



Financial Aid

Arkansas Concurrent Challenge Scholarship Program

**Policy Statement**

These rules shall be known as the Arkansas Department of Education, Division of Higher Education Rules Governing the Arkansas Concurrent Challenge Scholarship Program. This policy addresses the student eligibility criteria, method for recipient selection, continuing eligibility requirements and procedures for making payments to an approved institution of higher education, and other administrative procedures necessary for operation of the program.

**Applicable Arkansas Code**

Act 456 of 2019

**Applicability**

This rule is applicable to students who are eligible for a scholarship under the Arkansas Concurrent Challenge Scholarship Program.

**Definitions**

- 1) “Approved institution of higher education” an institution of higher education that:
  - a. Is approved by the Division of Higher Education to participate in the Arkansas Concurrent Challenge Scholarship Program;
  - b. Offers at least a fifty percent (50%) discount on the tuition and mandatory fees of an endorsed concurrent enrollment course or certificate program to a student who is enrolled in an endorsed concurrent enrollment course or certificate program, unless other opportunities are provided that lower the tuition and mandatory fees below fifty percent (50%); and
  - c. Is a:
    - i. State-supported two-year or four-year college or university; or
    - ii. Private, nonprofit two-year or four-year college or university that has its primary headquarters located in Arkansas and that is eligible to receive Title IV federal student aid funds

- 2) “Eligible Course” means any endorsed concurrent enrollment course or Certificate Program.
- 3) “Certificate program” means a program that is offered or made available to a student by an approved institution of higher education that leads to the obtainment of a certification or license. This definition does not include a program operated or sponsored by a third party.
- 4) “Endorsed concurrent enrollment course” means a college-level course offered by an approved institution of higher education in Arkansas that upon completion would qualify for academic credit in both the approved institution of higher education and a public high school that:
  - a. Is in one (1) of the four (4) core areas of math, English, science, and social studies;
  - b. Meets the requirements of § 6-16-1204(b); and
  - c. Is listed in the Arkansas Course Transfer System of the Division of Higher Education;This definition does not include programs operated or sponsored by a third party;
- 5) “Student” means a person who has junior or senior status and who is enrolled at a:
  - a. Public high school in Arkansas;
  - b. Private high school in Arkansas; or
  - c. Home school, as defined in § 6-15-501 et seq.;
- 6) “Student success plan” means a plan developed by school personnel in collaboration with parents and the student that is reviewed annually . The plan shall, at a minimum:
  - a. Guide the student along pathways to graduation;
  - b. Address accelerated learning opportunities;
  - c. Address academic deficits and interventions; and
  - d. Include college and career planning components;
- 7) “Third Party” means a person or entity that does not receive disbursement directly from the Division for this program, including a subcontractor of the institution.

### Eligibility

- 1) A student is eligible to receive an Arkansas Concurrent Challenge Scholarship for an academic semester or academic year during which the student is enrolled in an endorsed concurrent enrollment course or certificate program if the student:
  - a. Is an Arkansas resident or, if the student is less than twenty-one (21) years of age, either the student or one (1) parent of the student is an Arkansas resident; and
  - b. Provides proof that a completed student success plan has been submitted to the student's high school or home school.
- 2) The student success plan for a student who is enrolled in an endorsed concurrent enrollment course or certificate program shall:
  - a. Be prepared in consultation with school personnel, the student, and the student's parent or legal guardian or a college advisor.
  - b. Include an endorsed concurrent enrollment course or certificate program that is

relevant to the student's success plan and include measures that ensure the successful completion of the endorsed concurrent enrollment course or certificate program in which the student is enrolled.

- c. A student whose enrollment in a vocational center is reimbursable under § 6-51-305 is not eligible for a scholarship under this program.
- d. Students must meet all established requirements for endorsed concurrent enrollment courses set by the Division of Higher Education.

**Continuing Eligibility**

- 1) A student is eligible to continue to receive the Arkansas Concurrent Challenge Scholarship if the student successfully completes an endorsed concurrent credit course or certificate program course and receives a minimum letter grade of "C" or the equivalent.
- 2) A student who fails to complete an endorsed concurrent credit course or certificate program course with a minimum letter grade of "C" or the equivalent may retain eligibility and enroll in only one (1) endorsed concurrent credit course or certificate program course for the semester immediately following the semester in which the student failed to successfully complete an endorsed concurrent credit course or certificate program course.
  - a. If a student fails to complete an endorsed concurrent credit course or certificate program course a second time, the student shall be ineligible to reapply or receive the scholarship again. This also applies to a student that drops out of an endorsed concurrent credit course or certificate program course before the end of the semester.

