

1 State of Arkansas
2 90th General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2015
4
5 By: Senator D. Johnson

A Bill

SENATE BILL 300

For An Act To Be Entitled

8 AN ACT TO CLARIFY THAT ACCREDITATION IN ARKANSAS IS
9 DONE BY AN ACCREDITING AGENCY RECOGNIZED BY THE
10 UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION; AND FOR OTHER
11 PURPOSES.

Subtitle

15 TO CLARIFY THAT ACCREDITATION IN ARKANSAS
16 IS DONE BY AN ACCREDITING AGENCY
17 RECOGNIZED BY THE UNITED STATES
18 DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.

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

23 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 6-51-905(d)(2), concerning technical
24 institutes, is amended to read as follows:

25 (2) Those degrees offered at a technical institute must be
26 awarded by an Arkansas higher education institution accredited by ~~the Higher~~
27 ~~Learning Commission~~ an accrediting agency recognized by the federal
28 Department of Education.

30 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 6-51-906(c)(3)(A), concerning comprehensive
31 lifelong learning centers, is amended to read as follows:

32 (A) Any degree program at or above the associate degree
33 level offered at a comprehensive lifelong learning center must be approved by
34 the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board and awarded by an Arkansas
35 institution of higher education accredited by ~~the Higher Learning Commission~~
36 an accrediting agency recognized by the federal Department of Education.



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 2 SECTION 3. Arkansas Code § 6-51-907(d)(1), concerning expanded
 3 associate degree instruction, is amended to read as follows:

4 (d)(1) The associate degree programs to be offered at the center shall
 5 be developed by participating institutions and shall meet all the standards
 6 for accreditation by ~~the Higher Learning Commission~~ an accrediting agency
 7 recognized by the federal Department of Education.

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 9 SECTION 4. Arkansas Code § 6-53-209 is amended to read as follows:
 10 6-53-209. Interim accreditation and governance.

11 (a) The Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board ~~is hereby~~
 12 ~~authorized to~~ may act as the legal entity, governing board, and receiver of
 13 all property for any institution not accredited by ~~the Higher Learning~~
 14 ~~Commission~~ an accrediting agency recognized by the federal Department of
 15 Education and seeking merger or consolidation with an existing institution of
 16 higher education during the interim period when approval of institutional
 17 change from ~~the commission~~ an accrediting agency recognized by the federal
 18 Department of Education is being sought.

19 (b) Upon approval by ~~the commission~~ an accrediting agency recognized by
 20 the federal Department of Education, all records, personnel, property,
 21 unexpended balances, and all legal authority shall pass from the Arkansas
 22 Higher Education Coordinating Board to the legal entity governing the newly
 23 merged or consolidated institution.

24 (c) The Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board ~~is hereby~~
 25 ~~authorized to~~ may provide accreditation for a period of up to six (6) years
 26 to ~~any~~ an institution governed by the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating
 27 Board.

28 (d)(1) ~~Until such time as~~ the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating
 29 Board approves associate of applied science degrees for the institutions
 30 identified in § 6-53-301(a), no change in the educational mission of those
 31 institutions is intended or authorized by this chapter.

32 (2) ~~Therefore, the~~ The State Board of Career Education ~~must~~
 33 shall show cause why accreditation of ~~those~~ an institution should not be
 34 continued and, ~~further, must~~ provide twelve (12) months' notice of any action
 35 to withdraw ~~its~~ accreditation of ~~those~~ an institution.

36 (e) ~~Any~~ A postsecondary vocational-technical school other than those

1 listed in §§ 6-53-301 and 6-53-404 that receives approval from the state
 2 board and the General Assembly to begin the process of consolidation or
 3 merger with an existing institution of higher education shall be governed by
 4 the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board ~~in accordance with the~~ under
 5 ~~provisions of~~ this section and § 6-53-302(f), (h), and (i) pending approval
 6 of the merger or consolidation from ~~the commission~~ an accrediting agency
 7 recognized by the federal Department of Education.

8 (f) ~~Should any~~ If a consolidation plan ~~fail to be~~ is not approved by
 9 ~~the commission~~ an accrediting agency recognized by the federal Department of
 10 Education, ~~the provision of~~ § 6-53-301(f) shall apply to the postsecondary
 11 vocational-technical school or technical college seeking merger or
 12 consolidation with an institution of higher education.

13
 14 SECTION 5. Arkansas Code § 6-53-401 is amended to read as follows:
 15 6-53-401. Coordination with institutional boards of trustees.

16 ~~All future mergers or consolidations~~ A merger or consolidation of a
 17 state-supported postsecondary vocational-technical ~~institutions~~ institution
 18 with an existing community ~~colleges~~ college, with a branch ~~campuses~~ campus of
 19 four-year ~~institutions~~ institution, or with a four-year ~~institutions~~
 20 institution ~~shall be~~ is subject to the approval of the board of trustees of
 21 the institution, the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board, and the
 22 ~~Higher Learning Commission~~ accrediting agency recognized by the federal
 23 Department of Education.

