarship application can be found inside the student portal (my.ccc.edu > finances > financial aid > STAR Scholarship Application).

Q: Can students still apply for the Chicago STAR Scholarship during the fall semester?

A: Yes. Students can apply for the STAR Scholarship year round. The first semester of scholarship eligibility is determined by CPS high school graduation date and STAR application date.

Q: Is there a deadline for applying for the Chicago STAR Scholarship?

A: Yes. The deadline for applying for the Chicago STAR Scholarship in any given semester is the last day of registration for the upcoming semester's 16-week credit term. Students that miss the deadline will have their application reviewed and processed for the start of the following academic semester.

Q: How long do CPS applicants have to wait before they hear anything about their acceptance into the STAR Scholarship program?

A: CCC will do its best to get back to students within 4 weeks of their application to the STAR Scholarship program. All STAR Scholarship communications are sent to students' CCC e-mail address.

Q: Is the timeline different for charter high school seniors?

A: Yes, it may be. Retrieving student academic data from Chicago charter high schools typically takes longer due to the need to contact each Chicago charter high school separately. Chicago charter students may speed up the process by directly requesting their official transcripts be sent to starscholarship@ccc.edu.

Q: What is the latest date I may apply to the STAR Scholarship after my high school graduation?

A: You may apply to the STAR Scholarship up to one year following the first fall term after your CPS high school graduation, by the CCC registration deadline; however, you must have qualifying ACT, SAT, placement test scores, or coursework upon submitting your application at this final deadline.

Q: What does “completion-ready” actually mean?

A: Completion-ready is a level of academic preparedness that places students one level below credit math and English along with a 3.0 high school GPA or better. Completion-ready placement allows students requiring some moderate preparation to earn an associate degree in the 3 years covered by the STAR Scholarship.

Q: If you applied for the scholarship, but have not heard a response back yet, what can you do?

A: Students may contact starscholarship@ccc.edu to have their records reviewed. Many students have received an email notification from CCC, but have not checked their CCC student email. Some applicants do not have valid e-mail addresses on file and email messages may have been undeliverable.

Q: Is there a yearly maximum number of Chicago public or charter high school students that may be awarded the Chicago STAR Scholarship?

A: No. There is no pre-determined maximum limit on the number of CPS students that might qualify and may be awarded Chicago STAR Scholarship waivers.

Q: What if I'm taking AP courses? Does that affect my college placement?

A: AP courses do not affect college placement. AP Courses successfully completed in high school may be used to satisfy part of the general education requirements or electives in your approved CCC academic pathway. See your college advisor for additional information. Students interested in the STAR Scholarship must still have qualifying ACT, SAT, or placement test scores.

Q: I'm already attending classes at one of the City Colleges as part of the dual enrollment/dual credit program. Do I automatically qualify for the STAR Scholarship?

A: No. A dual enrollment/dual credit student must first apply to be a STAR Scholar. Additionally, evidence of STAR eligibility is required.

Q: I have a GPA of 2.99. Do I qualify? Will GPAs be rounded up?

A: No. GPAs will not be rounded up. To be eligible for the STAR Scholarship, CPS students must have a GPA of 3.0 or higher (on a 4.0 grading scale) at high school graduation.

Q: To qualify for the STAR Scholarship, do you look at regular or weighted GPA?

A: Either one—as long as either GPA is 3.0 or greater at the time of CPS high school graduation, it will meet GPA eligibility requirements.

Q: If I did not complete all of my high school courses at a CPS high school, how will my credits be used in calculating my GPA at graduation?

A: CPS determines one comprehensive transcript record with one GPA. The CPS calculated GPA is what CCC uses in determining a student's STAR Scholarship GPA-based eligibility. Questions about your high school GPA should be directed to CPS.

After High School Graduation

Q: Does a CPS student need to start their college career at CCC to keep the scholarship?

A: No. A student who meets the eligibility requirements but chooses to attend a different institution immediately after high school can still qualify for STAR if they transfer to CCC; however, the scholarship's 3-year duration will have still begun the first fall semester after their CPS high school graduation.

Q: What can I do after graduation if I still do not qualify for the STAR Scholarship because my ACT or SAT scores are too low?

