

1 State of Arkansas
2 90th General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2015

A Bill

SENATE BILL 3

4
5 By: Senator Hickey

For An Act To Be Entitled

8 AN ACT TO MODIFY THE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
9 ACADEMIC CHALLENGE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM - PART 2; TO
10 CLARIFY FUNDING AMOUNTS AND PROVISIONS; AND FOR OTHER
11 PURPOSES.

Subtitle

15 TO MODIFY THE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS
16 FOR THE ACADEMIC CHALLENGE SCHOLARSHIP
17 PROGRAM - PART 2; AND TO CLARIFY FUNDING
18 AMOUNTS AND PROVISIONS.

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

22
23 SECTION 1. DO NOT CODIFY.

24 The intent of this Act is to promote stability in the Arkansas Academic
25 Challenge Scholarship Program – Part 2 and to increase the overall amount of
26 scholarship award amounts beginning in the second year of college for student
27 who are successful in their first year of higher education.

28
29 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 6-85-201 is amended to read as follows:
30 6-85-201. Findings.

31 The General Assembly finds that:

32 (1) In approving Arkansas Constitution, Amendment 87, the
33 citizens of this state provided an opportunity to increase the resources
34 provided for higher education scholarships and grants through a state
35 lottery; ~~and~~

36 (2) The net proceeds from the state lottery, in addition to

1 existing nonlottery state educational resources for scholarships and grants,
2 will:

3 (A) Encourage associate degree, certificate of proficiency
4 program, and technical certificate program recipients and university juniors
5 to complete a baccalaureate degree;

6 (B) Provide opportunities for students more than one (1)
7 year out of high school to enter or reenter higher education;

8 (C) Provide an improved system of communication to
9 students and parents about opportunities for higher education scholarships
10 and grants in Arkansas; and

11 (D) Provide an evaluation and analysis of all state
12 funding for scholarships and grants and how the funding advances the state's
13 goals for higher education-; and

14 (3) Changes to the Arkansas Academic Challenge Scholarship
15 Program – Part 2 may be necessary from time to time to ensure the solvency of
16 the program by spreading the program liabilities over a period of time while
17 ensuring that there are scholarship dollars available for students who
18 successfully complete their courses.

19
20 SECTION 3. Arkansas Code § 6-85-207 is amended to read as follows:

21 6-85-207. Additional eligibility requirements for traditional
22 students.

23 (a) ~~In~~ Beginning in the 2016-2017 school year, in addition to the
24 requirements of § 6-85-206, an applicant is eligible as a level 1 traditional
25 student if the applicant:

26 (1)~~(A)~~ Graduated from an Arkansas public high school and has:

27 ~~(i)~~(A) Successfully completed the Smart Core
28 curriculum established by the Department of Education; ~~and~~

29 ~~(ii)~~(B) ~~Either:~~

30 ~~(a)~~ Achieved a high school grade point average
31 of at least ~~2.5~~ 3.25; ~~or~~ and

32 ~~(b)~~(C) Had a minimum composite score of
33 ~~nineteen (19)~~ twenty-two (22) on the ACT or the equivalent score on an ACT
34 equivalent-;;

35 ~~(B) Graduated from an Arkansas public high school before~~
36 ~~the 2013-2014 school year, but did not complete the Smart Core curriculum, he~~

1 ~~or she shall have achieved a high school grade point average of at least 2.5~~
2 ~~and either:~~

3 ~~(i) Have a minimum composite score of nineteen (19)~~
4 ~~on the ACT or the equivalent score on an ACT equivalent; or~~

5 ~~(ii) Scored proficient or higher on all state-~~
6 ~~mandated end-of-course assessments, including without limitation end-of-~~
7 ~~course assessments on:~~

- 8 ~~(a) Algebra I;~~
- 9 ~~(b) Geometry; and~~
- 10 ~~(c) Biology;~~

11 (2) Has a disability identified under the Individuals with
12 Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1400 et seq., as it existed on July
13 1, 2009, and graduated from an Arkansas public high school but did not
14 complete the Smart Core curriculum because the applicant’s individualized
15 education program under § 6-41-217 did not require it, achieved a high school
16 grade point average of at least ~~2.5~~ 3.25, and either:

17 (A) Had a minimum composite score of ~~nineteen (19)~~ twenty-
18 two (22) on the ACT or the equivalent score on an ACT equivalent; or

19 (B) Scored proficient or higher on all state-mandated end-
20 of-course assessments, including without limitation end-of-course assessments
21 on:

- 22 (i) Algebra I;
- 23 (ii) Geometry;
- 24 (iii) Biology; and
- 25 (iv) ~~Beginning with the 2013-2014 school year,~~
26 literacy Literacy; or

27 (3) Achieved a minimum composite score of ~~nineteen (19)~~ twenty-
28 two on the ACT or the equivalent score on an ACT equivalent and:

29 (A) Graduated from a private high school, an out-of-state
30 high school, or a home school high school; or

31 (B) In the year in which the student would have been a
32 junior or senior in high school, completed the requirements for high school
33 graduation and obtained a Certificate of General Educational Development
34 instead of receiving a diploma.

35 (b) Beginning in the 2016-2017 school year, in addition to the
36 requirements of § 6-85-206, an applicant is eligible as a level 2 traditional

1 student if the applicant:

2 (1) Graduated from an Arkansas public high school and has:

3 (A) Successfully completed the Smart Core curriculum
4 established by the department;

5 (B) Achieved a high school grade point average of at least
6 2.5 but less than 3.25; and

7 (C) Had a minimum composite score of at least nineteen
8 (19) but less than twenty-two (22) on the ACT or the equivalent score on an
9 ACT equivalent;

10 (2) Has a disability identified under the Individuals with
11 Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1400 et seq., as it existed on July
12 1, 2009, and graduated from an Arkansas public high school but did not
13 complete the Smart Core curriculum because the applicant’s individualized
14 education program under § 6-41-217 did not require it, achieved a high school
15 grade point average of at least 2.5 but less than 3.25, and either:

16 (A) Had a minimum composite score of at least nineteen
17 (19) but less than twenty-two (22) on the ACT or the equivalent score on an
18 ACT equivalent; or

19 (B) Scored proficient or higher on all state-mandated end-
20 of-course assessments, including without limitation end-of-course assessments
21 on:

22 (i) Algebra I;

23 (ii) Geometry;

24 (iii) Biology; and

25 (iv) Literacy; or

26 (3) Achieved a minimum composite score of at least nineteen (19)
27 but less than twenty-two (22) on the ACT or the equivalent score on an ACT
28 equivalent and:

29 (A) Graduated from a private high school, an out-of-state
30 high school, or a home school high school; or

31 (B) In the year in which the student would have been a
32 junior or senior in high school, completed the requirements for high school
33 graduation and obtained a Certificate of General Educational Development
34 instead of receiving a diploma.

35
36 SECTION 4. Arkansas Code § 6-85-212(e)(1), concerning scholarship

1 award amounts, is amended to read as follows:

2 (e)(1)(A) Beginning with the 2013-2014 academic year, the scholarship
 3 award amount under this subchapter for an academic year for a full-time
 4 recipient enrolled in a four-year approved institution of higher education
 5 is:

6 (i) Two thousand dollars (\$2,000) for a recipient in
 7 his or her freshman year;

8 (ii) Three thousand dollars (\$3,000) for a recipient
 9 in his or her sophomore year;

10 (iii) Four thousand dollars (\$4,000) for a recipient
 11 in his or her junior year; and

12 (iv) Five thousand dollars (\$5,000) for a recipient
 13 in his or her senior year.

14 (B) The Department of Higher Education shall not accept
 15 new applications for scholarships for current achiever students under § 6-85-
 16 209 after June 1, 2012.

17 (C) Beginning in the 2016-2017 school year, for the
 18 freshman year only:

19 (i) A level 1 traditional student, as determined
 20 under § 6-85-207, shall receive his or her scholarship award at the beginning
 21 of the semester in which the student is enrolled; and

22 (ii) A level 2 traditional student, as determined
 23 under § 6-85-207, shall receive his or her scholarship award at the end of
 24 his of her successfully completed freshman year except as provided under
 25 subdivision (e)(1)(D) of this section.

