

Stricken language would be deleted from present law. Underlined language would be added to present law.

1 State of Arkansas  
2 81st General Assembly  
3 Regular Session, 1997  
4  
5 By: Senator Todd

# A Bill

SENATE BILL 453

## For An Act To Be Entitled

9 "AN ACT AMENDING VARIOUS SECTIONS OF TITLE 6 OF THE  
10 ARKANSAS CODE ANNOTATED TO PROVIDE THAT THERE SHALL BE ONE  
11 CORE CURRICULUM IN ARKANSAS PUBLIC SCHOOLS; AND FOR OTHER  
12 PURPOSES."

## Subtitle

13  
14 "AMENDING VARIOUS SECTIONS OF THE  
15 ARKANSAS CODE ANNOTATED TO PROVIDE THAT  
16 THERE SHALL BE ONE CORE CURRICULUM IN  
17 ARKANSAS PUBLIC SCHOOLS."

18  
19  
20 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

21  
22 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Annotated 6-15-1101 is amended to read as  
23 follows:

24 "6-15-1101. Legislative findings.

25 (a) The General Assembly hereby recognizes and acknowledges that in  
26 recent years a high school diploma has lost credibility as a warranty that the  
27 recipient has the basic knowledge and skills necessary for either an entry-  
28 level job or for postsecondary education. The General Assembly further  
29 recognizes that the State Board of Education, the State Department of  
30 Education, and local school districts have worked diligently to establish and  
31 implement a ~~college preparatory~~ core curriculum ~~and a technical preparation~~  
32 ~~core curriculum~~ in Arkansas secondary schools. Students who complete ~~either~~  
33 the core curriculum with a satisfactory grade point average should receive  
34 recognition for both perseverance and a job well done. It is the purpose of  
35 this legislation to both further that recognition and to increase the  
36 confidence of Arkansans in the value of diplomas awarded by the state's public

1 schools.

2 (b) Beginning with the 1994-95 school year, a school district shall  
3 attach a seal, stamp, or other symbol to transcripts and diplomas awarded to  
4 high school students who have completed ~~either the college preparatory the~~  
5 ~~core curriculum or the technical preparation core curriculum~~ with a minimum  
6 grade point average of 2.75 on a 4.0-point scale.

7 (c) The State Board of Education is authorized to promulgate rules and  
8 regulations for the implementation of this section."

9

10 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code Annotated 6-18-101 is amended to read as  
11 follows:

12 "6-18-101. Qualifications for valedictorian and salutatorian.

13 (a)(1) Only a student who has successfully completed a minimum core of  
14 high school courses ~~recommended for preparation for postsecondary education or~~  
15 ~~a more rigorous program of vocational study~~ shall be eligible for the honor of  
16 serving as a valedictorian or salutatorian of his or her graduating class.

17 (2) Only a student who has successfully completed the minimum  
18 core of high school courses ~~recommended for preparation for postsecondary~~  
19 ~~education or a more rigorous program of vocational study~~ with a minimum grade  
20 point established by the school district or its equivalent shall be eligible  
21 for distinction as an honor graduate of a senior class in a high school in  
22 this state.

23 (b)~~(1)~~ For the purpose of meeting the requirements of subsection (a) of  
24 this section, the students must complete the minimum core of courses  
25 recommended by the State Board of Higher Education and the State Board of  
26 Education pursuant to § 6-61-217 enlisted during the period of his enrollment  
27 in high school.

28 ~~(2) The State Board of Education, in consultation with the State~~  
29 ~~Board of Higher Education and the Vocational and Technical Education Division~~  
30 ~~of the Department of Education, shall establish the requirements for a minimum~~  
31 ~~core of high school courses recommended for postsecondary technical~~  
32 ~~preparation.~~

33 (c) Only a student who is enrolled in a course of study containing the  
34 minimum core of high school courses recommended ~~for preparation for~~  
35 ~~postsecondary education as set forth~~ by the State Board of Higher Education  
36 and the State Board of Education pursuant to § 6-61-217, ~~or the technical~~

1 ~~preparation program as set forth by the State Board of Education in~~  
 2 ~~consultation with the State Board of Higher Education and the Vocational and~~  
 3 ~~Technical Education Division of the Department of Education,~~ shall be eligible  
 4 for membership in the National Honor Society or any equivalent academic honor  
 5 society.

