

Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program

Report to the Senate Finance and Appropriations Committee
Select Workgroup on Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents
Education Program
September 9, 2024



STATE COUNCIL OF HIGHER
EDUCATION FOR VIRGINIA

SCHEV's Role

The Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program (VMSDEP) provides two types of benefits, as described in the Code of Virginia.

- § 23.1-608 – **tuition waivers** for dependents of qualified parent or spouse.
- § 23.1-608.1 – **stipends** for dependents of qualified parent or spouse.

SCHEV's Role

SCHEV is charged in section 608.1 to:

- Determine the amount of the stipend:

The maximum annual stipend is based on available appropriations and the number of anticipated recipients. In recent years, appropriations have sustained a maximum annual award of \$1,900, pro-rated for less than full-time.

- Provide award information to the Commissioner of Veterans Services.
- Disburse stipend funds to the institutions, who then apply the amounts to individual student accounts.
- Calculate the completion rate for recipients.

SCHEV's Role

Item 130 of the 2024 Act of Appropriation:

- Report the total number of recipients by May 15 to the Chairs of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance and Appropriations Committees.

Item 130 of 2024 Act of Appropriation and Item 470.10 of the July special session

- Determine the methodology for disbursing state funds (\$65 million total for each year) provided to offset the tuition waivers.

Per its role as a coordinating agency for higher education, SCHEV identifies various issues, such as the VMSDEP, impacting higher education institutions or its students and provides information or makes recommendations to policymakers, as appropriate.

Student Data

During the award year, access the online VMSDEP Portal developed by DVS

- DVS provides individual student eligibility and institution enrolled.
- Institutions verify enrollment and provide total credit hours.
- The data on the portal is fluid with new students added and enrollment levels changing frequently.

After the award year, collect end-of-year financial aid data file and accompanying reports

- Reports are submitted by the institutions each fall for the prior year.
- Individual student level records contain final actual financial aid awards, including VMSDEP waiver and stipend award amounts.
- Data includes class level, race, whether the student filed a federal FAFSA, etc.

Online Data

SCHEV Online reports are available at <https://research.schev.edu/>

Financial Aid

- “FA22 – Financial Aid by Program”
Provides breakouts by degree level, in-state or out-of-state; aggregated by institution.

Retention and Completion

- “Graduation Rates, 3-10 years, by Subcohorts”
Select “FTIC with Military Survivor/Dependent Award”
Provides completion percentages by institution over ten years.

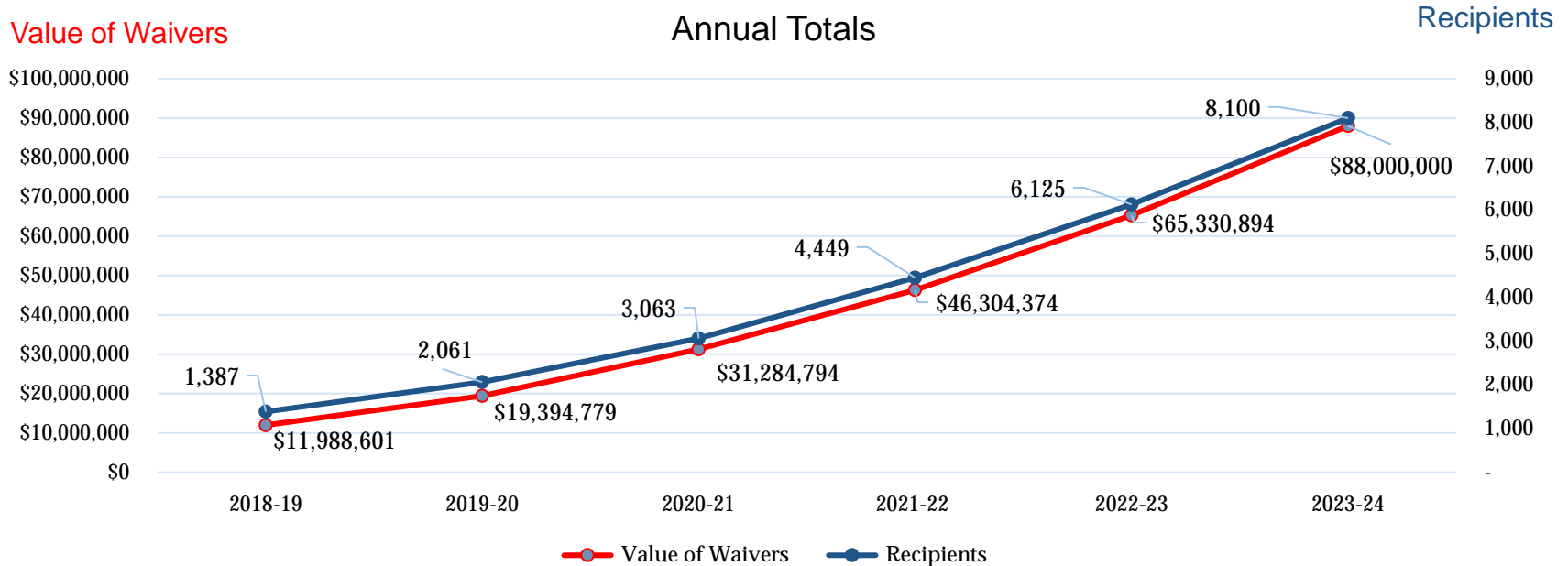
Coordination with DVS

SCHEV staff periodically and as needed coordinates or consults with DVS staff regarding:

- VMSDEP application and participation trends
- Changes in the stipend award amounts
- Compare VMSDEP student information online and print material
- Materials disseminated on the VMSDEP financial benefits
- Consultation on the online DVS web portal
- Proposed bills impacting the VMSDEP program
- Issues regarding federal military education benefits
- Any other higher education issues of mutual interest

Program Growth

Program experienced unprecedented growth from FY 2019 to FY 2024.

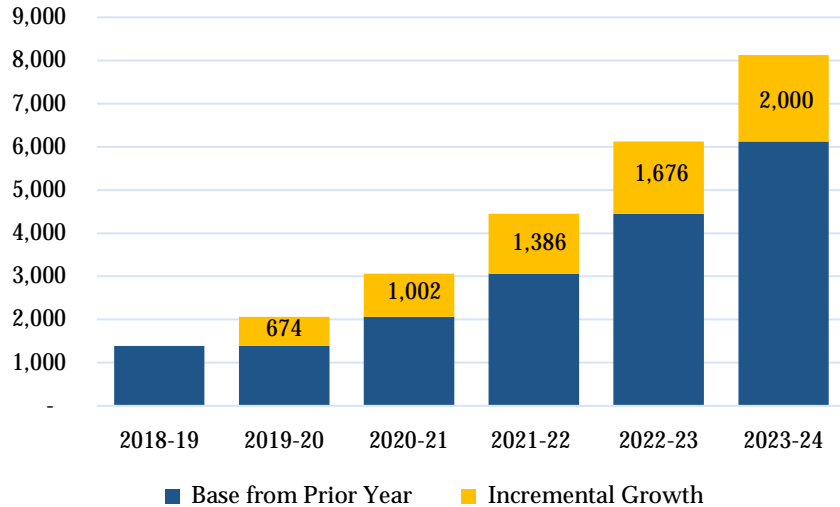


2023-24 preliminary = 8,100+ recipients and \$88,000,000+ total of waivers

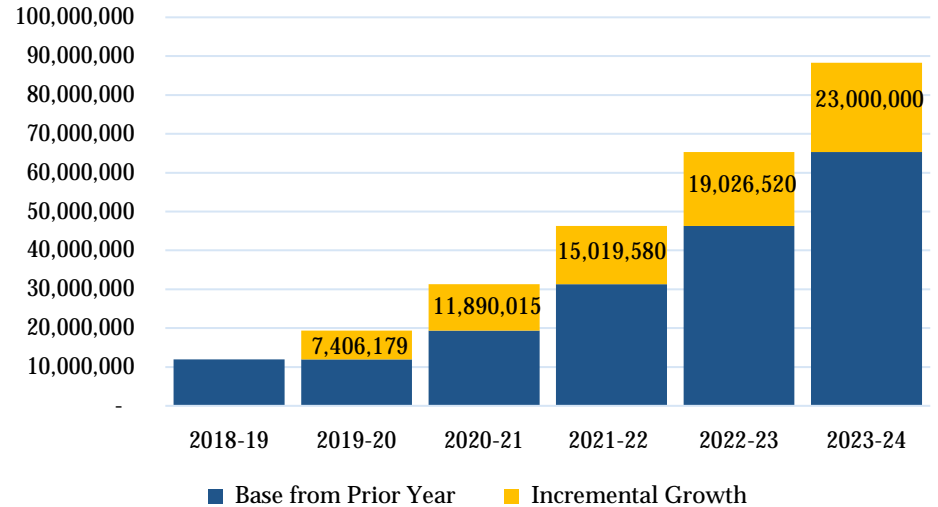
Program Growth

More importantly, the *incremental growth* year-over-year has not slowed.

Growth in Recipients



Growth in Value of Waivers



2023-24 is preliminary and reflects minimum expected growth

Program Growth

- Primary contributing growth factors.
 - US military in combat zones for 20+ years following 9/11,
 - Increased awareness and marketing of the program, and
 - Expansion of program eligibility.
- The incremental rise in usage is expected to slow, but data predicting when usage will plateau is limited to non-existent at this time.

Program Growth

- The value of the waiver is growing at a faster rate than recipients due to increases in tuition and a growing trend of students using the waiver for higher cost programs.
- If recipient growth continues over the next biennium by just 10 percent per year, the total value of the reported tuition waivers will exceed \$100 million by FY 2026.
- If recipient growth is realistically closer to 30% in FY 2025 and 20% in FY 2026, the total value of the reported waivers will exceed \$110 million and \$140 million each year, respectively.
- The current budget provides \$65 million each year of the biennium.

Questions?

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