

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to the law as it existed prior to this session of the General Assembly.

1 State of Arkansas
2 84th General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2003
4

As Engrossed: H4/10/03

A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1854

5 By: Representatives Cleveland, C. Johnson, Dickinson, Mahony, Stovall, White
6 By: Senators Baker, Broadway, Lavery
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For An Act To Be Entitled

9
10 AN ACT TO AMEND THE ARKANSAS ACADEMIC CHALLENGE
11 SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM TO GIVE PRIORITY IN AWARDS TO
12 APPLICANTS AGREEING TO TEACH IN SUBJECT MATTER
13 *AREAS OF CRITICAL NEED OR GEOGRAPHICAL AREAS OF*
14 *CRITICAL NEED; TO CREATE A GRADUATED AWARD SCALE*
15 *FOR NEW RECIPIENTS OF AN ACADEMIC CHALLENGE*
16 *AWARD; TO GIVE THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION*
17 *AUTHORITY TO MAKE AWARDS TO STUDENTS WHO DID NOT*
18 *RECEIVE AN AWARD BECAUSE OF FUNDING SHORTAGES;*
19 *AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.*
20

Subtitle

21
22 AN ACT TO AMEND THE ARKANSAS ACADEMIC
23 CHALLENGE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM TO GIVE
24 PRIORITY IN AWARDS TO APPLICANTS
25 AGREEING TO TEACH IN SUBJECT MATTER
26 AREAS OF CRITICAL NEED OR IN
27 *GEOGRAPHICAL AREAS OF CRITICAL TEACHER*
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30 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
31

32 *SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 6-82-1001 is amended to read as follows:*
33 *6-82-1001. Legislative findings and declarations of public necessity.*
34 *The General Assembly hereby recognizes that taking the proper course*
35 *work in high school is essential for success in college. Arkansas high*
36 *school students who complete the recommended precollegiate or technical*



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1 preparation core curriculum score significantly higher on standardized
 2 preadmissions tests and are more likely to be successful in college. Because
 3 the State of Arkansas also benefits from the academic success of well-
 4 prepared college students, there is hereby established the Arkansas Academic
 5 Challenge Scholarship Program, a college scholarship plan to promote academic
 6 achievement and encourage academically prepared Arkansas high school
 7 graduates to enroll in the state's colleges and universities, and to
 8 encourage students to enter the field of teaching for the purpose of teaching
 9 in subject matter areas of critical teacher shortage or in geographical areas
 10 of critical teacher shortage in the state.

11
 12 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 6-82-1006 is amended to read as follows:

13 6-82-1006. Duration - Amount.

14 (a) A recipient who graduated from high school before January 1, 2001,
 15 shall receive a scholarship for one (1) academic year renewable for up to
 16 three (3) additional academic years if the recipient meets continuing
 17 eligibility criteria established by the Department of Higher Education and if
 18 sufficient funds are available for that purpose.

19 (b) A recipient who graduated from high school after December 31,
 20 2000, shall receive a scholarship for one (1) academic year renewable for up
 21 to three (3) additional academic years if the recipient meets the following
 22 continuing eligibility criteria:

23 (1) The recipient earns a cumulative grade point average of 2.75
 24 or above on a 4.0 scale at an approved institution;

25 (2) The recipient has completed a total of at least twenty-seven
 26 (27) hours during the first full academic year and a total of at least thirty
 27 (30) hours per academic year thereafter;

28 (3) If the student is entering the junior year, the student has
 29 taken the standardized rising junior test provided for in § 6-61-114; and

30 (4) The recipient meets any other continuing eligibility
 31 criteria established by the department.

32 (c)(1) For recipients who graduated from high school between January
 33 1, 1995, and December 31, 1996, the amount of the annual scholarship awarded
 34 to each recipient shall be the lesser of one thousand five hundred dollars
 35 (\$1,500) or the annual tuition charged by the approved institution in which
 36 the recipient is enrolled.

1 (2) For recipients who graduated from high school between
2 January 1, 1997, and December 31, 1998, the amount of the annual scholarship
3 awarded to each recipient shall be the lesser of two thousand five hundred
4 dollars (\$2,500) or the annual tuition charged by the approved institution in
5 which the recipient is enrolled.

6 (3) For ~~new~~ recipients who graduated from high school after
7 December 31, 1998, the amount of the annual scholarship awarded to each
8 recipient shall be two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500).

9 (4) For recipients who graduated from high school after December
10 31, 2001, the amount of the annual scholarship awarded to each recipient
11 shall be graduated as follows:

12 (A) A recipient in his or her freshman year shall be
13 awarded an amount not the exceed two thousand dollars (\$2,000);

14 (B) A recipient in his or her sophomore year shall be
15 awarded an amount not the exceed two thousand two hundred and fifty dollars
16 (\$2,250);

17 (C) A recipient in his or her junior year shall be awarded
18 an amount not the exceed two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500); and

19 (D) A recipient in his or her senior year shall be awarded
20 an amount not the exceed three thousand dollars (\$3,000).

21
22 SECTION 3. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 82, Subchapter 10 is amended
23 to add an additional section to read as follows:

24 6-82-1008. Awards not funded.

