

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.

State of Arkansas  
85th General Assembly  
Regular Session, 2005

*As Engrossed: H3/11/05*

## A Bill

HOUSE BILL 2610

By: Representative Burris

### For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO AMEND THE FINANCIAL NEED AND GRADE  
POINT AVERAGE REQUIREMENTS OF THE ARKANSAS  
ACADEMIC CHALLENGE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM; AND FOR  
OTHER PURPOSES.

### Subtitle

AN ACT TO AMEND THE FINANCIAL NEED AND  
GRADE POINT AVERAGE REQUIREMENTS OF THE  
ARKANSAS ACADEMIC CHALLENGE SCHOLARSHIP  
PROGRAM.

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

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 6-82-1005(b)(6), concerning eligibility for the Arkansas Academic Challenge Scholarship Program, is amended to read as follows:

(6)(A) The applicant who ~~graduates~~ graduated from an Arkansas high school after December 31, 2001, but before December 31, 2004, must have achieved the following:

(i) A grade point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale in the set of core curriculum courses if enrolling at an approved four-year institution; or

(ii) A grade point average of 2.75 on a 4.0 scale in the set of core curriculum courses if enrolling at an approved two-year institution.

(iii)(a) These ~~revised~~ grade point average requirements may be reduced to no lower than a 2.5 on a 4.0 scale by a rules



1 change by the Department of Higher Education if it is determined by the  
2 department, based on the most recent evaluation of the program's operation,  
3 that the change to a 3.0 or 2.75 grade point average on a 4.0 scale would  
4 unduly reduce the number of low-income or disadvantaged students who would  
5 otherwise be eligible for the program.

6 (b) At the Department of Higher Education's  
7 discretion, the Department of Higher Education may make such a reduction for  
8 admissions to institutions with a high percentage of students receiving full  
9 Pell grants upon petition to the Department of Higher Education by the  
10 institution.

11 (B) The applicant scored nineteen (19) or above on the  
12 American College Test composite or the equivalent as defined by the  
13 Department of Higher Education.

14 (C)(i) The Department of Higher Education is authorized to  
15 develop selection criteria through program rules and regulations that combine  
16 an applicant's American College Test or equivalent score and grade point  
17 average in the core curriculum into a selection index.

18 (ii) Notwithstanding the provisions of subdivisions  
19 (b)(6)(A) and (b)(6)(B) of this section, this selection index shall be  
20 employed as an alternative selection process for applicants who achieve a  
21 grade point average above 2.75 if attending an approved two-year institution  
22 or 3.0 if attending a four-year institution on a 4.0 scale in the set of core  
23 curriculum courses defined in subdivision (b)(5)(A) of this section or for  
24 applicants who have an American College Test composite or equivalent score  
25 greater than nineteen (19).

26 (D)(i) The applicant demonstrates financial need as  
27 defined by the department.

28 (ii) In calculating financial need for applicants  
29 who graduate from an Arkansas high school after December 31, 1998, but before  
30 January 1, 2001, the following criteria shall be used:

31 (a) An applicant whose family includes one (1)  
32 unemancipated child shall have average family adjusted gross income over the  
33 previous two (2) years not exceeding seventy thousand dollars (\$70,000) per  
34 year at the time of application to the program;

35 (b) An applicant whose family includes two (2)  
36 unemancipated children shall have average family adjusted gross income over

1 the previous two (2) years not exceeding seventy-five thousand dollars  
2 (\$75,000) per year at the time of application to the program;

3 (c) An applicant whose family includes three  
4 (3) or more unemancipated children shall have average family adjusted gross  
5 income over the previous two (2) years not exceeding eighty thousand dollars  
6 (\$80,000) per year at the time of application to the program, plus for  
7 families with more than three (3) unemancipated children, an additional five  
8 thousand dollars (\$5,000) per year for each additional child;

9 (d) Any applicant whose family includes more  
10 than one (1) unemancipated child enrolled full time at an approved  
11 institution of higher education shall be entitled to an additional ten  
12 thousand dollars (\$10,000) of adjusted gross income for each additional child  
13 when the department calculates financial need; and

14 (e) If the applicant is an adopted child who  
15 was at least twelve (12) years of age at the time of adoption and if the  
16 applicant's family includes unemancipated adopted children who were at least  
17 twelve (12) years of age at the time of adoption, the adoptive family shall  
18 be entitled to an additional ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) of adjusted gross  
19 income per adopted unemancipated child.

20 (iii) In calculating financial need for applicants  
21 who ~~graduate~~ graduated from an Arkansas high school after December 31, 2000,  
22 but before December 31, 2004, the following criteria shall be used:

23 (a) An applicant whose family includes one (1)  
24 unemancipated child shall have average family adjusted gross income over the  
25 previous two (2) years not exceeding fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) per  
26 year at the time of application to the program;

27 (b) An applicant whose family includes two (2)  
28 unemancipated children shall have average family adjusted gross income over  
29 the previous two (2) years not exceeding fifty-five thousand dollars  
30 (\$55,000) per year at the time of application to the program;

31 (c) An applicant whose family includes three  
32 (3) or more unemancipated children shall have average family adjusted gross  
33 income over the previous two (2) years not exceeding sixty thousand dollars  
34 (\$60,000) per year at the time of application to the program, plus for  
35 families with more than three (3) unemancipated children, an additional five  
36 thousand dollars (\$5,000) per year for each additional child; and

(d) Any applicant whose family includes more than one (1) unemancipated child enrolled full time at an approved institution of higher education shall be entitled to an additional ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) of adjusted gross income for each additional child when the department calculates financial need.