A: You have one year (by the second fall semester after high school graduation) to be completion-ready. This can be accomplished by re-taking your ACT or SAT test(s) to achieve STAR academic eligibility, taking City Colleges' placement tests as an alternative to the ACT or SAT, transferring from another institution completed college level course work for English and Math, or by successfully completing (with a letter grade of "C" or better) CCC's remediation course sequence in the subject area(s) requiring improvement within a year after your CPS graduation.

Q: For financial aid eligible students, must students use subsidized/unsubsidized loans prior to applying STAR Scholarship waivers to their tuition and book expenses?

A: Students must use all awarded grant money (and other tuition discounts) first before applying the STAR Scholarship waivers to their tuition and book expenses, but not loans. Students who qualify for the STAR Scholarship will not need to take out subsidized/unsubsidized loans, as the scholarship covers all CCC approved academic expenses.

Q: STAR Scholarship applicants that do not meet all the qualifications at the time of their application for the scholarship may choose to enroll in classes and pay enrollment and Nelnet fees to hold their classes. How will these students be refunded those costs if they are later awarded the scholarship?

A: Students that are awarded the STAR Scholarship will not have to request a refund of payments they may have made. City Colleges will inform applicants in a confirmation email when awarded the STAR Scholarship that their payment arrangement will be cancelled and City Colleges will proceed to refund any refundable fees or payments they made with no actions required on the student's part. A full refund will be granted once their STAR Scholarship has been reviewed and awarded. The CCC Student Finance team issues refunds every two weeks during the semester and the refund will appear in the Student Portal within two weeks of that review. A paper check will be mailed to students' address on file at the City Colleges of Chicago or they may set up a direct deposit through the Student Portal and the refund will be deposited in that account. NOTE: To receive a refund, a student must have established STAR academic eligibility by the last day of registration for that semester. We do not refund costs if a student achieves academic eligibility during the semester.

Earning My Degree

Q: The STAR Scholarship requires students to be on an academic pathway. How does the STAR Scholarship define a pathway?

A: Enrolling in a pathway means the student is declared in an academic program that leads to a CCC degree or certificate. Based on the student's declared academic program, the Student Planner will create a personalized, semester-by-semester map of the recommended courses needed to complete the degree or certificate in the shortest amount of time. Students in a "Course Enrollee" or "No Degree or Certificate" status are not on a pathway.

Q: Is the Associate in Arts degree considered a "relevant pathway" for purposes of the scholarship?

A: Yes

Q: Are there any academic programs that are not included in the Chicago STAR Scholarship program?

A: Yes. The French Pastry School, Adult Education (GED/ESL), Continuing Education, and Personal and Professional Development programs are not included or covered by the Chicago STAR Scholarship. An exception applies to Personal and Professional Development classes that are a requirement in an approved academic pathway. An example is a CPR class in an approved Healthcare program.

Q: Can the STAR Scholarship be used for all academic certificate programs even if some of the programs do not qualify for financial aid?

A: In order to remain eligible for the STAR Scholarship, students must be enrolled in an approved pathway. Many of our pathways have stackable credentials in which a student can earn a basic certificate and advanced certificate while completing an associate degree. As long as the certificate program is on the pathway, it is eligible for STAR. Note: Personal and Professional Development course offerings are not covered by the STAR Scholarship.

Q: What about CCC academic programs that don't require math? Must a student still have an ACT score of 17 or SAT score of 440 in math to be eligible for the STAR Scholarship?

A: Yes. In order to qualify for the STAR Scholarship, a student must get an ACT score of 17 in both English and Math or SAT scores of 460 in Writing and 440 in Math. Students with a qualifying graduation GPA, but below qualifying ACT or SAT scores are contingently qualified and will be accepted into STAR once those remaining qualifications are met, assuming they are met within one year of graduation.

Q: How will we ensure that the student is only taking courses that are applicable to his/her program?

A: When the CCC student is following a chosen pathway, we confirm all classes are within that specific pathway through a degree audit. We notify the student via CCC email if they are registered for a class outside of their degree requirement/pathway. The student is held financially responsible for registering for any classes not associated with their degree requirement as the STAR Scholarship only covers classes within the chosen pathway.

Q: Will the scholarship include repeatable courses and if so, how many times?