25 (a)(1) Any applicant who graduated after December 31, 2001, who was
26 eligible to receive an academic challenge award, but did not receive the
27 award because of insufficient funding in the program, may be eligible to
28 receive a award to begin in a year other than the freshman year.

29 (2) Any student enrolled in an institution of higher education
30 must have achieved at least a 2.0 cumulative grade point average to be
31 eligible for a deferred award.

32 (b) The Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board and the
33 department shall promulgate regulations necessary for the implementation of
34 this section.

35 (c) Any award made under this section shall have funding priority as
36 follows:

1 (1) Awards shall first be made to individuals who made
2 application prior to the original deadline during the individual's senior
3 year in high school, received an award letter from the Department of Higher
4 Education, did not receive an award because of insufficient funding, and are
5 now eligible under this section;

6 (2) Awards shall be made second to the current year high school
7 graduates who are for the first time eligible to receive an academic
8 challenge award; and

9 (3) If sufficient funds are available after funding awards under
10 subdivision (c)(1) and (c)(2) of this section, awards may be made to an
11 individual who did not apply during his or her senior year in high school,
12 but would have been eligible if the individual would have applied prior that
13 year's deadline, and is now eligible under this section.

14
15 SECTION 4. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 82, Subchapter 10, is
16 amended by adding an additional section to read as follows:

17 6-82-1009. Priority for teaching commitment.

18 (a) During times of funding shortages under the Academic Challenge
19 Scholarship Program, the Department of Higher Education shall give a priority
20 to awards to applicants meeting all eligibility requirements under the
21 Academic Challenge Scholarship Program, who agree to accept a forgivable
22 loan, as set forth in section § 6-82-1009, in lieu of a scholarship, and who
23 agree to:

24 (1) Teach, as required under § 6-82-1010, in a subject matter
25 area designated by the Department of Education as having a critical shortage
26 of teachers; or

27 (2) Teach, as required under § 6-82-1010, in a geographical area
28 of the state designated by the Department of Education as having a critical
29 shortage of teachers.

30 (b) The Department of Higher Education shall make awards under this
31 chapter as follows:

32 (1) First, to applicants who agree to the provisions of § 6-82-
33 1009; and

34 (2) Second, to applicants eligible under § 6-82-1005(b).

35 (c) Forgivable loans awarded under this section shall be paid from
36 appropriations to the Academic Challenge Scholarship fund.

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2 SECTION 5. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 82, Subchapter 10, is
3 amended by adding an additional section to read as follows:

4 6-82-1010. Teaching requirements.

5 (a)(1) At the beginning of the first school year in which a recipient
6 of a forgivable loan under § 6-82-1009 is eligible for employment as a
7 licensed teacher, that recipient shall begin to render service as a licensed
8 teacher in a public school district in the state:

9 (A) In a subject matter area designated by the Department
10 of Education as having a critical shortage of teachers, if the recipient's
11 award was made under § 6-82-1009(a)(1); or

12 (B) In a geographical area of the state designated by the
13 Department of Education as having a critical shortage of teachers, if the
14 recipient's award was made under § 6-82-1009(a)(2).

15 (2)(A) Any recipient receiving a forgivable loan under § 6-82-
16 1009 who received four (4) annual awards, or the equivalent of four (4)
17 annual awards, shall render four (4) years' service as a licensed teacher.

18 (B) Any person who received a forgivable loan under § 6-
19 82-1009 in an amount less than four (4) annual awards, or the equivalent of
20 four (4) annual awards, shall render one (1) year's service as a licensed
21 teacher for each year that the person received a full-time student forgivable
22 loan, or for the number of academic hours equivalent to one (1) school year,
23 as determined by the Department of Higher Education, for which a part-time
24 student received a forgivable loan.

25 (b) Any person receiving a forgivable loan shall execute a note made
26 payable to the Department of Higher Education for an amount equal to the
27 scholarship award each semester that shall bear interest at a rate to be
28 determined by the Department of Higher Education and set forth in the note,
29 after completion of the program or immediately after termination of the
30 forgivable loan, whichever is earlier.

31 (c) Any person failing to complete a program of study which will
32 enable the person to become a licensed teacher shall begin repaying the note
33 according to the note's terms for the sum of all forgivable loan awards made
34 to that person, less the corresponding amount of any awards for which service
35 has been rendered.

36 (d)(1) Except as provided in subdivision (d)(1)(B), any person failing

1 to complete the teaching obligation, as required by this chapter, shall
2 become immediately liable to the Department of Higher Education for the sum
3 of all forgivable loan awards made to that person, less the corresponding
4 amount of any awards for which service has been rendered according to the
5 note's terms.

6 (A) The Department of Higher Education may defer payment
7 on the note if an employment position is not immediately available upon a
8 teacher's completion of licensure requirements or for other just cause as
9 determined by the Department of Education.

10 (B) After the period of deferral, the person shall begin
11 or resume teaching duties as required under this section or shall become
12 liable to the board under this section.

13 (e) If a claim for payment under this section is placed in the hands
14 of an attorney for collection, the obligor shall be liable for an additional
15 amount equal to a reasonable attorney's fee.

16 (f) The obligations made by the recipient of a forgivable loan under §
17 6-82-1009 and this section shall not be voidable by reason of the age of the
18 student at the time of receiving the forgivable loan award.

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20 /s/ Cleveland, et al
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