6 (d) A student who is a member of any academic honor society on August  
 7 13, 1993, shall be exempt from the provisions of subsection (c) of this  
 8 section."

9

10 SECTION 3. Arkansas Code Annotated § 6-60-208 is amended to read as  
 11 follows:

12 "6-60-208. Requirements.

13 (a) Beginning with the 1997-1998 academic year, any student who  
 14 graduates from a high school after May 1, 1997, must have successfully  
 15 completed the ~~college preparatory~~ core curriculum, recommended by the State  
 16 Board of Higher Education after consultation with the State Board of Education  
 17 and pursuant to § 6-61-217, ~~or the technical preparatory core curriculum~~  
 18 ~~established by the State Board of Education pursuant to § 6-18-101,~~ with a  
 19 minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale, to be eligible  
 20 for unconditional admission to an associate of arts or a bachelor's degree  
 21 program in a public four-year institution of higher education.

22 (b) Subject to subsection (c) of this section, beginning with the 1997-  
 23 1998 academic year, any student who graduates from a high school after May 1,  
 24 1997, must have successfully completed the ~~college preparatory~~ core  
 25 curriculum, recommended by the State Board of Higher Education after  
 26 consultation with the State Board of Education and pursuant to § 6-61-217, ~~or~~  
 27 ~~the technical preparatory core curriculum established by the State Board of~~  
 28 ~~Education pursuant to § 6-18-101,~~ to enroll in any certificate, diploma, or  
 29 degree program in any public two-year institution of higher education.

30 (c)(1) The colleges and universities shall develop standards for  
 31 collegiate admissions based on the mission of each institution and establish a  
 32 conditional collegiate admission process for each institution, subject to the  
 33 recommendations of the State Board of Higher Education. The colleges and  
 34 universities are hereby directed to establish standards for conditional  
 35 admission for students who have not completed the ~~college preparatory~~ core  
 36 curriculum ~~or the technical preparatory core curriculum,~~ subject to the

1 recommendations of the State Board of Higher Education. At a minimum, these  
2 conditional admissions standards shall require the following:

3 (A) For a student seeking an associate of arts degree or a  
4 baccalaureate degree and who failed to successfully complete the ~~college~~  
5 ~~preparatory core curriculum or the technical preparatory core curriculum~~,  
6 completion of twelve (12) hours of core academic courses and any necessary  
7 remedial courses with a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale.

8 (B) For a student seeking a diploma, a technical  
9 certificate, or an associate of applied science degree and who failed to  
10 successfully complete the ~~college preparatory core curriculum or the technical~~  
11 ~~preparatory core curriculum~~, completion of six (6) hours of core academic  
12 courses, six (6) hours of technical courses required for the diploma,  
13 technical certificate, or associate of applied science degree, and any  
14 necessary remedial courses with a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 on a  
15 4.0 scale.

16 (2) In the development of the conditional admission standards,  
17 special attention shall be given to nontraditional students, including those  
18 who are home-schooled or who attended private secondary schools.

19 (3)(A) Conditional admission standards should appropriately  
20 reflect the mission of the institution and shall be implemented by the  
21 institutions as a condition for receiving state funds.

22 (B) If the State Board of Higher Education does not approve  
23 the conditional collegiate admission standards and process for an institution,  
24 no state funds shall be used to subsidize or pay for any portion of the cost  
25 associated with the conditional students.

26 (d) The admissions criteria set forth in this section shall not apply  
27 to those individuals who graduate from a high school prior to May 1, 1997.

28 (e) Nothing in this section shall prevent an institution of higher  
29 education from setting higher admissions standards for enrolling freshmen."  
30

31 SECTION 4. Arkansas Code Annotated § 6-82-1001 is amended to read as  
32 follows:

33 "6-82-1001. Legislative findings and declarations of public necessity.