A: The CCC student policy determines how many times a student may repeat a class. STAR waivers will fully cover any courses taken in accordance with this policy.

Q: Is there a maximum date for qualified STAR Scholarship recipients to begin using the Chicago STAR Scholarship funding?

A: Yes. Students must begin using the STAR Scholarship funding within 1 year from the CCC fall semester following the student's graduation from high school. The deadline is fixed regardless of when the student was either awarded the scholarship or informed they are contingently qualified, meaning they have the required 3.0 GPA or greater on a 4.0 scale, but not yet achieved the required ACT Math and/or English scores or equivalent CCC placement level to qualify for the STAR Scholarship award.

Q: Are STAR Scholarship recipients restricted to an academic semester they may enroll and start using the Chicago STAR Scholarship funding?

A: Students may begin using the STAR Scholarship in any semester (fall, spring, or summer) beginning with the fall semester after CPS graduation provided they have not exceeded 1 year from the first CCC fall semester following their high school graduation.

Q: Is the scholarship refundable?

A: No. The waivers will be applied directly to tuition and books with no student refunds for unused balances.

Q: Can the student combine STAR with other scholarships?

A: Yes. STAR can be used to cover any remaining costs AFTER all other grant and scholarship dollars have been applied. However, there is no refund associated with the STAR Scholarship.

Q: Does the scholarship cover out-of-district tuition and fees?

A: Yes. Although the student must graduate from a CPS high school to qualify, they retain their three years of eligibility regardless of residency.

Q: Does the STAR Scholarship cover online courses?

A: Yes.

Q: Are there restrictions for STAR Scholars on where they must purchase textbooks?

A: Yes. They will receive vouchers that can be used only at Akademos, our online bookstore. If they want to pay for their own books, they can of course purchase books from any provider.

Q: Is CTA transportation included?

A: Yes, if you agree to enroll at City Colleges full-time (12 or more credit hours per semester). Ventra cards are provided to full-time students.

Q: Do I have to attend City Colleges of Chicago on a full-time basis to be included in the STAR Scholarship?

A: No. STAR Scholars may attend classes on a full or part-time basis. The number of credit hours STAR Scholars choose to pursue each semester may change. However, the scholarship will be available for a maximum of 3 years from the start of the fall semester following the CPS student's high school graduation.

Q: Do I have to attend City Colleges of Chicago continuously (term-after-term) to be retained in the STAR Scholarship?

A: No. STAR Scholars may stop-out (not attend classes for a given semester or longer) and later resume classes. However, STAR Scholars should check in with their STAR advisor before resuming classes. CCC will need to confirm STAR Scholars' eligibility (e.g., are they still within the 3-year duration) and that they have applied for financial aid (or provided documentation regarding financial aid ineligibility).

Q: If I complete an Associate Degree in two years may I pursue other areas of academic interest for the last year of the STAR Scholarship at no cost to me?

A: No. The STAR Scholarship ends three years from the start of the fall semester following the CPS student's high school graduation or upon earning an Associate Degree, whichever comes first.

Q: Can a student earn multiple certificates in their three year eligibility period?

A: Yes, as long as those certificates are on the student's selected pathway.

Q: If a student was awarded the Chicago STAR Scholarship, do they have to re-apply for it each semester or every year to retain the scholarship?

A: No. Once a student has been awarded the STAR Scholarship they have the benefits of the scholarship for 3 years starting with the first CCC fall semester following their high school graduation. They will, however, be required to complete the FAFSA process or a STAR Scholarship Certification of Ineligibility to file for Financial Aid form each academic year.

Q: If a student was awarded the Chicago STAR Scholarship, but did not immediately enroll and attend classes at City Colleges do they have to re-apply for the scholarship?

A: No. However, if an academically eligible STAR Scholar does not begin using the scholarship within 1 year of their high school graduation, they will not be funded by STAR Scholarship waivers thereafter.

Q: What happens if STAR Scholars drop a class and want to add one? Is this possible?

A: Yes. STAR Scholars follow the same policy as all other CCC students. STAR Scholars may drop a class and add one if it is within the academic pathway the student is pursuing. Students should meet with their assigned STAR College Advisor to be certain the added class is appropriate for their individual education plan.

Q: What does the term "Courses not Used" mean?

