

1 State of Arkansas  
2 90th General Assembly  
3 Regular Session, 2015  
4

# A Bill

SENATE BILL 5

5 By: Senator Hickey  
6

## 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.  
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## Subtitle

14 TO MODIFY THE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS  
15 FOR THE ACADEMIC CHALLENGE SCHOLARSHIP  
16 PROGRAM - PART 2; AND TO CLARIFY FUNDING  
17 AMOUNTS AND PROVISIONS.  
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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 (22) 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, if an applicant does not qualify as a level 1

1 traditional student, an applicant is eligible as a level 2 traditional  
2 student if the applicant:

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

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

6 (B) Achieved a high school grade point average of at least  
7 2.5; and

8 (C) Had a minimum composite score of at least nineteen  
9 (19) on the ACT or the equivalent score on an 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, and either:

16 (A) Had a minimum composite score of at least nineteen  
17 (19) on the ACT or the equivalent score on an ACT equivalent; or

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

21 (i) Algebra I;

22 (ii) Geometry;

23 (iii) Biology; and

24 (iv) Literacy; or

25 (3) Achieved a minimum composite score of at least nineteen (19)  
26 on the ACT or the equivalent score on an ACT equivalent and:

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

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

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34 SECTION 4. Arkansas Code § 6-85-212(e)(1), concerning scholarship  
35 award amounts, is amended to read as follows:

36 (e)(1)(A) Beginning with the 2013-2014 academic year, the scholarship

1 award amount under this subchapter for an academic year for a full-time  
2 recipient enrolled in a four-year approved institution of higher education  
3 is:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

31 (ii) Beginning with the 2014-2015 academic year, the  
32 department shall award an aggregate amount of scholarship awards to  
33 nontraditional students of up to sixteen million dollars (\$16,000,000).  
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35 SECTION 3. Arkansas Code § 6-82-212(e)(3)-(6), concerning scholarship  
36 award amounts, is amended to add an additional subdivision to read as

1 follows:

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

5 ~~(A)(i)~~ A two-year approved institution of higher  
6 education;

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

33 (5) The scholarship award amount for a student enrolled in a  
34 certificate of proficiency program or a technical certificate program is  
35 seven hundred fifty dollars (\$750.00).

36 (6) A current recipient who maintains eligibility for the

1 scholarship under this subchapter shall continue to receive the scholarship  
2 award amount first awarded to the recipient.

3 ~~(6)~~(7) The department shall give priority for a scholarship  
4 award to a full-time or part-time student:

5 (A) Who meets the eligibility requirements under this  
6 subchapter; and

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

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

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

13 (a) In a status identified under 32 U.S.C. §  
14 101 et seq. or 10 U.S.C. § 101 et seq. as they existed on January 1, 2011; or

15 (b) In state active duty status.  
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17 SECTION 6. Arkansas Code § 6-85-212(i)(2), concerning scholarship  
18 award amounts, is amended to add an additional subdivision to read as  
19 follows:  
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21 (2) If the funding is still insufficient to fully fund the  
22 scholarships created under this subchapter, the department shall award  
23 scholarships after considering applicants:

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

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

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

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

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

33 (ii) In a science, technology, engineering, or mathematics  
34 field.  
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