24
 25 SECTION 6. Arkansas Code § 6-53-402(b), concerning technical colleges,
 26 is amended to read as follows:

27 (b) Upon approval by the board and ~~the Higher Learning Commission~~ an
 28 accrediting agency recognized by the federal Department of Education and upon
 29 assignment of a service area for the institution, the two-year branch campus
 30 shall be known as a technical college.

31
 32 SECTION 7. Arkansas Code § 6-53-402(g)(1), concerning technical
 33 colleges, is amended to read as follows:

34 (g)(1) A technical college established under this section that fails to
 35 achieve higher education institutional accreditation from ~~the commission~~ an
 36 accrediting agency recognized by the federal Department of Education within

1 eight (8) years following the date of conversion shall be abolished by the
 2 state board.

3
 4 SECTION 8. Arkansas Code § 6-53-402(h)(2), concerning technical
 5 colleges, is amended to read as follows:

6 (2) The local board of any state-supported postsecondary
 7 institution and the board of a community college located within the same
 8 county, upon passage of a resolution by each board and with the approval by
 9 the state board and ~~the commission~~ an accrediting agency recognized by the
 10 federal Department of Education, may merge the state-supported postsecondary
 11 institution with the community college.

12
 13 SECTION 9. Arkansas Code § 6-53-405(a), concerning consolidations, is
 14 amended to read as follows:

15 (a)(1) As provided in this chapter or upon approval of the State Board
 16 of Career Education, the board of trustees of the receiving institution, the
 17 Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board, and ~~the Higher Learning~~
 18 ~~Commission~~ an accrediting agency recognized by the federal Department of
 19 Education ~~thereafter~~, the board may consolidate a state-supported
 20 vocational-technical institution with a four-year institution or a two-year
 21 branch campus of a four-year institution.

22 (2) Following approval by ~~the commission~~ an accrediting agency
 23 recognized by the federal Department of Education, the board, upon approval
 24 of the board of trustees of the receiving institution, shall consolidate the
 25 following state-supported vocational-technical institutions and four-year
 26 institutions or two-year branch campuses of a four-year institution: White
 27 River Vocational-Technical School with Arkansas State University-Beebe.

28
 29 SECTION 10. Arkansas Code § 6-54-104(b), concerning administration of
 30 the College of the Ouachitas, is amended to read as follows:

31 (b) The technical college shall work to achieve higher education
 32 institutional accreditation from ~~the Higher Learning Commission~~ an
 33 accrediting agency recognized by the federal Department of Education.

34
 35 SECTION 11. Arkansas Code § 6-82-1702(1)(A)(ii), concerning the Higher
 36 Education Opportunities Grant Program, is amended to read as follows:

1 (ii) Certifies to the Department of Higher Education
2 that its students are accepted for transfer at institutions accredited by ~~the~~
3 ~~Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and~~
4 ~~Schools~~ an accrediting agency recognized by the federal Department of
5 Education.

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7 SECTION 12. Arkansas Code § 12-62-602(1), concerning the Arkansas
8 National Guard Tuition Incentive Program, is amended to read as follows:

9 (1) "Approved institution" means an Arkansas public or private
10 postsecondary institution that is accredited or has achieved candidacy status
11 from ~~the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of~~
12 ~~Colleges and Schools~~ an accrediting agency recognized by the federal
13 Department of Education or is a technical institute or comprehensive lifelong
14 learning center under the supervision of the Department of Career Education;
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16 SECTION 13. Arkansas Code § 27-24-1001(2), concerning special license
17 plates, is amended to read as follows:

18 (2) Authorize a special license plate for the Arkansas School for
19 the Deaf, which is accredited by ~~the Higher Learning Commission of the North~~
20 ~~Central Association of Colleges and Schools~~ an accrediting agency recognized
21 by the federal Department of Education and has students up to twenty-one (21)
22 years of age.
23

24 SECTION 14. Arkansas Code § 27-24-1002(3) and (4), concerning special
25 license plates, are amended to read as follows:

26 (3) Is accredited by ~~the Higher Learning Commission of the North~~
27 ~~Central Association of Colleges and Schools~~ an accrediting agency recognized
28 by the federal Department of Education;

29 (4) Certifies to the Department of Higher Education that its
30 students are accepted for transfer at institutions accredited by ~~the~~
31 ~~commission~~ an accrediting agency recognized by the federal Department of
32 Education; and
33

34 SECTION 15. Arkansas Code § 27-24-1102(3) and (4), concerning special
35 license plates, are amended to read as follows:

36 (3) Is accredited by ~~the Higher Learning Commission of the North~~

1 ~~Central Association of Colleges and Schools~~ an accrediting agency recognized
2 by the federal Department of Education;

3 (4) Certifies to the Department of Higher Education that its
4 students are accepted for transfer at institutions accredited by ~~the Higher~~
5 ~~Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools~~
6 an accrediting agency recognized by the federal Department of Education; and
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