

1 State of Arkansas
2 92nd General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2019
4

A Bill

SENATE BILL 678

5 By: Senators Elliott, Bond, L. Chesterfield, K. Ingram
6 By: Representatives Walker, Richardson, Richey, Scott
7

For An Act To Be Entitled

8
9 AN ACT CONCERNING THE ARKANSAS ACADEMIC CHALLENGE
10 SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM - PART 2; TO AMEND THE LAW WITH
11 RESPECT TO AWARDS GRANTED UNDER THE ARKANSAS ACADEMIC
12 CHALLENGE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM - PART 2; AND FOR OTHER
13 PURPOSES.
14
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Subtitle

16
17 CONCERNING THE ARKANSAS ACADEMIC
18 CHALLENGE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM - PART 2;
19 AND TO AMEND THE LAW WITH RESPECT TO
20 AWARDS GRANTED UNDER THE ARKANSAS
21 ACADEMIC CHALLENGE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM -
22 PART 2.
23
24

25 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
26

27 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 6-85-207(2), regarding the eligibility
28 requirements for a traditional student applying for an Arkansas Academic
29 Challenge Scholarship, is amended to read as follows:

30 (2) Has a disability identified under the Individuals with
31 Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1400 et seq., as it existed on July
32 1, 2009, and graduated from an Arkansas public high school, and either:

33 (A) Had a minimum composite score of nineteen (19) on the
34 ACT or the equivalent score on an ACT equivalent; ~~or~~

35 (B) Achieved a grade point average of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale;

36 or



1 ~~(B)~~(C) Scored proficient or higher on all state-mandated
2 end-of-course assessments, including without limitation end-of-course
3 assessments on:

- 4 (i) Algebra I;
5 (ii) Geometry;
6 (iii) Biology; and
7 (iv) Literacy;

8
9 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 6-85-210, concerning continuing eligibility
10 requirements under the Arkansas Academic Challenge Scholarship Program – Part
11 2, is amended to add an additional subdivision to read as follows:

12 (e)(1) The award amount of a scholarship under this subchapter for an
13 academic year is not guaranteed to a student from year to year.

14 (2) Before, but no later than, the fall semester of the 2021-
15 2022 school year, the department shall notify a current recipient of a
16 scholarship of the 2022-2023 school year under this subchapter that the
17 recipient's scholarship award amount is subject to change beginning in the
18 2022-2023 school year.

19
20 SECTION 3. Arkansas Code § 6-85-212(e), concerning scholarship award
21 amounts for recipients of an Arkansas Academic Challenge Scholarship, is
22 amended to read as follows:

23 ~~(e)(1)(A) Beginning with the 2016-2017 academic year, The Department~~
24 of Higher Education shall determine annually the scholarship award amount
25 under this subchapter for an academic year for a full-time recipient enrolled
26 in a four-year approved institution of higher education ~~is+~~

27 ~~(i) One thousand dollars (\$1,000) for a recipient~~
28 ~~who has earned less than twenty seven (27) semester credit hours;~~

29 ~~(ii) Four thousand dollars (\$4,000) for a recipient~~
30 ~~who has earned at least twenty seven (27) semester credit hours but less than~~
31 ~~fifty seven (57) semester credit hours;~~

32 ~~(iii) Four thousand dollars (\$4,000) for a recipient~~
33 ~~who has earned at least fifty seven (57) semester credit hours but less than~~
34 ~~eighty seven (87) semester credit hours; and~~

35 ~~(iv)(a) Five thousand dollars (\$5,000) for a~~
36 ~~recipient who has earned at least eighty seven (87) semester credit hours but~~

1 ~~no more than one hundred twenty (120) semester credit hours unless the~~
2 ~~recipient is enrolled in a baccalaureate degree program that requires more~~
3 ~~than one hundred twenty (120) semester credit hours, but not more than one~~
4 ~~hundred thirty (130) semester credit hours, as provided under § 6-61-232,~~
5 ~~then up to the number of credit hours required to complete the baccalaureate~~
6 ~~program.~~

7 ~~(b)(B)~~ A recipient shall receive no more than
8 one (1) year of the scholarship provided under subdivision ~~(e)(1)(A)(iv)(a)~~
9 (e)(1)(A) of this section unless the recipient is enrolled in a baccalaureate
10 degree program that requires more than one hundred twenty (120) semester
11 credit hours as provided under § 6-61-232.

12 ~~(e)(1)(C)(i)~~ A recipient who is eligible to
13 receive ~~the~~ a scholarship under subdivision ~~(e)(1)(A)(iv)(a)~~ (e)(1)(A) of
14 this section may receive the scholarship while enrolled in a semester as a
15 part-time student if the recipient is enrolled in the number of credit hours
16 necessary to complete the recipient's degree program.

17 ~~(2)(ii)~~ The scholarship amount for the
18 semester in which a recipient is enrolled as a part-time student under
19 subdivision ~~(e)(1)(A)(iv)(e)(1)~~ (e)(1)(C)(i) of this section shall be
20 prorated by the number of credit hours in which the recipient is enrolled.

