

State of Arkansas *As Engrossed: S2/4/25 S2/25/25*

95th General Assembly

A Bill

Regular Session, 2025

SENATE BILL 183

By: Senator J. Dotson

By: Representative Brooks

For An Act To Be Entitled

*AN ACT CONCERNING STANDARDIZED ASSESSMENTS; TO AMEND
THE UNIVERSAL ACT ASSESSMENT PROGRAM ACT; TO AMEND
THE TYPES OF ASSESSMENTS PUBLIC SCHOOLS MAY PROVIDE
TO STUDENTS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.*

Subtitle

*TO AMEND THE UNIVERSAL ACT ASSESSMENT
PROGRAM ACT; AND TO AMEND THE TYPES OF
ASSESSMENTS PUBLIC SCHOOLS MAY PROVIDE
TO STUDENTS.*

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

*SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 18, Subchapter 16 is amended
to read as follows:*

Subchapter 16 – Universal ~~ACT~~ Assessment Program Act

6-18-1601. Title.

*This subchapter shall be known and may be cited as the “Universal ~~ACT~~
Assessment Program Act”.*

6-18-1602. ~~Definitions~~ Definition.

As used in this subchapter:

*(1)(A) “~~ACT Assessment~~” “Assessment” means a test of student
educational development that measures student readiness for future learning
and that may be used by institutions of higher education as part of their
admissions, placement, and scholarship processes and by high schools to*



1 improve college and workforce readiness; ~~and~~

2 ~~(2) "Smart Core" means:~~

3 ~~(A) The college and career readiness curriculum by that~~
4 ~~name under the rules of the State Board of Education; or~~

5 ~~(B) A college and career readiness curriculum that is:~~

6 ~~(i) Established by rules of the state board in~~
7 ~~coordination with the Division of Higher Education; and~~

8 ~~(ii) Substituted for the curriculum named "Smart~~
9 ~~Core".~~

10 "Assessment" includes without limitation:

11 (i) The ACT test;

12 (ii) The SAT;

13 (iii) The CLT;u

14 (iv) The PreACT;

15 (v) The PSAT 8/9;

16 (vi) The PSAT 10;

17 (vii) The Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship
18 Qualifying Test; or

19 (viii) The CLT 10; and

20 (2) "CLT" means the Classic Learning Test administered by Class
21 Learning Initiatives, LLC.

22
23 6-18-1603. Creation.

24 There is created in the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education
25 the Universal ~~ACT~~ Assessment Program to be developed, implemented, and
26 administered by the division as provided in this subchapter.

27
28 6-18-1604. Purpose.

29 The purpose of the Universal ~~ACT~~ Assessment Program is to:

30 (1) Improve the college readiness of all students in grade
31 eleven (11);

32 (2) Prevent or minimize the continued remediation of nearly
33 fifty percent (50%) of all students entering Arkansas institutions of higher
34 education in one (1) or more subjects because they do not meet the ~~college~~
35 recommended readiness score ~~of nineteen (19) or higher on the ACT Assessment~~
36 an assessment;

(3) Advance the number of students, including students of low income, English-language learners, and minority students, taking ~~the ACT Assessment~~ an assessment while in grade eleven (11) to increase the number of first-generation college students;

(4) Increase the college participation rates among all racial and ethnic groups;

(5) Improve preparation for college and the workforce;

(6) Improve the course selection patterns of high school students;

(7) Increase the early identification of college-ready students; and

~~(8) Support students participating in the Smart Core by providing a baseline for their college and workforce readiness and an opportunity to benefit from earlier remediation or course selection review; and~~

~~(9) Provide a link between what students have learned, what they need to learn, and what is necessary in order to be college or workforce ready, or both, by providing expectations and measuring their progress.~~

~~6-18-1605. Smart Core and ACT Assessment.~~

~~(a) The General Assembly finds that students who take the recommended Smart Core courses or students who take additional courses after completing the Smart Core continue to perform better on the ACT Assessment than students who take less than the recommended core.~~

~~(b) The recommended core courses according to ACT Assessment officials include:~~

~~(1) Four (4) years or more of English;~~

~~(2) Three (3) years or more of mathematics;~~

~~(3) Three (3) years or more of social studies; and~~

~~(4) Three (3) years or more of natural sciences.~~

6-18-1606. Implementation.

(a) Beginning with the ~~2017-2018~~ 2025-2026 school year, the Universal ~~ACT~~ Assessment Program may provide each student in grades nine (9), ten (10), eleven (11), or twelve (12) with the opportunity to take ~~the ACT Assessment~~ an assessment while in grades eight (8), nine (9), ten (10), eleven (11), or

1 twelve (12) without any charge by using school district funding, including
2 National School Lunch Act funds, 42 U.S.C. § 1751 et seq., to pay for the
3 exams as approved by the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education.

4 (b) A public school district shall allow a student to choose to take
5 ~~the ACT Assessment~~ an assessment under subsection (a) of this section in
6 grade ten (10) or grade eleven (11).

7
8 6-18-1607. Rules.

9 The Division of Higher Education and the Division of Elementary and
10 Secondary Education shall develop rules for the administration of this
11 subchapter.

12
13 6-18-1608. Reporting.

14 The Division of Higher Education and the Division of Elementary and
15 Secondary Education shall submit a combined annual report to the Legislative
16 Council by December 1 of each year that ~~establishes:~~

17 (1) Establishes compliance with this subchapter, ~~provides;~~

18 (2) Provides data on the number of participants in the Universal
19 ~~ACT Assessment Program;~~ and ~~outlines~~

20 (3) Outlines the impact of this program on the college readiness
21 of high school seniors and the remediation rates at institutions of higher
22 education.

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24 /s/J. Dotson
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