

State of Arkansas

77th General Assembly

Regular Session, 1989

A Bill

HOUSE BILL

1224

By: Representatives Thicksten, Stephens, Cabe, Schexnayder,  
Arnold, Pollan, Northcutt, and Bryan

For An Act To Be Entitled

"AN ACT TO ENABLE ANY PUPIL IN THE ELEVENTH OR TWELFTH GRADE TO ENROLL IN CERTAIN APPROVED COURSES AT A STATE SUPPORTED COLLEGE OR COMMUNITY COLLEGE AND, UPON SATISFACTORY COMPLETION OF THE COURSEWORK, RECEIVE CREDIT TOWARD A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA FOR THE COLLEGE OR COMMUNITY COLLEGE COURSEWORK; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES."

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

SECTION 1. POPULAR TITLE. This section may be cited as the "Post-Secondary Enrollment Options Act."

SECTION 2. LEGISLATIVE INTENT AND PURPOSE. The purpose of this act is to promote rigorous academic pursuits and to provide a wider variety of options to high school students by encouraging and enabling secondary students to enroll full-time or part-time in nonsectarian courses or programs in eligible postsecondary institutions, as defined in Section 3 of this Chapter.

SECTION 3. ELIGIBLE POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTIONS. For purposes of this section, an "eligible institution" means a public two-year or four-year college or university located in Arkansas. "Course" means a course or program.

SECTION 4. AUTHORIZATION: NOTIFICATION. (a) Notwithstanding any other law to the contrary, an 11th or 12th grade student may apply to an eligible institution, as defined in Section 3, to enroll in nonsectarian courses offered at the postsecondary institution. If an institution accepts a secondary student for enrollment under this section, the institution shall

send written notice to the student, the student's school district, and the Director of the Department of Education within ten days of acceptance. The notice shall indicate the course and hours of enrollment of the student. If the student enrolls in a course for postsecondary credit, the institution shall notify the student about payment in the customary manner used by the institution.

(b) (1) To the extent possible, the school district shall provide counseling services to students and their parents or guardian before the students enroll in courses under this section to ensure that the students and their parents or guardian are fully aware of the risks and possible consequences of enrolling in postsecondary courses. The district shall provide information on the program including who may enroll, what institutions and courses are eligible for participation, the decision-making process for granting academic credits, financial arrangements for tuition, books and materials, eligibility criteria for transportation aid, available support services, the need to arrange an appropriate schedule, consequences of failing or not completing a course in which the student enrolls, the effect of enrolling in this program on the student's ability to complete the required high school graduation requirements, and the academic and social responsibilities that must be assumed by the students and their parents or guardian. The person providing counseling shall encourage students and their parents or guardian to also use available counseling services at the postsecondary institutions before the quarter or semester of enrollment to ensure that anticipated plans are appropriate.

(2) Prior to enrolling in a course, the student and the student's parents or guardian must sign a form that must be provided by the districts and may be obtained from a postsecondary institution stating that they have received the information specified in this section and that they understand the responsibilities that must be assumed in enrolling in this program. The Department of Education shall develop appropriate forms and counseling guidelines.

(c) By March 1 of each year, each school district shall provide general information about the program to all students in grades 10 and 11.

SECTION 5. LIMIT ON PARTICIPATION. A student who first enrolls in grade 11 may not enroll in postsecondary courses under this section for secon-

dary credit for more than the equivalent of two academic years. A student who first enrolls in grade 12 may not enroll in postsecondary courses under this section for secondary credit for more than the equivalent of one academic year. If a student in grade 11 or 12 first enrolls in a postsecondary course for secondary credit during the school year, the time of participation shall be reduced proportionately.

SECTION 6. ENROLLMENT PRIORITY. A postsecondary institution shall give priority to its postsecondary students when enrolling 11th and 12th grade students in courses for secondary credit. Once a student has been enrolled in a postsecondary course under this section, the student shall not be displaced by another student.

SECTION 7. CREDITS. A student may enroll in a course under this section for secondary credit or postsecondary credit, or for both simultaneously. At the time a student enrolls in a course, the student shall designate whether the course is for secondary or postsecondary credit or both. A student taking several courses may designate some for secondary credit and some for postsecondary credit and some for both.

A school district shall grant academic credit to a student enrolled in a course for secondary credit if the student successfully completes the course. A school district shall also grant academic credit to a student enrolled in a course for postsecondary credit if secondary credit is requested by a student. If there is a dispute between the district and the student regarding the number of credits granted for a particular course, the student may appeal the school board's decision to the State Board of Education. The State Board's decision regarding the number of credits shall be final.

The credits granted to a student shall be counted toward the graduation requirements and subject area requirements of the school districts. Evidence of successful completion of each course and secondary credits granted shall be included in the student's secondary school records. Upon the request of a student, the student's secondary school record shall also include evidence of successful completion and credits granted for a course taken for postsecondary credit. In either case, the record shall indicate that the credits were earned at a postsecondary institution.

If a student enrolls in a postsecondary institution after leaving

secondary school, the postsecondary institution shall award postsecondary credit for any course successfully completed for either secondary or postsecondary credit at that institution. Other postsecondary institutions may award, after a student leaves secondary school, postsecondary credit for any courses successfully completed under this section. An institution may not charge a student for the award of credit.

SECTION 8. FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS. (a) Each school district which has one or more students enrolled in a course for secondary credit pursuant to this Act shall pay tuition reimbursement to the postsecondary institutions for such course(s). The amount of tuition reimbursement per student shall equal the lesser of:

(1) the actual costs of tuition, textbooks, materials, and fees directly related to the course or program taken by the secondary student; or

(2) an amount calculated by multiplying the district's state minimum foundation aid allocation per weighted average daily membership by the percentage of the student's total credits being provided by the postsecondary institution.

(b) A district shall not be required to pay any tuition reimbursement or other costs of a course taken for postsecondary credit only.

(c) A student enrolled in a postsecondary course for secondary credit only is not eligible for any state student financial aid.

SECTION 9. TRANSPORTATION. A parent or guardian of a student enrolled in a course for secondary credit may apply to the student's resident district for reimbursement for transporting the student between the secondary school in which the student is enrolled and the postsecondary institution that the student attends, provided that the postsecondary institution is not more than fifty (50) miles from the parent or guardian's home. The State Board of Education shall establish guidelines for providing state aid to districts to reimburse the parent or guardian for the necessary transportation costs, which may include a financial need factor.

SECTION 10. LIMIT TO STATE OBLIGATION. The provisions of Sections 8 and 9 shall not apply for any courses in which a student is enrolled while also being enrolled full time in that student's district or while being

enrolled in a comparable or equivalent course in the school district where the student resides.

SECTION 11. 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.