21 ~~(B)(D)~~ The Department of Higher Education shall not accept
22 new applications for scholarships for current achiever students under § 6-85-
23 209 after June 1, 2012.

24 ~~(C)(i)~~ ~~To determine the correct scholarship award amount~~
25 ~~based on credit hours, a first-time recipient shall submit a current college~~
26 ~~or university transcript if the first-time recipient has earned any semester~~
27 ~~credit hours to the Department of Higher Education no later than a date~~
28 ~~determined by the Department of Higher Education prior to the academic year~~
29 ~~for which the first-time recipient will receive an initial scholarship award.~~

30 ~~(ii)~~ ~~A first-time recipient who does not submit a~~
31 ~~transcript to the Department of Higher Education on or before June 1 shall~~
32 ~~receive the award amount under subdivision (e)(1)(A)(i) of this section.~~

33 ~~(D)(i)~~ ~~An applicant may elect for the earned semester~~
34 ~~credit hours under subdivision (e)(1)(A) of this section to be only those~~
35 ~~semester credit hours earned after graduating from high school or obtaining a~~
36 ~~high school equivalency diploma approved by the Department of Career~~

1 ~~Education.~~

2 ~~(ii) If an applicant makes the election under~~
3 ~~subdivision (e)(1)(D)(i) of this section, any semester credit hours earned~~
4 ~~through concurrent credit or any other method before graduating high school~~
5 ~~or obtaining a high school equivalency diploma approved by the Department of~~
6 ~~Career Education shall not be counted as earned semester credit hours for the~~
7 ~~purposes of determining a recipient's scholarship award amount under~~
8 ~~subdivision (e)(1)(A) of this section.~~

9 (2)(A) The Department of Higher Education shall award an
10 aggregate amount of scholarship awards to nontraditional students ~~beginning~~
11 ~~with the 2017-2018 academic year~~ of up to fifteen million dollars
12 (\$15,000,000).

13 (B)(i) The Department of Higher Education shall return to
14 the Office of the Arkansas Lottery the excess funding, if any, for
15 scholarship awards under this subchapter the Department of Higher Education
16 received under § 23-115-801.

17 (ii) The office shall deposit any funds received
18 from the Department of Higher Education under this subdivision (e)(2)(B) into
19 a trust account established under § 23-115-801(b).

20 (C) Priority for scholarships awarded to nontraditional
21 students and current achiever students is based on:

22 (i) The applicant's level of progress toward
23 completion of a certificate, an associate degree, a nursing diploma, a
24 baccalaureate degree, or a graduate-level or professional degree; or

25 (ii) Other criteria established by the Department of
26 Higher Education.

27 (3) The Department of Higher Education shall determine annually
28 the scholarship award for an academic year for a full-time student enrolled
29 in one (1) of the following institutions of higher education ~~is one thousand~~
30 ~~dollars (\$1,000) for the first year and three thousand dollars (\$3,000) for~~
31 ~~the second year:~~

32 (A) A two-year approved institution of higher education;

33 (B) A branch campus of a four-year approved institution of
34 higher education; or

35 (C) An approved nursing school.

36 (4) The scholarship award amount for a part-time student

1 recipient shall be:

2 (A) One-half ($\frac{1}{2}$) of the award amount for a full-time
3 student recipient, as determined annually by the Department of Higher
4 Education under subdivision (e)(1)(A) and subdivision (e)(3) of this section,
5 if the recipient is enrolled in at least six (6) semester hours but less than
6 nine (9) semester hours; or

7 (B) Three-quarters ($\frac{3}{4}$) of the award amount for a full-time
8 student recipient, as determined annually by the Department of Higher
9 Education under subdivision (e)(1)(A) and subdivision (e)(3) of this section,
10 if the recipient is enrolled in at least nine (9) semester hours but less
11 than the number of hours required for a full-time student recipient.

12 ~~(5) A current recipient who maintains eligibility for the~~
13 ~~scholarship under this subchapter shall continue to receive the scholarship~~
14 ~~award amount first awarded to the recipient.~~

15 ~~(6)(5)~~ The Department of Higher Education shall give priority
16 for a scholarship award to a full-time or part-time student:

17 (A) Who meets the eligibility requirements under this
18 subchapter; and

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

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

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

25 (a) In a status identified under 32 U.S.C. §
26 101 et seq. or 10 U.S.C. § 101 et seq. as they existed on January 1, 2011; or

27 (b) In state active duty status.

28 (6)(A) The scholarship award amounts under this subsection are
29 not guaranteed year to year for an academic year for a full-time recipient
30 enrolled in an approved institution of higher education, and are subject to
31 change by the Department of Higher Education as necessary.

32 (B) Before, but no later than, the fall semester of the
33 2021-2022 school year, the Department of Higher Education shall notify a
34 current recipient of a scholarship of the 2022-2023 school year under this
35 subchapter that the recipient's scholarship award amount is subject to change
36 beginning in the 2022-2023 school year.

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SECTION 4. DO NOT CODIFY. Effective date. This act is effective on
and after July 1, 2021.