

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to present law.
Act 1008 of the Regular Session

State of Arkansas
91st General Assembly
Regular Session, 2017

As Engrossed: H3/17/17
A Bill

HOUSE BILL 2243

By: Representative Davis

For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO AMEND PROVISIONS OF THE ARKANSAS CODE
CONCERNING SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS; AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES.

Subtitle

TO AMEND PROVISIONS OF THE ARKANSAS CODE
CONCERNING SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS.

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

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 6-81-1101(a), concerning grants for certain professional schools, is amended to read as follows:

(a) The Department of Higher Education shall institute a program of making grants for the benefit of Arkansas residents to assist in paying tuition for attending certain accredited schools of dentistry, optometry, veterinary medicine, podiatry, or chiropractic, ~~or osteopathy~~ located outside the State of Arkansas but within the United States.

SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 6-82-311(c)(2), concerning renewal of the Arkansas Governor's Distinguished Scholarship, is amended to read as follows:

(2) A student receiving ~~the additional~~ a scholarship under ~~§ 6-82-312(b)~~ § 6-82-312(a) maintains not less than a 3.25 grade point average on a 4.0 scholastic grading scale;

SECTION 3. Arkansas Code § 6-82-312 is amended to read as follows:
6-82-312. Scholarship amounts.

(a) An Arkansas Governor's Scholarship or Arkansas Governor's



Distinguished Scholarship awarded to a new recipient who enrolls in ~~college~~ an approved institution as a first-time entering freshmen after July 1, 1995, shall be in the an amount of ~~four thousand dollars (\$4,000)~~ per year, ~~provided funds are available.~~

~~(b) Provided sufficient funds are available, a student who was a first-time entering freshman after July 1, 1997, but before July 1, 2002, and who exhibited extraordinary academic achievement shall be awarded, in addition to the award in subsection (a) of this section, an amount per year which when combined with the award in subsection (a) of this section equals tuition, room and board, and mandatory fees charged in academic year 2000-2001 for a regular full-time course load by the approved institution in which the recipient is enrolled.~~

~~(c) Provided sufficient funds are available, a student who is a first-time entering freshman after July 1, 2002, and who exhibits extraordinary academic achievement shall be awarded, in addition to the award in subsection (a) of this section, an amount per year which when combined with the award in subsection (a) of this section that equals the lesser of:~~

~~(1) Ten thousand dollars (\$10,000); or~~

~~(2) Tuition, room and board, and mandatory fees charged for a regular full-time course load ~~in academic year 2000-2001~~ by the approved institution in which the recipient is enrolled.~~

(b) A student selected as a recipient under § 6-82-306(b)(6)(B)(iii)(b) who enrolls in an approved institution as a first-time entering freshman after July 1, 2017, shall be awarded an amount per year that equals the lesser of:

(A) Five thousand dollars (\$5,000); or

(B) Tuition, room and board, and mandatory fees charged for a regular full-time course load by the approved institution in which the recipient is enrolled.

SECTION 4. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 82, Subchapter 11, is repealed.

~~Subchapter 11—Second Effort Scholarship Program~~

~~6-82-1101. Creation—Purpose.~~

~~(a) The General Assembly recognizes the importance of a high school~~

~~equivalency program for Arkansans desiring to complete the high school degree and go on to postsecondary education.~~

~~(b)(1) An Arkansas student who completes a high school equivalency program and passes a high school equivalency test is commended for his or her initiative and persistence.~~

~~(2) A student who succeeds in this endeavor should also be encouraged to enroll in a postsecondary education program.~~

~~(c) There is established the Second Effort Scholarship Program to reward the top ten (10) scorers each year on a high school equivalency test with a scholarship to an Arkansas postsecondary school or college.~~

~~6-82-1102. Definitions.~~

~~For purposes of this subchapter, the following terms shall be defined as indicated:~~

~~(1) "Approved institution" means any public or private school or college or any public postsecondary vocational and technical school located in Arkansas which awards postsecondary certificates, degrees, or diplomas. Further, such institution shall not discriminate against applicants, students, or employees on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, disability, or national origin, consistent with the provisions of applicable state and federal law;~~

~~(2) "Eligible student" means any student who meets the criteria set out in this subchapter and is deemed to be eligible by rules and regulations authorized by this subchapter and promulgated by the Department of Higher Education;~~

~~(3)(A) "Tuition" means charges levied for attendance at an eligible institution.~~

~~(B) For purposes of this subchapter, tuition charges shall not include any fees charged or used for student activities, including any student athletic fee; and~~

~~(4) "Undergraduate student" means a resident of Arkansas who attends a postsecondary school or college and is enrolled for at least three (3) credit hours per semester or the equivalent, as defined by the Department of Higher Education, in a program of study which leads to a postsecondary certificate, degree, or diploma.~~

~~6-82-1103. Eligibility—Number of scholarships.~~

~~(a) Eligibility for the Second Effort Scholarship Program shall be based on the criteria set forth in this section as well as program rules and regulations adopted pursuant to this subchapter by the Department of Higher Education.~~

~~(b) A student shall be eligible for an award from this program if he or she meets all of these criteria:~~

~~(1) The recipient shall be at least eighteen (18) years of age or a former member of a high school class which has graduated;~~

~~(2) The recipient shall have been a resident of the State of Arkansas for at least twelve (12) months prior to successful completion of the General Educational Development Test;~~

~~(3) The recipient must be a citizen of the United States or be a permanent resident alien;~~

~~(4) The recipient must be accepted for admission at an approved postsecondary school or college as a freshman, as defined by the Department of Higher Education, and must enroll in an approved institution within eighteen (18) months following passage of a high school equivalency test;~~

