

**Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to the law as it existed prior to this session of the General Assembly.**

1 State of Arkansas  
2 83rd General Assembly  
3 Regular Session, 2001

# A Bill

HOUSE BILL 2324

4  
5 By: Representative Schall  
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## For An Act To Be Entitled

9 AN ACT TO AMEND THE ARKANSAS GOVERNOR' S SCHOLARS  
10 PROGRAM; TO CHANGE THE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS;  
11 TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF APPLICANTS; TO LOWER THE  
12 AMOUNT OF THE AWARD; TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY; AND  
13 FOR OTHER PURPOSES.  
14

## Subtitle

15 AN ACT TO AMEND THE ARKANSAS GOVERNOR' S  
16 SCHOLARS PROGRAM; TO CHANGE THE  
17 ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS; TO REDUCE THE  
18 NUMBER OF APPLICANTS; AND TO LOWER THE  
19 AMOUNT OF THE AWARD.  
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22

23 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:  
24

25 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code 6-82-301 is amended to read as follows:

26 6-82-301. Legislative determinations.

27 The General Assembly recognizes that outstanding students are an  
28 essential ingredient for the economic and social benefit of the State of  
29 Arkansas. Benefits accrue to the state when a majority of National Merit  
30 Scholars, National Achievement Scholars, and superior students attend  
31 Arkansas institutions of higher learning and remain in the state.  
32

33 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code 6-82-302 is amended to read as follows:

34 6-82-302. Definitions.

35 As used in this subchapter, unless the context otherwise requires:

36 (1) "Approved institution" means a public or private college or

1 university:

2 (A) Dedicated to educational purposes, located in  
3 Arkansas, or located out of state and educating Arkansas residents in  
4 dentistry, optometry, veterinary medicine, podiatry, chiropractic, or  
5 osteopathy under agreement with the Board of Control for Southern Regional  
6 Education, accredited by an accrediting agency certified and recognized by  
7 the United States Department of Education or the Division of Agency  
8 Evaluation and Institutional Accreditation, or a school giving satisfactory  
9 assurance that it has the potential for accreditation and is making progress  
10 which, if continued, will result in its achieving accreditation;

11 (B) Which does not discriminate in the admission of  
12 students on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin; and

13 (C) Which subscribes to the principle of academic freedom;

14 (2) "Department" means the Department of Higher Education;

15 (3) "Full-time student" means a resident of Arkansas who is in  
16 attendance at an approved private or public institution and who is enrolled  
17 in at least twelve (12) ~~semester hours~~ credit hours the first semester and  
18 fifteen (15) hours thereafter; or other reasonable academic equivalent as  
19 defined by the department;

20 (4) "Undergraduate student" means an individual who is enrolled  
21 in a postsecondary educational program which leads to or is directly  
22 creditable toward the individual's first baccalaureate degree;

23 (5) "Eligible student" means a resident of the State of Arkansas  
24 as defined by the Department of Higher Education who is eligible for  
25 admission as a full-time student and who declares an intent to matriculate in  
26 an approved institution in Arkansas;

27 (6) "Scholarship" means an award to an eligible student for  
28 matriculation in an approved institution in the State of Arkansas;

29 (7) "Competitive examination" means a standardized examination  
30 measuring achievement which is administered annually on a specified date and  
31 at a specified location and which is announced publicly;

32 (8) "Academic ability" means the intellectual standing of a  
33 student. In determining superior academic ability, the department shall  
34 examine the student's high school records, competitive examination scores,  
35 and demonstrated leadership capabilities; and

36 (9) "Extraordinary academic ability" means a score of 32 or

1 above on the American College Test (ACT), 1410 or above on the Scholastic  
2 Aptitude Test (SAT), ~~or~~ selection as a finalist in either the National Merit  
3 Scholarship competition or the National Achievement Scholarship competition  
4 conducted by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation.

5  
6 SECTION 3. Arkansas Code 6-82-304 is amended to read as follows:

7 6-82-304. Administration - Authority of department.

8 The Department of Higher Education shall administer the Arkansas  
9 Governor's Scholars Program and shall have the following authority and  
10 responsibility with respect to the program:

11 (1) To prepare application forms or such other forms as the  
12 department shall deem necessary to properly administer and carry out the  
13 purposes of this subchapter;

14 (2) To establish and consult as necessary with an advisory  
15 committee representing the public and private sectors of postsecondary  
16 education and secondary schools in determining guidelines and regulations for  
17 the administration of this program;

18 (3) To select recipients of scholarships awarded pursuant to the  
19 provisions of this subchapter;

20 (4) To establish the procedures for payment of scholarships to  
21 recipients; ~~and~~

22 (5) To set a termination date for the acceptance of  
23 applications;

24 (6) To review and evaluate the operation of the program with  
25 regard to eligibility criteria and size of the scholarship award to ensure  
26 that the program's operation meets the intent of this legislation; and

27 (7) To determine the necessary procedures for the awarding of  
28 scholarships should the number of eligible applicants exceed the funds  
29 available.

30  
31 SECTION 4. Arkansas Code 6-82-305 is amended to read as follows:

32 6-82-305. Recipients known as Arkansas Governor's Scholars or Arkansas  
33 Governor's Distinguished Scholars.

34 (a) Students receiving scholarships shall be known as Arkansas  
35 Governor's Scholars.

36 (b) Arkansas Governor's Scholarship recipients ~~Students~~ who exhibit

1 extraordinary academic ability shall be known as Arkansas Governor's  
2 Distinguished Scholars.

3  
4 SECTION 5. Arkansas Code 6-82-306 is amended to read as follows:

5 6-82-306. Eligibility.

