

1 State of Arkansas As Engrossed: S2/20/19 S2/26/19

2 92nd General Assembly

A Bill

3 Regular Session, 2019

SENATE BILL 343

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5 By: Senator J. Sturch

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For An Act To Be Entitled

8 AN ACT TO CREATE THE ARKANSAS CONCURRENT CHALLENGE
9 SCHOLARSHIP; TO PROVIDE FOR AN ADDITIONAL USE OF
10 EXCESS LOTTERY PROCEEDS TO FUND SCHOLARSHIPS FOR
11 CERTAIN STUDENTS WHO ARE ENROLLED IN ENDORSED
12 CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT COURSES OR CERTIFICATE
13 PROGRAMS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

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Subtitle

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TO CREATE THE ARKANSAS CONCURRENT
18 CHALLENGE SCHOLARSHIP.

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BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

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SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 85, is amended to add an
24 additional subchapter to read as follows:

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Subchapter 4 – Arkansas Concurrent Challenge Scholarship Program

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6-85-401. Creation.

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There is created the Arkansas Concurrent Challenge Scholarship Program.

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6-85-402. Definitions.

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As used in this subchapter:

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(1) “Approved institution of higher education” means an

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institution of higher education that:

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(A) Is approved by the Department of Higher Education to

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participate in the Arkansas Concurrent Challenge Scholarship Program;

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(B) Offers at least a fifty percent (50%) discount on the



1 tuition and mandatory fees of an endorsed concurrent enrollment course or
2 certificate program to a student who is enrolled in an endorsed concurrent
3 enrollment course or certificate program, unless other opportunities are
4 provided that lower the tuition and mandatory fees below fifty percent (50%);
5 and

6 (C) Is a:

7 (i) State-supported two-year or four-year college or
8 university; or

9 (ii) Private, nonprofit two-year or four-year
10 college or university that has its primary headquarters located in Arkansas
11 and that is eligible to receive Title IV federal student aid funds;

12 (2)(A) "Certificate program" means a program that is offered or
13 made available to a student by an approved institution of higher education
14 that leads to the obtainment of a certification or license.

15 (B) "Certificate program" does not include a program that
16 is operated or sponsored by a third party;

17 (3)(A) "Endorsed concurrent enrollment course" means the same
18 as defined in § 6-16-1202(2).

19 (B) "Endorsed concurrent enrollment course" does not
20 include a program that is operated or sponsored by a third party; and

21 (4) "Student" means a person who has junior or senior status
22 and who is enrolled at a:

23 (A) Public high school in Arkansas;

24 (B) Private high school in Arkansas; or

25 (C) Home school, as defined in § 6-15-501 et seq.

26
27 6-85-403. Eligibility.

28 (a) A student is eligible to receive an Arkansas Concurrent Challenge
29 Scholarship under this subchapter for an academic semester or academic year
30 during which the student is enrolled in an endorsed concurrent enrollment
31 course or certificate program if the student:

32 (1) Is an Arkansas resident or, if the student is less than
33 twenty-one (21) years of age, either the student or one (1) parent of the
34 student is an Arkansas resident; and

35 (2)(A) Submits a student success plan as described under § 6-15-
36 2911(b).

1 (B) The student success plan required under subdivision
2 (a)(3)(A) of this section for a student who is enrolled in an endorsed
3 concurrent enrollment course or certificate program shall:

4 (i) Be prepared in consultation with:

5 (a) School personnel, the student, and the
6 student's parent or legal guardian; or

7 (b) A college advisor; and

8 (ii) Include:

9 (a) An endorsed concurrent enrollment course
10 or certificate program that is relevant to the student's success plan; and

11 (b) Measures that ensure the successful
12 completion of the endorsed concurrent enrollment course or certificate
13 program in which the student is enrolled.

14 (b)(1) A student successfully completes an endorsed concurrent
15 enrollment course or a course taken towards the completion of a certificate
16 program under this subchapter if he or she completes the course or program
17 and receives a minimum letter grade of "C" or the equivalent.

18 (2)(A) A student who fails to successfully complete an endorsed
19 concurrent enrollment course or a course taken towards the completion of a
20 certificate program under this subchapter shall:

21 (i) Retain eligibility for a scholarship under this
22 subchapter; and

23 (ii) Enroll in only one (1) endorsed concurrent
24 enrollment course or course required for the completion of a certificate
25 program for the semester immediately following the semester in which the
26 student failed to successfully complete an endorsed concurrent enrollment
27 course or course taken towards the completion of a certificate program.

28 (B) However, if a student fails an endorsed concurrent
29 enrollment course or a course taken towards the completion of a certificate
30 program under this subchapter a second time, the student shall be ineligible
31 to reapply for a scholarship under this subchapter.

32 (c) A student whose enrollment in a vocational center is reimbursable
33 under § 6-51-305 is not eligible for a scholarship under this subchapter.

34
35 6-85-404. Funding.

36 (a) For an academic year, Arkansas Concurrent Challenge Scholarships

1 under this subchapter shall be funded with any funds remaining after the
2 Department of Higher Education allocates sufficient funding to award Arkansas
3 Workforce Challenge Scholarships under § 6-85-301 et seq., at a level
4 equivalent to the awards made in the previous academic year.