A: City Colleges Financial Aid identifies students registered for courses which do not apply to their CCC academic program. Federal financial aid is only available to students taking courses that apply to a federal aid-eligible

degree or certificate. Students enrolled in “courses not used”, will not be covered by their federal financial aid for that course.

Q: If federal financial aid does not cover “courses not used,” will my STAR Scholarship waivers cover those courses?

A: No. If federal financial aid policy does not cover “courses not used,” STAR Scholarship waivers will not cover them either.

Q: What can I do if I need the “course not used” for my transfer program?

A: You should fill a full-time schedule (12+ credits) with courses required for your degree. You should add the additional course needed for the transfer program. You are still considered full-time for either federal financial aid or STAR Scholarship funding. Tuition funding in either case will not be diminished. NOTE: Books and materials for the “course not used” will be the responsibility of the student. Since the course not used is not part of a STAR Scholarship recipient’s academic pathway, the books and materials for that course will not be covered by STAR book vouchers.

Q: Can STAR Scholarship funding be awarded to students in the tuition chargeback program?

A: No. STAR Scholars may participate in the tuition chargeback program, however, they will not be covered by STAR Scholarship funding. It does not meet the STAR Scholarship requirement that a student must be enrolled in a “structured, relevant pathway” offered at City Colleges of Chicago.

Q: Is there a limit on the number of classes students can take with the STAR Scholarship?

A: STAR covers all pathway credits per term. A student is limited only by the maximum credit per semester standards of CCC's Academic policy with the approval of their College.

Q: If students get the scholarship, will they be able to get classes covered for the summer semester as well or only fall and spring?

A: Yes. The STAR Scholarship covers fall, spring, and summer classes starting with the CCC fall semester after graduation from CPS.

Q: If STAR Scholarship recipients are attending City Colleges for the first time in the summer semester, do they still have to apply for federal financial aid even though federal grants do not cover any summer academic expenses for any students?

A: Yes. If the STAR Scholarship recipient has not filed a FAFSA and completed all necessary verification steps for the current academic year, they will be required to do so before STAR Scholarship funding is applied. If STAR Scholarship recipients have not exhausted their financial aid award, it will be used to cover any summer academic expenses before STAR Scholarship funding is used to cover the excess.

Q: If a STAR Scholarship recipient is attending another institution on a full-time basis, but wants to take summer classes at City Colleges of Chicago and use STAR Scholarship funding, can they still receive financial support for the summer if they do not plan to pursue a degree with us?

A: No. If a student wants to enroll full-time elsewhere during the academic year and is only at City Colleges of Chicago for summer courses, that student will be classified as a "Visiting Student," as they have no intention of pursuing a pathway with us and are simply taking courses. To be eligible for STAR Scholarship funding, a student must be enrolled in a program working toward a degree.

Q: What happens if students need to take a semester off, will the scholarship still be good for the next semester?

A: Yes. As long as the STAR Scholarship recipient is within the 3-year scholarship duration, they may enroll and resume attending classes.

Q: What happens if students get misplaced in a foundational studies course? Will the STAR Scholarship cover the cost of the foundational studies course?

A: Yes. The CCC Chicago STAR Scholarship administrator conducts an analysis of STAR Scholars' placement before the start of each semester. We will attempt to identify placement issues that are inconsistent with the STAR Scholarship requirements and bring them to the attention of College Advisors for correction. However, if students are inadvertently placed in foundational studies courses, the STAR Scholarship will cover the cost of the courses.

Q: Can eligible students use their STAR Scholarship at any CCC school if they leave the one they originally started at?

A: Yes. The STAR Scholarship is available at any of our colleges and is transportable between colleges.

Q: If a student has already been awarded an Associate Degree at another non-CCC institution, are they still eligible to apply for the Chicago STAR Scholarship and earn an Associate Degree at CCC?

A: Yes. Applicants for the Chicago STAR Scholarship that are academically eligible for the scholarship and fulfill all other requirements will still be able to pursue an Associate Degree at City Colleges of Chicago.

Q: To whom do STAR students ask direct questions? Only advisors? Is there a particular person to contact?

A: If students, STAR applicants, scholars, or College Advisors need answers to questions of a general or personal nature on eligibility, application status, FAFSA issues, etc., those questions should be directed to starscholarship@ccc.edu.