6 (a) The Arkansas Governor's Scholars Program scholarships are to be  
7 awarded to those students who demonstrate the highest capabilities for  
8 successful college study.

9 (b) A student is eligible for this scholarship if:

10 (1) The individual has met the admission requirements and is  
11 accepted for enrollment as a full-time undergraduate student in an eligible  
12 public or private college or university in Arkansas;

13 (2) The individual is a bona fide resident of the state, as  
14 defined by the department. Preference will be given to students who plan to  
15 enter college at the beginning of the academic year directly following their  
16 last year of high school attendance;

17 (3) The individual is a citizen of the United States or a  
18 permanent resident alien; ~~and~~

19 (4)(A) The applicant has demonstrated proficiency in the  
20 application of knowledge and skills in reading and writing literacy and  
21 mathematics by passing the end of course examination as may be developed by  
22 the Department of Education, and as may be designated by the Department of  
23 Higher Education for this purpose;

24 (B) "End of course" examination shall mean those  
25 examinations defined in § 6-15-419(4).

26 ~~(4)(5)(A)~~ (A) The individual satisfactorily meets the qualifications  
27 of superior academic ability as established by the department with such  
28 criteria consisting of value points for academic achievement and leadership  
29 including but not limited to:

30 (i) ACT or SAT score or National Merit Finalist or  
31 National Achievement Finalist;

32 (ii) High school grade point average;

33 (iii) Rank in high school class; and

34 (iv) Leadership in school, community, and  
35 employment;

36 (B) The Department of Higher Education shall have the

1 authority to alter the weight assigned to the individual criterion to more  
2 appropriately meet the needs of the state as determined by the Arkansas  
3 Higher Education Coordinating Board.

4 (c) The scholarship shall be weighed on the factors of achievement,  
5 ability, and demonstrated leadership capabilities.

6 (d) Students who are selected as Arkansas Governor's Scholars who also  
7 exhibit extraordinary academic ability as defined in this subchapter shall be  
8 designated as Arkansas Governor's Distinguished Scholars.

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10 SECTION 6. Arkansas Code 6-82-311 is amended to read as follows:

11 6-82-311. Term, renewal, and allocation of scholarships.

12 (a) A scholarship may be awarded annually for a period not to exceed  
13 an academic year.

14 (b)(1) The scholarships shall correspond to academic terms, semesters,  
15 quarters, or equivalent time periods at the eligible institutions.

16 (2) In no instance may the entire amount of the grant for an  
17 educational year be paid to or on behalf of students in advance.

18 (c) ~~(1) The~~ Provided sufficient funds are available, the scholarship  
19 shall be awarded for one (1) academic year and renewed annually for three (3)  
20 additional academic years if the following conditions for renewal are met:

21 (1) The student maintains not less than a 3.0 grade point  
22 average on a 4.0 scholastic grading scale and meets other criteria as  
23 established by the Department of Higher Education;

24 ~~(2) However, effective after July 1, 1999, a~~ A student receiving  
25 the additional scholarship under § 6-82-312(b) ~~must maintain~~ maintains not  
26 less than a 3.25 grade point average on a 4.0 scholastic grading scale;

27 (3) The recipient has completed a total of at least twenty-seven  
28 (27) hours during the first full academic year and, if applicable, a total of  
29 at least thirty (30) hours per academic year thereafter;

30 (4) If the student is entering the junior year, the student has  
31 taken the standardized rising junior test provided for in § 6-61-114; and

32 (5) The recipient has met any other continuing eligibility  
33 criteria established by the Department of Higher Education.

34  
35 SECTION 7. Arkansas Code 6-82-312 is amended to read as follows:

36 6-82-312. Scholarship amounts.

1 (a) Scholarships awarded to new recipients who enroll in college as  
2 first-time entering freshmen after July 1, 1995, shall be in the amount of  
3 four thousand dollars (\$4,000) per year, provided funds are available.

4 (b) ~~Students~~ Provided sufficient funds are available, students who are  
5 were first-time entering freshmen after July 1, 1997 but before July 1, 2001,  
6 and who exhibit exhibited extraordinary academic achievement shall be  
7 awarded, in addition to the award in subsection (a) of this section, an  
8 amount per year which when combined with the award in subsection (a) of this  
9 section equals tuition, room and board, required textbooks, and mandatory  
10 fees charged for a regular full-time course load by the approved institution  
11 in which the recipient is enrolled.

12 (c) Provided sufficient funds are available, students who are first-  
13 time entering freshmen after July 1, 2001, and who exhibit extraordinary  
14 academic achievement shall be awarded, in addition to the award in subsection  
15 (a) of this section, an amount per year which, when combined with the award  
16 in subsection (a) of this section, equals the lesser of:

17 (1) Ten thousand dollars (\$10,000); or

18 (2) Tuition, room and board, required textbooks, and mandatory  
19 fees charged for a regular full-time course load by the approved institution  
20 in which the recipient is enrolled.

21  
22 SECTION 8. EMERGENCY CLAUSE. It is found and determined by the  
23 General Assembly that the state does not have the funds to support the  
24 Arkansas Governor's Scholars Program in its current form; and that applicants  
25 graduating after December 31, 2000, will experience uncertainty regarding  
26 eligibility for the Arkansas Governor's Scholars Program; and that many  
27 applicants may be delayed in beginning their post-secondary education unless  
28 changes in the scholarship program become effective in sufficient time to  
29 allow scholarship awards to be made to those students needing to make  
30 enrollment decisions for the 2001-2002 academic year. Therefore, an  
31 emergency is declared to exist and this act being immediately necessary for  
32 the preservation of the public peace, health and safety shall become  
33 effective on March 1, 2001.