~~(5) The recipient must have passed a high school equivalency test in the calendar year prior to application for the scholarship; and~~

~~(6)(A) The recipient must have scored in the top ten (10) of all Arkansans who took a high school equivalency test in the calendar year prior to application for the scholarship, as certified to the Department of Higher Education by the Adult Education Section of the Department of Career Education.~~

~~(B) Provided, however, that the Department of Higher Education is authorized to award a high school equivalency scholarship to an otherwise eligible student who scored in the top twenty five (25) on the previous calendar year's high school equivalency test if all test-takers scoring above the applicant on a high school equivalency test:~~

~~(i) Have either received a scholarship;~~

~~(ii) Have not applied by the application deadline;~~

~~or~~

~~(iii) Are otherwise ineligible to receive a scholarship.~~

~~(c) In no case, however, shall the Department of Higher Education~~

~~award more than ten (10) scholarships per year.~~

~~6-82-1104. Amount and duration of scholarship—Funding.~~

~~(a) Each recipient shall receive a scholarship for one (1) academic year or its equivalent for part-time students, as defined by the Department of Higher Education. The scholarship shall be renewable for up to three (3) academic years, or their equivalent for part-time students, if the recipient meets continuing eligibility criteria established by the department.~~

~~(b)(1) The amount of the annual scholarship shall be the lesser of one thousand dollars (\$1,000) or the annual tuition charged by the approved institution in which the recipient is enrolled.~~

~~(2) For part-time students who are recipients, the amount of the annual scholarship shall be prorated on the basis of the number of credit hours enrolled each term such that the recipient receives the maximum equivalent of two hundred fifty dollars (\$250) per three (3) credit hours each term up to a maximum of one thousand dollars (\$1,000).~~

~~(3) Tuition shall mean the charges defined in § 6-82-1102(4).~~

~~(c) Scholarships shall be awarded to eligible recipients contingent on the appropriation of funds for this purpose to the department.~~

~~6-82-1105. Rules and regulations—Review—Certified list.~~

~~(a) The Department of Higher Education is authorized by this subchapter to develop and promulgate rules and regulations for the administration of the Second Effort Scholarship Program, consistent with the purposes and requirements of this subchapter.~~

~~(b) The rules and regulations shall include:~~

~~(1) Student eligibility criteria based on the provisions of this subchapter;~~

~~(2) The method for selecting scholarship recipients;~~

~~(3) Rules for determining continuing eligibility;~~

~~(4) Procedures for making payment to recipients; and~~

~~(5) Such other administrative procedures which may be necessary for the implementation and operation of the program.~~

~~(c) The Director of the Department of Higher Education is authorized to review and evaluate the operation of the program to ensure that the program's operation meets the intent of this legislation.~~

~~(d) The Department of Career Education, Adult Education Section shall provide to the Department of Higher Education by February 1 each year a certified list of the twenty five (25) top scorers on a high school equivalency test administered in the previous calendar year.~~

~~6-82-1106. Scholarship hold.~~

~~The Department of Higher Education may approve a scholarship hold for a student for a period of twenty four (24) months or less for the following reasons without limitation:~~

~~(1) A medical condition of the student or of a member of the student's immediate family that, on the basis of a physician's good-faith judgment, necessitates that the student or the student's immediate family member be hospitalized or receive outpatient or home-based medical care or recuperate until released by the attending physician;~~

~~(2) A personal or family emergency that requires the student to:~~

~~(A) Attend the funeral of an immediate family member; or~~

~~(B) Visit a relative of the student if the relative has a medical condition in which death is possible or imminent;~~

~~(3) Military service under § 6-61-112; or~~

~~(4)(A) A commitment of twelve (12) to twenty four (24) months for service in a national or international humanitarian project sponsored by a nonprofit corporation organized with a charitable or educational purpose.~~

~~(B) The student's commitment shall be expressed in a written agreement with the nonprofit organization, including the terms of completion for the student's service on the related project.~~

~~(C) The department shall release a scholarship hold if the department determines that the student did not complete the commitment under the written agreement.~~

SECTION 5. Arkansas Code § 6-85-208 is amended to read as follows:

6-85-208. Additional eligibility requirements for a nontraditional student.

An applicant is eligible as a nontraditional student if, in addition to the requirements of § 6-85-206, the applicant meets one (1) of the following requirements:

(1) If the applicant has not been enrolled in an approved

institution of higher education, has either:

(A) Graduated from an Arkansas public high school and achieved a 2.5 high school grade point average ~~but has not successfully completed at least twelve (12) semester hours of credit of courses under subdivision (2)(B) of this section;~~ or

~~(2)(B)~~ Graduated from an Arkansas public high school, a private high school, an out-of-state high school, a home school high school, or obtained a high school equivalency diploma approved by the Department of Career Education and ~~either:~~

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

~~(B)(i)~~ Has ~~successfully completed at least twelve (12) semester hours of courses granting three (3) or more hours of credit per course at an institution of higher education and earned a postsecondary grade point average of at least 2.5.~~

~~(ii)~~ A course granting less than three (3) hours of credit may be counted toward the twelve (12) semester hours under this subdivision (2)(B) if it is related to a credit course required for a degree

(2) If the applicant has been enrolled in an approved institution of higher education, has earned a postsecondary grade point average of at least 2.5.

SECTION 6. Arkansas Code § 6-85-212(e)(1)(C)(i), concerning transcript submission, is amended to read as follows:

(C)(i) To determine the correct scholarship award amount based on credit hours, a first-time recipient shall submit a current college or university transcript if the first-time recipient has earned any semester credit hours to the Department of Higher Education no later than June 1 a date determined by the department each year prior to the academic year for which the first-time recipient will receive an initial scholarship award.

/s/Davis

APPROVED: 04/06/2017