

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

As Engrossed: S1/27/15

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:
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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) Successfully completed the Smart Core curriculum~~
28 ~~established by the Department of Education; and~~

29 ~~(ii) Either:~~
30 ~~(a) Achieved a high school grade point average of at~~
31 ~~least 2.5; or~~

32 ~~–~~ ~~(b) Had achieved 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 achieved a minimum composite score of at least nineteen (19) but less than
5 twenty-two (22) on the ACT or the equivalent score on an ACT equivalent;

6 (2) Has a disability identified under the Individuals with
7 Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1400 et seq., as it existed on July
8 1, 2009, and graduated from an Arkansas public high school but did not
9 complete the Smart Core curriculum because the applicant's individualized
10 education program under § 6-41-217 did not require it, achieved a high school
11 grade point average of at least 2.5, and either:

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

14 (B) Scored proficient or higher on all state-mandated end-
15 of-course assessments, including without limitation end-of-course assessments
16 on:

17 (i) Algebra I;

18 (ii) Geometry;

19 (iii) Biology; and

20 (iv) Literacy; or

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

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

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

29
30 SECTION 4. Arkansas Code § 6-85-212(e)(1), concerning scholarship
31 award amounts, is amended to read as follows:

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

36 (i) Two thousand dollars (\$2,000) for a recipient in

1 his or her freshman year;

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

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

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

8 (B) The Department of Higher Education shall not accept
9 new applications for scholarships for current achiever students under § 6-85-
10 209 after June 1, 2012.

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

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

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

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

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

30
31 SECTION 3. Arkansas Code § 6-82-212(e)(3)-(6), concerning scholarship
32 award amounts, is amended to add an additional subdivision to read as
33 follows:

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

1 ~~(A)(i)~~ A two-year approved institution of higher
2 education;

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

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

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

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

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

16 (C) A level 2 traditional student who is enrolled in a
17 certificate of proficiency program or a technical certificate program shall
18 receive his or her scholarship award at the beginning of the semester in
19 which the student is enrolled.

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

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

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

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

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

35 ~~(6)(7)~~ The department shall give priority for a scholarship
36 award to a full-time or part-time student:

1 (A) Who meets the eligibility requirements under this
2 subchapter; and

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

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

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

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

11 (b) In state active duty status.

12
13 *SECTION 6. Arkansas Code § 6-85-212(i), concerning scholarship award*
14 *amounts, is amended to read as follows:*

15 (i)(1) *If the department has less than a sufficient amount from net*
16 *proceeds from the state lottery to provide for the scholarship commitments*
17 *under this subchapter, the department shall give priority for continued*
18 *financial support under this subchapter to a ~~recipient who has~~ student with*
19 *continuing eligibility superior to first-time applicants.*

20 (2) *If the funding is ~~still~~ insufficient to fully fund the*
21 *scholarships for students with continuing eligibility created under this*
22 *subchapter, the department shall award scholarships ~~after considering~~*
23 *~~applicants~~ based upon the following criteria to students with continuing*
24 *eligibility as follows:*

25 (A) *~~With~~ First, to students who have the highest level of*
26 *progress toward completion of a certificate, an associate degree, or a*
27 *baccalaureate degree and who are enrolled in a program of study that is:*

28 (i) *In an area of critical workforce need as*
29 *determined by the department; or*

30 (ii) *In a science, technology, engineering, or*
31 *mathematics field;*

32 (B) *Second, to students who have the highest level of*
33 *progress toward completion of a certificate, an associate degree, or a*
34 *baccalaureate degree and who are enrolled in a program of study other than*
35 *those listed in subdivision (i)(2)(A) of this section; and*

36 (C) *With Last, in the event funding is insufficient to*

1 fully fund students under subdivision (i)(2)(A) or (B) of this section, to
2 students who have the highest high school or postsecondary grade point
3 average, as applicable to the applicant; and

4 ~~(C) Who are enrolled in or intend to enroll in a program~~
5 ~~of study that is:~~

6 ~~(i) In an area of critical workforce need as~~
7 ~~determined by the department; or~~

8 ~~(ii) In a science, technology, engineering, or~~
9 ~~mathematics field.~~

10 (3) If after funding all students with continuing eligibility
11 under this section funding is insufficient to fund all qualified first-time
12 applicants, the department shall award scholarships to first-time applicants
13 in order of priority based upon the applicants' highest ACT or ACT equivalent
14 scores.

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16 /s/Hickey
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