34 The General Assembly hereby recognizes that taking the proper coursework  
35 in high school is essential for success in college. Arkansas high school  
36 students who complete the recommended ~~precollegiate or technical preparation~~

1 core curriculum score significantly higher on standardized preadmissions tests  
 2 and are more likely to be successful in college. Because the State of  
 3 Arkansas also benefits from the academic success of well-prepared college  
 4 students, there is hereby established the Arkansas Academic Challenge  
 5 Scholarship Program, a guaranteed college scholarship plan to promote academic  
 6 achievement and encourage academically prepared Arkansas high school graduates  
 7 to enroll in the state's colleges and universities."

8

9 SECTION 5. Arkansas Code Annotated § 6-82-1005 is amended to read as  
 10 follows:

11 "6-82-1005. Eligibility.

12 (a) Eligibility for the Arkansas Academic Challenge Scholarship Program  
 13 shall be based on the criteria set forth in this section as well as program  
 14 rules and regulations adopted pursuant to this subchapter by the Department of  
 15 Higher Education.

16 (b)(1) A student shall be eligible for an award from this program if he  
 17 or she meets all of these criteria:

18 (A) The recipient shall have graduated from an Arkansas  
 19 high school on or after March 5, 1991, and within twenty-four (24) months of  
 20 enrolling as a full-time first-time freshman at an approved institution of  
 21 higher education; and

22 (B) The recipient shall have been a resident of the State  
 23 of Arkansas for at least twelve (12) months prior to graduation from an  
 24 Arkansas high school, and the recipient's parent or parents or guardian or  
 25 guardians shall have maintained Arkansas residency for the same period of  
 26 time; and

27 (C) The recipient must be a citizen of the United States or  
 28 be a permanent resident alien; and

29 (D) The recipient must be accepted for admission at an  
 30 approved institution of higher education as a full-time first-time freshman,  
 31 as defined by the Department of Higher Education, and must enroll in an  
 32 approved institution within twenty-four (24) months of high school graduation;  
 33 and

34 (E) The recipient must have successfully completed the  
 35 ~~precollegiate or technical preparation~~ core curriculum established by the  
 36 State Board of Education and State Board of Higher Education pursuant to §§ 6-

1 61-111, 6-61-217, and 6-61-218, ~~and 6-18-101(b)(2).~~ For the purposes of this  
2 ~~section, "the technical preparation core curriculum" shall refer to those~~  
3 ~~courses reviewed by a peer review committee composed of high school and~~  
4 ~~college faculty in the appropriate disciplines and equivalent to similar~~  
5 ~~courses in the precollegiate core curriculum.~~

6 (2) Further, the recipient must satisfy these criteria:

7 (A) The recipient must have achieved a grade point average  
8 of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale in the set of core curriculum courses; and

9 (B) The recipient must score nineteen (19) or above on the  
10 American College Test composite, or the equivalent as defined by the  
11 Department of Higher Education.

12 (3) The student must demonstrate financial need as defined by the  
13 Department of Higher Education. In calculating student financial need for  
14 applicants who graduate from an Arkansas high school after May 1, 1991, the  
15 following criteria shall be used:

16 (A) An applicant whose family includes one (1)  
17 unemancipated child under the age of twenty-one (21) shall have average family  
18 adjusted gross income over the previous two (2) years not exceeding thirty-  
19 five thousand dollars (\$35,000) per year at the time of application to the  
20 program. If the applicant is an adopted child who was at least twelve (12)  
21 years of age at the time of adoption, and the applicant's family includes one  
22 (1) unemancipated adopted child under twenty-one (21) years of age, the  
23 adoptive family's average adjusted gross income for the previous two (2) years  
24 shall not exceed forty thousand dollars (\$40,000) per year.

