

Act 279 of the 1989 Regular Session.

Act 279

SB133

By: Senator Nelson

"AN ACT TO AMEND ARKANSAS CODE OF 1987, TITLE 6, CHAPTER 82, BY ADDING A NEW SUBCHAPTER 7 TO ESTABLISH THE ARKANSAS LITERACY CORPS WHICH WILL PROVIDE PAYMENTS TO COLLEGE STUDENTS WHO ASSIST LOCAL LITERACY GROUPS AND TEACH ADULTS TO READ; TO DESIGNATE THE ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION TO ADMINISTER THE PROGRAM; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES."

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

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code of 1987, Title 6, Chapter 82 is hereby amended to add a new Subchapter 7 to read as follows:

"6-82-701. Purpose. One of the greatest problems facing Arkansans and the State of Arkansas is the large number of adults unable to read well enough to participate fully in a society and economy that demands literacy for individuals to function effectively in employment, participate as citizens, and continue to develop their personal knowledge and abilities. The purpose of this legislation is to address this problem directly by creating the Arkansas Literacy Corps which will train and employ college students to teach adults to read, assign those students to work with local adult education programs and local literacy groups, and pay students for hours spent working in the program.

6-82-702. Authorization. There is hereby established a program to be known as the "Arkansas Literacy Corps" to be administered by the Arkansas Department of Higher Education.

6-82-703. Program Description. (a) Sponsoring institutions, which shall be selected by the Arkansas Department of Higher Education, shall either directly or through cooperation with local literacy groups or adult education programs, select and train students to serve as tutors to adults who are working to attain or improve their literacy. If a sponsoring institution of higher education has more students participating in the Arkansas Literacy Corps than are needed to serve as tutors with adult literacy or adult education groups or agencies within a reasonable distance of the campus, the sponsoring institution may contract with one or more local school districts for Literacy Corps participants to serve as tutors or classroom aides in public school programs of compensatory education or reading instruction. The student tutors will be required to complete an appropriate credit or non-credit training program. The State Board of Higher Education shall annually establish the hourly rate of compensation for students participating in the program based on the anticipated available funding and the projected number of participants; however, the hourly rate of compensation shall not be less than five dollars (\$5.00) per hour.

(b) Development of systems for monitoring student training, tutoring, and eligibility for payment shall be the responsibility of each sponsoring institution within the program rules and regulations. The Arkansas Department of Higher Education shall require periodic reports from each sponsoring institution concerning these systems for monitoring student training, tutoring, and eligibility for payment and shall make payments to sponsoring institutions for costs of administering the program and student payments.

6-82-704. Institutional Eligibility. To be eligible for participation

in the Arkansas Literacy Corps as a sponsoring institution, an institution must be a public or private college or university in the State of Arkansas accredited by a certifying agency recognized by the United States Department of Education or give assurance that it has the potential for such accreditation and is making progress which, if continued, will result in the achievement of such accreditation. The institution must not discriminate in the admission of students on the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin.

6-82-705. Student Eligibility. To be eligible for employment in the Arkansas Literacy Corps, a student must:

(a) Be a resident of the State of Arkansas, as defined by the Arkansas Department of Higher Education, and a U.S. citizen or permanent resident alien,

(b) Be a full-time student at a sponsoring institution,

(c) Be either an undergraduate student who has completed at least twenty-four (24) college semester credit hours (or the equivalent), or a graduate student.

(d) Meet satisfactory progress requirements of the sponsoring institutions, and

(e) Meet such additional requirements consistent with the law and rules and regulations relating to this program which the sponsoring institution may impose.

6-82-706. Administration. The Arkansas Department of Higher Education shall administer the Arkansas Literacy Corps and shall have the authority to establish necessary rules, regulations, and procedures for the administration of the program. The Department will utilize an advisory council composed of representatives of adult literacy groups, institutions of higher education, state agencies involved in adult literacy activities and the general public. The advisory council will provide advice to the Department in the selection of sponsoring institutions, the establishment of rules, regulations, and procedures, and other matters as appropriate."

SECTION 2. All provisions of this act of a general and permanent nature are amendatory to the Arkansas Code of 1987 Annotated and the Arkansas Code Revision Commission shall incorporate the same in the Code.

SECTION 3. EMERGENCY. It is hereby found and determined that large numbers of adult Arkansans currently cannot read or cannot read well enough to participate fully in a society and economy that demands a functional level of literacy for its adult citizens. Therefore an emergency is declared to exist; and this Act being found necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health and safety shall be in full force and effect on July 1, 1989.