

State of Arkansas
93rd General Assembly
Regular Session, 2021

A Bill

SENATE BILL 397

By: Senators Irvin, Bledsoe, B. Davis, J. English
By: Representatives Speaks, Barker, Bentley, Brown, Cavanaugh, Crawford, Dalby, D. Ferguson, C. Fite,
M. Gray, Haak, Lundstrum, J. Mayberry, McKenzie, Vaught

For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO CREATE THE HIGHER EDUCATION CONSUMER GUIDE
ACT; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Subtitle

TO CREATE THE HIGHER EDUCATION CONSUMER
GUIDE ACT.

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

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 81, is amended to add an
additional subchapter to read as follows:

Subchapter 19 – Higher Education Consumer Guide Act

6-81-1901. Title.

This subchapter shall be known and may be cited as the "Higher
Education Consumer Guide Act".

6-81-1902. Definitions.

As used in this subchapter:

(1) "Peer institution of higher education" means an in-state or
out-of-state state-supported institution of higher education that is selected
to be used for comparative analysis and benchmarking of institutional
qualities; and

(2) "State-supported institution of higher education" means a
state-supported two-year or four-year college or university.



1
2 6-81-1903. Higher Education Consumer Guide.

3 (a)(1) The Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board shall create a
4 Higher Education Consumer Guide that is designed for use by prospective
5 students and parents and legal guardians of prospective students at a state-
6 supported institution of higher education.

7 (2) The Higher Education Consumer Guide created by the board
8 under subdivision (a)(1) of this section shall be provided to each state-
9 supported institution of higher education for use in the prospective student
10 application process at each state-supported institution of higher education.

11 (b) The Higher Education Consumer Guide created by the board under
12 subdivision (a)(1) of this section shall identify the:

13 (1) Institutional grouping to which each state-supported
14 institution of higher education is assigned under the board's accountability
15 system; and

16 (2) Peer institutions of higher education associated with each
17 state-supported institution of higher education.

18 (c)(1) The Higher Education Consumer Guide created by the board under
19 subdivision (a)(1) of this section shall include the following information as
20 it relates to the most recent state fiscal year for which the information is
21 available:

22 (A) The College Scorecard and the link to the College
23 Navigator as published by the National Center for Education Statistics, which
24 includes without limitation information on the following:

25 (i) Retention and graduation rates;
26 (ii) The cost of tuition; and
27 (iii) The average amount borrowed and loan default
28 rate;

29 (B) The Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System
30 Report, published by the National Center for Education Statistics, which
31 compares institutions to peers in key data points, which shall include
32 without limitation the:

33 (i) Percentage of students who applied for first-
34 time undergraduate admission and were offered admission to each state-
35 supported institution of higher education; and

36 (ii) Average test scores of students admitted to

1 each state-supported institution of higher education;

2 (C) Information regarding employment once the information
3 is reasonably available through the establishment of a state longitudinal
4 data system and interstate compacts for the sharing of employment data, which
5 shall include without limitation the:

6 (i) Job placement of students within the first three
7 (3) years of graduation; and

8 (ii) Income of college alumni over the first twenty
9 (20) years after completion of their credential; and

10 (D) Additional data required to be provided by the
11 Division of Higher Education, which shall include without limitation the:

12 (i) Percentage of students admitted to each state-
13 supported institution of higher education from the top ten percent (10%) of a
14 public high school class located in Arkansas; and

15 (ii) Average number of semesters for completion of
16 an associate's or bachelor's credential at the institution.

17 (2) Information provided under subdivision (c)(1) of this
18 section shall be compared with the same information that is available for the
19 state fiscal year preceding:

20 (A) The most recent state fiscal year; and

21 (B) The reports for the most recent five (5) years.

22 (d) A prospective student shall verify that he or she has been
23 provided the Higher Education Consumer Guide before completing an application
24 to a state-supported institution of higher education.

25 (e) The Higher Education Consumer Guide required by this section shall
26 be made publicly available on the:

27 (1) Board's website; and

28 (2) Website of each state-supported institution of higher
29 education.