25 (B) An applicant whose family includes two (2)  
26 unemancipated children under the age of twenty-one (21) shall have average  
27 family adjusted gross income over the previous two (2) years not exceeding  
28 forty thousand dollars (\$40,000) per year at the time of application to the  
29 program. If the applicant is an adopted child who was at least twelve (12)  
30 years of age at the time of adoption, and the applicant's family includes two  
31 (2) unemancipated adopted children under twenty-one (21) years of age, the  
32 adoptive family's average adjusted gross income for the previous two (2) years  
33 shall not exceed fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) per year.

34 (C) An applicant whose family includes three (3) or more  
35 unemancipated children under the age of twenty-one (21) shall have average  
36 family adjusted gross income over the previous two (2) years not exceeding

1 forty-five thousand dollars (\$45,000) per year at the time of application to  
2 the program, plus, for families with more than three (3) unemancipated  
3 children under the age of twenty-one (21), an additional five thousand dollars  
4 (\$5,000) per year for each additional child. If the applicant is an adopted  
5 child who was at least twelve (12) years of age at the time of adoption, and  
6 the applicant's family includes three (3) unemancipated adopted children under  
7 twenty-one (21) years of age, the adoptive family's average adjusted gross  
8 income for the previous two (2) years shall not exceed sixty thousand dollars  
9 (\$60,000) per year, plus, for families with more than three (3) unemancipated  
10 adopted children under the age of twenty-one (21), an additional ten thousand  
11 dollars (\$10,000) per year for each additional child.

12 (D) Any applicant whose family includes more than one (1)  
13 unemancipated child under the age of twenty-one (21) enrolled full time at an  
14 approved institution of higher education shall be entitled to an additional  
15 ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) of adjusted gross income when the Department of  
16 Higher Education calculates financial need.

17 (c) The Department of Higher Education is authorized to develop  
18 selection criteria through program rules and regulations which combine an  
19 applicant's American College Test or equivalent score and grade point average  
20 in the ~~precollegiate or technical preparation~~ core curriculum into a selection  
21 index. Notwithstanding the provisions of subdivisions (b)(2)(A) and (B) of  
22 this section, this selection index shall be employed as an alternative  
23 selection process for applicants who achieve a grade point average above 2.5  
24 on a 4.0 scale in the set of ~~precollegiate or technical preparation~~ core  
25 curriculum courses defined in subdivision (b)(1)(E) of this section, or for  
26 applicants who have an American College Test composite or equivalent score  
27 greater than nineteen (19).

28 (d) The required grade point average in the set of ~~precollegiate or~~  
29 ~~technical preparation~~ core curriculum courses defined in subdivision (b)(1)(E)  
30 shall be 3.0 on a 4.0 scale, unless it is determined by the Department of  
31 Higher Education, based on review and evaluation of the program's operation in  
32 1991-1993, that this change would unduly reduce the number of low-income or  
33 disadvantaged students who would otherwise be eligible for the program.

34 (e) Students who meet the provisions of subdivisions (b)(1)(A)-(C), but  
35 who have not completed the ~~precollegiate or technical preparation~~ core  
36 curriculum defined in subdivision (b)(1)(E) by the end of the senior year of

1 high school, shall have the grace period of twenty-four (24) months,  
2 established for this purpose in subdivision (b)(1)(A) and (D), in which to  
3 make up any course or American College Test score deficiencies required for  
4 program eligibility.

5 (f) The State Board of Higher Education shall have the authority to  
6 adjust these financial need family income requirements. Other financial need  
7 criteria necessary for the selection of recipients, including those defined as  
8 emancipated or independent by federal student aid regulations, shall be  
9 established through rules and regulations issued by the Department of Higher  
10 Education."

11

12 SECTION 6. All provisions of this act of a general and permanent nature  
13 are amendatory to the Arkansas Code of 1987 Annotated and the Arkansas Code  
14 Revision Commission shall incorporate the same in the Code.

15

16 SECTION 7. If any provision of this act or the application thereof to  
17 any person or circumstance is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect  
18 other provisions or applications of the act which can be given effect without  
19 the invalid provision or application, and to this end the provisions of this  
20 act are declared to be severable.

21

22 SECTION 8. All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this act are  
23 hereby repealed.

24

25

26

27

28

29

30

31

32

33

34

35