

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to present law.

State of Arkansas  
92nd General Assembly  
Regular Session, 2019

As Engrossed: S4/3/19  
**A Bill**

SENATE BILL 678

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

### **For An Act To Be Entitled**

AN ACT CONCERNING THE ARKANSAS ACADEMIC CHALLENGE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM - PART 2; TO AMEND THE LAW WITH RESPECT TO AWARDS GRANTED UNDER THE ARKANSAS ACADEMIC CHALLENGE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM - PART 2; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

### **Subtitle**

CONCERNING THE ARKANSAS ACADEMIC CHALLENGE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM - PART 2; AND TO AMEND THE LAW WITH RESPECT TO AWARDS GRANTED UNDER THE ARKANSAS ACADEMIC CHALLENGE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM - PART 2.

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

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

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

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

B) Achieved a grade point average of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale.

~~(B) Scored proficient or higher on all state-mandated end-of-~~



~~course assessments, including without limitation end-of-course assessments on:~~

- ~~(i) Algebra I;~~
- ~~(ii) Geometry;~~
- ~~(iii) Biology; and~~
- ~~(iv) Literacy;~~

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

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

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

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

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

- ~~(i) One thousand dollars (\$1,000) for a recipient who has earned less than twenty seven (27) semester credit hours;~~
- ~~(ii) Four thousand dollars (\$4,000) for a recipient who has earned at least twenty seven (27) semester credit hours but less than fifty seven (57) semester credit hours;~~
- ~~(iii) Four thousand dollars (\$4,000) for a recipient who has earned at least fifty seven (57) semester credit hours but less than eighty seven (87) semester credit hours; and~~
- ~~(iv)(a) Five thousand dollars (\$5,000) for a recipient who has earned at least eighty seven (87) semester credit hours but no more than one hundred twenty (120) semester credit hours unless the~~

~~recipient is enrolled in a baccalaureate degree program that requires more than one hundred twenty (120) semester credit hours, but not more than one hundred thirty (130) semester credit hours, as provided under § 6-61-232, then up to the number of credit hours required to complete the baccalaureate program.~~

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

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

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

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

~~(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 a date determined by the Department of Higher Education prior to the academic year for which the first-time recipient will receive an initial scholarship award.~~

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(C) An approved nursing school.

(4) The scholarship award amount for a part-time student recipient shall be:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(b) In state active duty status.

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

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

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

*/s/Elliott*