

1 State of Arkansas *As Engrossed: H2/20/23 H4/5/23*

2 94th General Assembly

# A Bill

3 Regular Session, 2023

HOUSE BILL 1417

4

5 By: Representative Lundstrum

6 *By: Senator J. English*

7

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## For An Act To Be Entitled

9

*AN ACT TO AMEND THE ARKANSAS ACADEMIC CHALLENGE*

10

*SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM TO INCLUDE VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL*

11

*SCHOOLS AND TECHNICAL INSTITUTES AS APPROVED*

12

*INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION; TO ENSURE THAT*

13

*CERTAIN FUNDS FROM THE HIGHER EDUCATION GRANTS FUND*

14

*ACCOUNT ARE EXPENDED ON STUDENTS ENROLLED IN A*

15

*TECHNICAL INSTITUTE OR A VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL SCHOOL;*

16

*AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.*

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## Subtitle

20

*TO AMEND THE ARKANSAS ACADEMIC CHALLENGE*

21

*SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM CONCERNING APPROVED*

22

*INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION; AND*

23

*CONCERNING THE HIGHER EDUCATION GRANTS*

24

*FUND ACCOUNT.*

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26

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

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29 *SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 6-85-204(3), concerning the definition of*  
30 *an "approved institution of higher education" under the Arkansas Academic*  
31 *Challenge Scholarship Program, is amended to read as follows:*

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*(3)(A) "Approved institution of higher education" means an*

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*institution of higher education approved by the division to participate in*

34

*the Arkansas Academic Challenge Scholarship Program and that is:*

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*~~(A)(i)~~ A state-supported two-year or four-year*

36

*college or university;*



1 ~~(B)(ii)~~ A private, nonprofit two-year or four-year  
2 college or university with its primary headquarters located in Arkansas that  
3 is eligible to receive Title IV federal student aid funds; ~~or~~

4 ~~(C)(iii)~~ An approved school of nursing, subject to  
5 the provisions of § 6-85-213(c);

6 (iv)(a) A public or private vocational-technical  
7 school.

8 (b) A public or private vocational-technical  
9 school shall be bonded and insured; or

10 (v)(a) A public or private technical institute.

11 (b) A public or private technical institute  
12 shall be bonded and insured.

13 (B) An approved institution of higher education that is a  
14 private, nonprofit two-year or four-year college or university shall be  
15 eligible to receive Title IV federal student aid funds;

16  
17 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 85, Subchapter 2, is amended  
18 to add an additional section to read as follows:

19 6-85-222. Vocational-technical school and technical institute  
20 eligibility.

21 (a) An applicant for a scholarship under this subchapter who has  
22 applied to or is currently enrolled in a public or private vocational-  
23 technical school or a public or private technical institute shall, in  
24 addition to the relevant eligibility requirements under this subchapter, be  
25 accepted for admission in a program of study that leads to an associate  
26 degree or a certificate program in one (1) of the following high-demand  
27 fields:

28 (1) Industry;

29 (2) Health care; or

30 (3) Information technology.

31 (b) The Division of Higher Education shall file annually by November 1  
32 a report to the Legislative Council in the manner and format that the  
33 Legislative Council requires regarding:

34 (1) All state-supported student financial assistance awarded by  
35 the division under this subchapter to students enrolled in vocational-  
36 technical schools and technical institutes; and

1                    (2) The permissible high-demand fields under subsection (a) of  
2 this section, including without limitation recommendations for adding or  
3 removing a high-demand field that is considered eligible for scholarship  
4 purposes under subsection (a) of this section.

5  
6                    SECTION 3. Arkansas Code § 19-5-302(11), concerning the Higher  
7 Education Grants Fund Account of the State General Government Fund, is  
8 amended to read as follows:

9                    (11) HIGHER EDUCATION GRANTS FUND ACCOUNT.

10                    (A) The Higher Education Grants Fund Account shall be used for  
11 the:

12                                    (i) State's contribution for tuition support for Arkansas  
13 students attending out-of-state schools in dentistry, optometry, veterinary,  
14 podiatry, osteopathy, and chiropractic; and

15                                    (ii)(a) Disbursement of funds for the Arkansas Academic  
16 Challenge Scholarship Program, and other various scholarship, loan, and grant  
17 programs as authorized by law and administered by the Division of Higher  
18 Education or other state agencies made disbursing agents by the General  
19 Assembly from the Higher Education Grants Fund Account.

20                                    (b) Disbursement of additional funds allocated for  
21 the Arkansas Academic Challenge Scholarship Program under this subdivision  
22 (11)(A)(ii) shall account for the distribution of up to two million dollars  
23 (\$2,000,000) by the Division of Higher Education on behalf of students who  
24 are enrolled in a technical institute or a vocational-technical institute.

25                    (B) The Higher Education Grants Fund Account shall consist of  
26 transfers from the Private Career School Student Protection Trust Fund under  
27 § 6-51-607 and those general revenues and any other funds as may be provided  
28 by law;

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30                                    /s/Lundstrum

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33                                    APPROVED: 4/11/23