Book Vouchers

Q: Are students' textbooks covered in full with the STAR Scholarship? Is there a cap?

A: The STAR Scholarship will cover required and recommended textbooks and materials for students' enrolled courses in full after all federal grants and any other eligible scholarships a student may qualify for have been applied first.

Q: When and how will I get my book vouchers?

A: Book vouchers are issued only after you have filed a FAFSA and completed all financial aid verification requirements or, if you cannot file a FAFSA, after you have completed the "STAR Scholarship Certification of Ineligibility to File for Financial Aid." If you are covered by a Pell grant, the book voucher is issued by your college's financial aid office. Please visit that office. If you are covered by STAR Scholarship waivers, we typically send book vouchers to your City Colleges of Chicago student email about 24-48 hours after you have registered for classes.

Q: If students have funds for textbooks from both financial aid and a STAR book voucher, what should they do?

A: Students will have two separate vouchers and they are able to apply both of them toward their textbook and materials purchases. However, students must first use the financial aid book voucher entirely before they use the STAR Scholarship book voucher.

Q: How many dollars will STAR Scholarship recipients receive in their book voucher?

A: STAR book vouchers will provide \$200 per enrolled course aligned with the student's education plan and their academic pathway. STAR book voucher funds may not be used for any expenses for enrolled courses that are not required by the STAR Scholar's academic pathway.

Q: What do I do if the STAR book voucher is not enough to cover all required and recommended books and materials?

A: If a STAR book voucher has insufficient funds for all the STAR Scholarship recipients' enrolled courses, students need to e-mail Tim Kirby (tkirby5@ccc.edu) to request additional funds. Please be prepared to review your current STAR book voucher purchases in detail and indicate the additional amounts you require. You will be provided additional book voucher funds, if approved.

Q: What should students do if there are textbooks or materials required for their classes, but the materials are not on the online inventory for their course on the Akademos site?

A: Students need to provide evidence that the textbook or materials are actually requested and required for their enrolled course. Students must attach a scanned copy of the faculty note, statement, or faculty email to Tim Kirby (tkirby5@ccc.edu) as evidence that the item(s) have been required by faculty. Without this, subsequent audits of a student's purchases may be interpreted as unauthorized purchases, since they do not align with the Akademos inventory for the course.

Q: How long are STAR book vouchers good for?

A: Chicago STAR Scholarship book vouchers are only for the current semester. Book vouchers have an expiration date. Students' purchases must be made prior to the expiration date. New book vouchers are issued each semester based on the number of courses a student is enrolled in and the student's financial aid eligibility, if any.

Q: If the student "drops" their enrolled courses, can they re-sell their textbooks and keep the proceeds?

A: No. Students dropping their enrolled courses must return the textbooks and materials for those courses or they will be charged for unauthorized purchases. The item(s) must be returned within the Akademos refund window (please see 'Returns' tab on the City Colleges Online Bookstore page for details). Also note that any remaining funds left in the voucher after all authorized purchases have been made will not be refunded to a student's account.

Q: If students have funds left over in their STAR book voucher after they have made their book and materials purchases for their enrolled courses, may they use the remaining funds for other things?

A: No. The STAR book voucher is intended for required and recommended books and materials as shown on the Akademos course inventory for their upcoming enrolled courses only. Any remaining funds are not to be used for any other purposes and are not refunded to students. The remaining funds are the property of and returned to the City Colleges of Chicago. Students receiving a STAR Scholarship book voucher will see the following notification on their voucher: "IMPORTANT: This voucher is for the purchase of required and recommended books and materials for your personal use in your enrolled pathway courses ONLY. Voucher funds in excess of these costs are the property of City Colleges of Chicago. Misuse of STAR Scholarship benefits, including the use of this voucher for any other purchase may result in loss of scholarship eligibility plus potential financial responsibility." Students misusing STAR book voucher funds are subject to permanent loss of the Chicago STAR Scholarship and will have to reimburse City Colleges of Chicago for any unauthorized purchases.

Retaining the Chicago STAR Scholarship

Q: Do students need to reapply for financial aid each year in order to remain covered by STAR?

A: Yes, or they must recertify ineligibility for financial aid.