**Amount of Awards**

- 1) If funds are available, the Division of Higher Education shall award Arkansas Concurrent Challenge Scholarships to all students eligible for the scholarship for the fall and spring terms.
- 2) The maximum scholarship award a student may receive in an academic year shall be the lesser of:
  - a. Five hundred dollars (\$500)
    - i. Eligible students shall be awarded one-hundred and twenty-five dollars (\$125) for each eligible course the student is enrolled, up to two (2) eligible courses per semester; or
  - b. The actual tuition and mandatory fees cost to the student for up to two (2) eligible courses per semester.
- 3) A scholarship granted under this section may be awarded in addition to any funds received for the enrollment in an endorsed concurrent enrollment course under § 6-16-1204(e)(3).
- 4) Unless a student's high school or community-based program provides financial assistance for the cost of tuition and mandatory fees for an endorsed concurrent credit course or certificate program course, the remaining cost of tuition and mandatory fees for an endorsed concurrent enrollment

course or certificate program is the responsibility of the eligible student who is enrolled in the endorsed concurrent credit course or certificate program course.

- 5) The division shall distribute scholarships from the funds available in an equal amount to every approved institution of higher education that has enrolled a student eligible to receive this scholarship.

**Institutional Responsibilities.**

Approved institution of higher education responsibilities.

1. Administrative agreement.

The chief executive officer of the approved institution of higher education is responsible for appointing one (1) representative from the financial aid office to act as administrator of the Arkansas Concurrent Challenge Scholarship Program and to receive all communications, forms, etc. This representative is responsible for verification, data, and compliance with these rules. The approved institution of higher education shall comply with all rules order to maintain the status of an approved institution of higher education.

2. Disbursement records.

The approved institution of higher education shall maintain information on the student indicating disbursement of scholarship funds.

3. Verification.

The approved institution of higher education shall provide certification of enrollment in courses that will meet satisfactory academic progress standards, as of the eleventh day of classes, by completing a Verification Roster each semester after registration. The Verification Roster is an alphabetical listing by an approved institution of higher education of all students receiving the award for a given academic term. The certifying official is responsible for completing the verification rosters each semester .

4. Deadlines for disbursement of funds.

The deadline for disbursement of funds is no later than ten (10) days after receipt of funds. Any outstanding funds not disbursed by this date must be returned to the division. For those students whose applications are received by the division too late to allow disbursement by this dates, disbursement will be made within ten (10) working days of receipt of the verification roster and electronic transfer of funds to the approved institution of higher education.

5. Due diligence.

The approved institution of higher education will exercise due diligence in providing

complete, accurate, and timely information as requested by the division on any scholarship recipient or former scholarship recipient. In addition, the approved institution of higher education will exercise due diligence in complying with these rules . The division may periodically review the approved institution of higher education's records concerning this scholarship program to ensure the comply with due diligence requirements.

6. Course eligibility.

The approved institution of higher education is responsible for verifying that the endorsed concurrent credit courses and certificate program courses meet the requirements set in Arkansas Code § 6-16-1202 and policies of the division.

High school and home school responsibilities

1. The high school or home school shall provide certification of eligibility for a student to enroll in an endorsed concurrent enrollment course or certificate program . A high school or home school shall verify the completion of the student's student success plan before certifying that a student is eligible for the scholarship.

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

4

5 By: Senator J. Sturch

6

7

## 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.

14

15

16

## Subtitle

17

TO CREATE THE ARKANSAS CONCURRENT  
18 CHALLENGE SCHOLARSHIP.

19

20

21

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

22

23

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

25

Subchapter 4 – Arkansas Concurrent Challenge Scholarship Program

26

27

6-85-401. Creation.

28

There is created the Arkansas Concurrent Challenge Scholarship Program.

29

30

6-85-402. Definitions.

31

As used in this subchapter:

32

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

34

(A) Is approved by the Department of Higher Education to  
35 participate in the Arkansas Concurrent Challenge Scholarship Program;

36

(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                   6-85-404. Funding.

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



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.

10  
11 6-85-406. Rules.

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

14  
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.

19  
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.

32  
33  
34 /s/J. Sturch

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

36