26 (D) A level 2 traditional student who is enrolled in a
 27 certificate of proficiency program or a technical certificate program shall
 28 receive his or her scholarship award at the beginning of the semester in
 29 which the student is enrolled.

30

31 SECTION 5. Arkansas Code § 6-85-212(e)(2)(A)(ii), concerning
 32 scholarship award amounts, is amended to read as follows:

33 (ii) Beginning with the 2014-2015 academic year, the
 34 department shall award an aggregate amount of scholarship awards to
 35 nontraditional students of up to sixteen million dollars (\$16,000,000).

36

1 SECTION 3. Arkansas Code § 6-82-212(e)(3)-(6), concerning scholarship
 2 award amounts, is amended to add an additional subdivision to read as
 3 follows:

4 (3)(A) The scholarship award for an academic year for a full-
 5 time student enrolled in one (1) of the following institutions of higher
 6 education is two thousand dollars (\$2,000):

7 ~~(A)(i)~~ A two-year approved institution of higher
 8 education;

9 ~~(B)(ii)~~ A branch campus of a four-year approved
 10 institution of higher education; or

11 ~~(C)(iii)~~ An approved nursing school.

12 (B) Beginning in the 2016-2017 school year, for the
 13 freshman year only:

14 (i) A level 1 traditional student, as determined
 15 under § 6-85-207, shall receive his or her scholarship award at the beginning
 16 of the semester in which the student is enrolled; and

17 (ii) A level 2 traditional student, as determined
 18 under § 6-85-207, shall receive his or her scholarship award at the end of
 19 his or her successfully completed freshman year and enrolls in his or her
 20 sophomore year except as provided under subdivision (e)(1)(D) of this
 21 section.

22 (C) A level 2 traditional student who is enrolled in a
 23 certificate of proficiency program or a technical certificate program shall
 24 receive his or her scholarship award at the beginning of the semester in
 25 which the student is enrolled.

26 (4) The scholarship award amount for a part-time student
 27 recipient shall be:

28 (A) One-half ($\frac{1}{2}$) of the award amount for a full-time
 29 student recipient, if the recipient is enrolled in at least six (6) semester
 30 hours but less than nine (9) semester hours; or

31 (B) Three-quarters ($\frac{3}{4}$) of the award amount for a full-time
 32 student recipient, if the recipient is enrolled in at least nine (9) semester
 33 hours but less than the number of hours required for a full-time student
 34 recipient.

35 (5) The scholarship award amount for a student enrolled in a
 36 certificate of proficiency program or a technical certificate program is

1 seven hundred fifty dollars (\$750.00).

2 (6) A current recipient who maintains eligibility for the
3 scholarship under this subchapter shall continue to receive the scholarship
4 award amount first awarded to the recipient.

5 ~~(6)~~(7) The department shall give priority for a scholarship
6 award to a full-time or part-time student:

7 (A) Who meets the eligibility requirements under this
8 subchapter; and

9 (B) Whose parent, by birth or legal adoption:

10 (i) Was a resident of the State of Arkansas at the
11 time that person entered the service of the United States Armed Forces or
12 whose official residence is in Arkansas; and

13 (ii) Was a member of the United States Armed Forces
14 who was killed while performing military duty:

15 (a) In a status identified under 32 U.S.C. §
16 101 et seq. or 10 U.S.C. § 101 et seq. as they existed on January 1, 2011; or

17 (b) In state active duty status.

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19 SECTION 6. Arkansas Code § 6-85-212(i)(2), concerning scholarship
20 award amounts, is amended to add an additional subdivision to read as
21 follows:

22
23 (2) If the funding is still insufficient to fully fund the
24 scholarships created under this subchapter, the department shall award
25 scholarships after considering applicants:

26 (A) With the highest level of progress toward completion of a
27 certificate, an associate degree, or a baccalaureate degree;

28 (B) With the highest high school or postsecondary grade point
29 average, as applicable to the applicant; ~~and~~

30 (C) With the highest ACT or ACT equivalent score; and

31 (D) Who are enrolled in or intend to enroll in a program of
32 study that is:

33 (i) In an area of critical workforce need as determined by
34 the department; or

35 (ii) In a science, technology, engineering, or mathematics
36 field.