5 (b)(1) A scholarship under this subchapter shall not be awarded for an
6 academic year if:

7 (A) Less than two hundred fifty thousand dollars
8 (\$250,000) is available under subsection (a) of this section; or

9 (B) The department received a loan from the Scholarship
10 Shortfall Reserve Trust Account under § 23-115-802 for the Arkansas Academic
11 Challenge Scholarship Program – Part 2, § 6-85-201 et seq., for the previous
12 academic year.

13 (2) Any funds under subsection (a) of this section that are not
14 disbursed for scholarships under this subchapter shall be carried over to the
15 next academic year to be used for scholarships under this subchapter.

16
17 6-85-405. Distribution – Award amounts.

18 (a) If funds are available, the Department of Higher Education shall
19 award Arkansas Concurrent Challenge Scholarships to all students who meet the
20 requirements under this subchapter.

21 (b)(1) The department shall distribute scholarships from the funds
22 available in an equal amount to every approved institution of higher
23 education that has enrolled a student eligible to receive a scholarship under
24 this subchapter.

25 (2) The maximum scholarship award a student may receive in an
26 academic year shall be the lesser of:

27 (A)(i) Five hundred dollars (\$500).

28 (ii) A scholarship awarded to a student who is
29 eligible under § 6-85-403 shall be awarded in the amount of one hundred and
30 twenty-five dollars (\$125) for each endorsed concurrent enrollment credit
31 course or certificate program in which the eligible student is enrolled, up
32 to two (2) endorsed concurrent enrollment credit courses or certificate
33 programs per semester.

34 (B) The tuition and mandatory fees of the endorsed
35 concurrent credit course or certificate program.

36 (3) A scholarship granted under this section may be awarded in

1 addition to any funds received for the enrollment in an endorsed concurrent
2 enrollment course under § 6-16-1204(e)(3).

3 (4) Unless a student's high school or community-based program
4 provides financial assistance for the cost of tuition and mandatory fees for
5 an endorsed concurrent enrollment course or certificate program, the
6 remaining cost of tuition and mandatory fees for an endorsed concurrent
7 enrollment course or certificate program is the responsibility of the
8 eligible student who is enrolled in the endorsed concurrent enrollment course
9 or certificate program.

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11 6-85-406. Rules.

12 The Department of Higher Education shall promulgate rules to implement
13 this subchapter.

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15 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 23-115-801(b)(1), concerning the deposit of
16 lottery proceeds into the Arkansas Workforce Challenge Scholarship Program,
17 is amended to read as follows:

18 (b)(1)(A) On or before the fifteenth day of each month, the office
19 shall deposit the net proceeds from the lottery into one (1) or more trust
20 accounts at one (1) or more financial institutions.

21 (B)(i) The office shall establish ~~a trust account~~ accounts
22 for both the Arkansas Workforce Challenge Scholarship Program, § 6-85-301 et
23 seq., and the Arkansas Concurrent Challenge Scholarship Program, § 6-85-401
24 et seq., in a financial institution into which the office shall transfer:

25 (a) Excess funding returned to the office
26 under § 6-85-212(e)(2)(B)(i) from the previous academic year; and

27 (b) Net proceeds remaining from the previous
28 academic year after the office:

29 (1) Transfers under subdivision (c)(2)
30 of this section the funds requested by the Department of Higher Education;
31 and

32 (2) Deposits the amount necessary into
33 the Scholarship Shortfall Reserve Trust Account under § 23-115-802 to
34 maintain an amount equal to twenty million dollars (\$20,000,000).

35 (ii) The funds transferred by the office into ~~the~~
36 trust account accounts for the Arkansas Workforce Challenge Scholarship

1 Program, § 6-85-301 et seq., and the Arkansas Concurrent Challenge
2 Scholarship Program, § 6-85-401 et seq., established under subdivision
3 (b)(1)(B)(i) of this section shall be used for:

4 (a) Arkansas Workforce Challenge Scholarships;

5 ~~and~~

6 (b) Any management fees charged by the
7 financial institution to manage the trust ~~account~~ accounts for scholarship
8 award supplements; and

9 (c) Arkansas Concurrent Challenge
10 Scholarships.

11 (iii) Annually, the office shall transfer to the
12 Department of Higher Education the funds from the previous academic year, if
13 any, that were transferred by the office into the trust ~~account~~ accounts for
14 the Arkansas Workforce Challenge Scholarship Program, § 6-85-301 et seq., and
15 the Arkansas Concurrent Challenge Scholarship Program, § 6-85-401 et seq.,
16 under subdivision (b)(1)(B)(i) of this section for distribution of Arkansas
17 Workforce Challenge Scholarships and the Arkansas Concurrent Challenge
18 Scholarships.

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20 SECTION 3. Arkansas Code § 23-115-802(c), concerning the use of funds
21 in the Scholarship Shortfall Reserve Trust Account, is amended to read as
22 follows:

23 (c)(1) Except as provided in subdivision (c)(2) of this section, if
24 net proceeds in any year are not sufficient to meet the amount allocated for
25 higher education scholarships, the account may be drawn upon to meet the
26 deficiency.

27 (2) The account shall not be drawn upon to fund Arkansas
28 Workforce Challenge Scholarships under the Arkansas Workforce Challenge
29 Scholarship Program, § 6-85-301 et seq., or Arkansas Concurrent Challenge
30 Scholarships under the Arkansas Concurrent Challenge Scholarship Program, §
31 6-85-401 et seq.

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34 /s/J. Sturch

35 **APPROVED: 3/13/19**

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