Q: If a student completes the "STAR Scholarship Certification of Ineligibility for Financial Aid" is it good for the entire 3 years the STAR Scholarship will last?

A: No. Students completing the "STAR Scholarship Certification of Ineligibility to File for Financial Aid" must recertify their ineligibility annually (academic year). Personal circumstances may change over time. Enrolled students that submitted the certification as part of their application for the scholarship will be sent an annual email reminder to re-certify. Continued STAR Scholarship funding will depend on students complying with this request.

Q: If a student does not re-certify their ineligibility to file for financial aid by the deadline indicated in the annual reminder, what happens?

A: A requirement to retain STAR Scholarship funding is that students must re-certify annually. If a student misses the re-certification deadline, they will not receive any Chicago STAR Scholarship funding or book vouchers they are eligible for. They must set up an Approved Payment Plan and pay a \$30 Nelnet application fee or their enrolled classes will be dropped.

Q: If a STAR Scholarship recipient's GPA falls below 2.0 while attending CCC, will the STAR Scholarship continue to fund them?

A: Yes. STAR Scholarship recipients will continue to be funded if their GPA at City Colleges falls below 2.0.

Q: If a STAR Scholarship recipient receives a SAP hold, are they required to appeal the hold?

A: Yes, if the STAR recipient is receiving federal financial aid. STAR Scholarship recipients receiving financial aid must appeal a SAP hold in order to continue to qualify for STAR. If the appeal is successful they will continue to be covered by PELL. If appeals made in good faith are unsuccessful, STAR waivers will be applied to cover students' books and tuition. If they do not appeal, they will no longer be covered by the STAR Scholarship.

Q: Is there any penalty if a student intentionally completes the "STAR Scholarship Certification of Ineligibility to File for Financial Aid" when they actually are eligible for federal financial aid?

A: Yes. Any STAR Scholarship funding students receive based on inaccurate information having filed a certification of ineligibility to file for financial aid must be repaid to City Colleges of Chicago. Students are subject to permanent loss of all future STAR Scholarship funding.

Q: If students qualify for financial aid, is there a refund?

A: Yes. If the student qualifies for full financial aid, then they will still receive the appropriate refund. If they qualify for partial financial aid and STAR waivers make up the difference, no refund would apply. There are no student refunds of unused STAR waiver balances, but if financial aid was used, there is no impact on the financial aid refund to which the student is entitled.

Q: Can a Pell grant be applied retroactively to an earlier, already completed semester?

A: Yes. Student applications for federal financial aid can be processed for the current year up through June 30th of the following year. Students will be able to file a 2018-19 FAFSA as early as October 1, 2017 rather than beginning on January 1, 2018. The earlier submission date will be a permanent change, enabling students to complete and submit a FAFSA as early as October 1st every year.

Q: What can be done for students that are otherwise eligible for financial aid, but cannot complete the FAFSA process?

A: A requirement of the STAR Scholarship is that students must file a FAFSA and complete all required verification processes, unless they are ineligible to file for financial aid. Students that do not complete the financial aid application process for a variety of reasons will not be eligible for STAR Scholarship funding. Students will have to set up an approved payment plan to avoid their enrolled courses being dropped.

Q: If the student withdraws from all courses, will the STAR Scholar still be responsible for the nonrefundable fee such as registration and activity fees?

A: No. There will be no costs to the student as City Colleges no longer has any fees.

Q: Is there any way a STAR Scholarship recipient may lose the scholarship?

A: Yes. The STAR Scholarship ends for all recipients when they are awarded a CCC Associate Degree or reach their 3 year scholarship expiration date, whichever comes first. Under normal circumstances, STAR Scholars will not lose the scholarship if they continue to follow CCC student policies while pursuing an approved academic pathway. If STAR recipients stop attending classes for a semester or more, the scholarship is still available when they resume classes, if they are within the 3 year scholarship eligibility duration. STAR Scholarship funding will discontinue if recipients do not file for Financial Aid or certify their ineligibility to file for Financial Aid, if they are unable to file a FAFSA, annually. Permanent loss of future scholarship funding may also result from students misusing STAR book vouchers for unauthorized purchases or providing intentionally inaccurate information regarding eligibility for federal and state financial aid.