

1 State of Arkansas  
2 91st General Assembly  
3 Regular Session, 2017  
4  
5 By: Senator A. Clark  
6

# A Bill

SENATE BILL 26

## For An Act To Be Entitled

8 AN ACT TO INCREASE TEACHERS IN HIGH NEEDS SUBJECT  
9 AREAS; TO PROVIDE ENHANCED ARKANSAS ACADEMIC  
10 CHALLENGE SCHOLARSHIPS FOR TEACHERS WHO AGREE TO  
11 TEACH IN THE HIGH NEEDS SUBJECT AREAS; AND FOR OTHER  
12 PURPOSES.

## Subtitle

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16 TO INCREASE TEACHERS IN HIGH NEEDS  
17 SUBJECT AREAS; AND TO PROVIDE ENHANCED  
18 ARKANSAS ACADEMIC CHALLENGE SCHOLARSHIPS  
19 FOR TEACHERS WHO AGREE TO TEACH IN THE  
20 HIGH NEEDS SUBJECT AREAS.

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

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25 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 85, Subchapter 2, is amended  
26 to add an additional section to read as follows:

27 6-85-222. Enhanced scholarships.

28 (a)(1) A recipient of an Arkansas Academic Challenge Scholarship under  
29 this subchapter who meets the requirements under subsection (b) of this  
30 section is eligible for an enhanced scholarship award of:

31 (A) Five thousand dollars (\$5,000) for the academic year  
32 in which the recipient either:

33 (i) Has earned at least fifty-seven (57) semester  
34 credit hours but less than eighty-seven (87) semester credit hours; or

35 (ii) Is classified as a junior by the approved  
36 institution of higher education in which the recipient is enrolled; and



1                   (B) Five thousand dollars (\$5,000) for the academic year  
2 in which the recipient either:

3                   (i) Has earned at least eighty-seven (87) semester  
4 credit hours but no more than one hundred twenty (120) semester credit hours  
5 unless the recipient is enrolled in a baccalaureate degree program that  
6 requires more than one hundred twenty (120) semester credit hours; or

7                   (ii) Is classified as a senior by the approved  
8 institution of higher education in which the recipient is enrolled.

9                   (2) A recipient is eligible to receive a maximum aggregate  
10 enhanced scholarship award of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) under  
11 subdivision (a)(1) of this section.

12                   (b) To be eligible for an enhanced scholarship award under subdivision  
13 (a)(1) of this section, a recipient shall:

14                   (1) Maintain a postsecondary grade point average of 3.25 or  
15 higher on a 4.0 scale at an approved institution of higher education;

16                   (2) Be enrolled in a teacher education program at a four-year  
17 approved institution of higher education; and

18                   (3) Enter into a written agreement with the Department of Higher  
19 Education to teach for a minimum of five (5) consecutive years in a high-  
20 needs subject area as determined by the Department of Education.

21                   (c) The written agreement entered into by the recipient and the  
22 Department of Higher Education under subdivision (b)(3) of this section shall  
23 provide that the recipient:

24                   (1) Shall seek licensure as a teacher from the State Board of  
25 Education within one (1) year of completing the teacher education program and  
26 earning a degree; and

27                   (2) Shall repay the enhanced scholarship award amount:

28                   (A) On a pro rata basis at an interest rate and on a  
29 schedule as determined by the Department of Higher Education for each year  
30 the recipient does not teach in a high-needs subject area if the recipient  
31 does not teach in a high-needs subject area as determined by the Department  
32 of Education for five (5) consecutive years after first becoming employed as  
33 a licensed teacher; or

34                   (B) In its entirety at an interest rate and on a schedule  
35 as determined by the Department of Higher Education if the recipient does  
36 not:

1                   (i) Obtain licensure as a teacher from the State  
2 Board of Education within one (1) year of completing the teacher education  
3 program and earning a degree;

4                   (ii) Begin work as a licensed teacher in a high-  
5 needs subject area, as determined by the Department of Education, in the  
6 academic year immediately following becoming licensed; or

7                   (iii) Teach in a high-needs subject area as  
8 determined by the Department of Education in the recipient's first year as a  
9 licensed teacher.

10           (d)(1) The Department of Higher Education may defer the requirements  
11 under subdivisions (c)(2)(B)(ii) and (iii) if the Department of Higher  
12 Education, in consultation with the Department of Education, determines that  
13 there was no employment position available that would reasonably enable the  
14 recipient to meet the requirements.

15           (2) After the period of deferral, the recipient shall begin or  
16 resume teaching in a high-needs subject area or become subject to repayment  
17 under subdivision (c)(2) of this section.

18           (e)(1) By March 1 of each year, the Department of Education shall  
19 provide to the Department of Higher Education a maximum on the number of  
20 enhanced scholarships that should be awarded under this section for the  
21 following academic year based on the projected needs of licensed teachers in  
22 high-needs subject areas.

23           (2) The Department of Higher Education shall not award for an  
24 academic year more enhanced scholarships than the maximum number provided by  
25 the Department of Education under subdivision (e)(1) of this section.

26           (f) If the Department of Higher Education receives applications from  
27 more qualified applicants than the number of enhanced scholarships available  
28 or if funds are not available to award enhanced scholarships to all qualified  
29 applicants, the Department of Higher Education shall award the enhanced  
30 scholarships on a competitive basis as determined by the Department of Higher  
31 Education.

32           (g) If a recipient of an enhanced scholarship under this section  
33 withdraws from an approved institution of higher education so that under the  
34 rules of that approved institution of higher education the recipient is  
35 entitled to a refund of any tuition, fees, or other charges, the approved  
36 institution of higher education shall pay the refund to which the recipient

1 may be entitled to the Department of Higher Education to the extent of any  
2 amount the Department of Higher Education has paid to the recipient for that  
3 academic year.

4 (h) The Department of Higher Education shall promulgate rules to  
5 implement this section.

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