(iv) In calculating financial need for applicants who graduate from an Arkansas high school after December 31, 2004, the following criteria shall be used:

(a) An applicant whose family includes one (1) unemancipated child shall have average family adjusted gross income over the previous two (2) years not exceeding seventy thousand dollars (\$70,000) per year at the time of application to the program;

(b) An applicant whose family includes two (2) unemancipated children shall have average family adjusted gross income over the previous two (2) years not exceeding seventy-five thousand dollars (\$75,000) per year at the time of application to the program;

(c) An applicant whose family includes three (3) or more unemancipated children shall have average family adjusted gross income over the previous two (2) years not exceeding eighty thousand dollars (\$80,000) per year at the time of application to the program, plus for families with more than three (3) unemancipated children, an additional five thousand dollars (\$5,000) per year for each additional child; and

(d) Any applicant whose family includes more than one (1) unemancipated child enrolled full time at an approved institution of higher education shall be entitled to an additional ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) of adjusted gross income for each additional child when the department calculates financial need.

*SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 6-82-1006(c), concerning the amount of the Academic Challenge Scholarship award, is amended to read as follows:*

*(c)(1) For recipients who graduated from high school between January 1, 1995, and December 31, 1996, the amount of the annual scholarship awarded to each recipient shall be the lesser of one thousand five hundred dollars (\$1,500) or the annual tuition charged by the approved institution in which the recipient is enrolled.*

*(2) For recipients who graduated from high school between*

1 January 1, 1997, and December 31, 1998, the amount of the annual scholarship  
2 awarded to each recipient shall be the lesser of two thousand five hundred  
3 dollars (\$2,500) or the annual tuition charged by the approved institution in  
4 which the recipient is enrolled.

5 (3) For recipients who graduated from high school after December  
6 31, 1998, the amount of the annual scholarship awarded to each recipient  
7 shall be two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500).

8 (4) For recipients who graduated from high school after December  
9 31, 2001 but before December 31, 2004, the amount of the annual scholarship  
10 awarded to each recipient shall be graduated as follows:

11 (A) A recipient in his or her freshman year shall be  
12 awarded an amount not to exceed two thousand dollars (\$2,000);

13 (B) A recipient in his or her sophomore year shall be  
14 awarded an amount not to exceed two thousand two hundred fifty dollars  
15 (\$2,250);

16 (C) A recipient in his or her junior year shall be awarded  
17 an amount not to exceed two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500); and

18 (D) A recipient in his or her senior year shall be awarded  
19 an amount not to exceed three thousand dollars (\$3,000).

20 (5) For recipients who graduated from high school after December  
21 31, 2004, the amount of the annual scholarship awarded to each recipient  
22 shall be graduated as follows:

23 (A) A recipient in his or her freshman year shall be  
24 awarded an amount not to exceed two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500);

25 (B) A recipient in his or her sophomore year shall be  
26 awarded an amount not to exceed two thousand seven hundred fifty dollars  
27 (\$2,750);

28 (C) A recipient in his or her junior year shall be awarded  
29 an amount not to exceed three thousand five hundred dollars (\$3,000); and

30 (D) A recipient in his or her senior year shall be awarded  
31 an amount not to exceed three thousand five hundred dollars (\$3,500).

32  
33 SECTION 3. Arkansas Code § 6-82-1008 is amended to read as follows:

34 6-82-1008. Awards not funded.

35 (a)(1) Any applicant who graduated after December 31, 2001, who was  
36 eligible to receive an academic challenge award but did not receive the award

1 because of insufficient funding in the program may be eligible to receive an  
2 award to begin in a year other than the freshman year.

3 (2) Any student enrolled in an institution of higher education  
4 must have achieved at least a 2.0 cumulative grade point average to be  
5 eligible for a deferred award.

6 ~~(b) The Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board and the~~  
7 ~~Department of Higher Education shall promulgate regulations necessary for the~~  
8 ~~implementation of this section.~~

9 ~~(e)(3)~~ Any award made under ~~this section~~ subsection (a) of this  
10 section shall have funding priority as follows:

11 ~~(1)(A)~~ Awards shall be made first to individuals who made  
12 application prior to the original deadline during the individual's senior  
13 year in high school, received an award letter from the department but did not  
14 receive an award because of insufficient funding, and are now eligible under  
15 this section;

16 ~~(2)(B)~~ Awards shall be made, second, to the current-year  
17 high school graduates who are for the first time eligible to receive an  
18 Arkansas Academic Challenge Award; and

19 ~~(3)(C)~~ If sufficient funds are available after funding  
20 awards under subdivisions ~~(e)(1) and (e)(2)~~ (a)(3)(A) and (a)(3)(B) of this  
21 section, awards may be made to individuals who did not apply during their  
22 senior year in high school but would have been eligible if the individuals  
23 had applied prior to that year's deadline and who are now eligible under this  
24 section.

25 (b) If sufficient funding is available, any applicant who graduated  
26 after December 31, 2003 may be eligible to receive an award to begin in a  
27 year other than the freshman year if the applicant:

28 (1) Is currently enrolled in an eligible institution;

29 (2) Has achieved at least a 2.0 cumulative grade point average,  
30 and

31 (3) The applicant would have been eligible to receive an  
32 academic challenge scholarship based upon the increase family income values  
33 established under § 6-82-1005(b)(6)(D)(iv) but did not receive the award  
34 because the family income limitations under § 6-82-1005(b)(6)(D)(iii) or did  
35 not complete the fourth (4) mathematics requirements because the applicant  
36 did not anticipate eligibility based on the former income guidelines.

1        (c) The Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board and the  
2        Department of Higher Education shall promulgate regulations necessary for the  
3        implementation of this section.

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5                                /s/ Burris  
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