

1 **HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - FLOOR VERSION**

2 STATE OF OKLAHOMA

3 1st Session of the 56th Legislature (2017)

4 ENGROSSED SENATE
5 BILL NO. 600

By: Smalley of the Senate

and

Henke of the House

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9 An Act relating to the Oklahoma Tuition Equalization
10 Grant Act; amending 70 O.S. 2011, Section 2632, as
11 amended by Section 1, Chapter 287, O.S.L. 2015 (70
12 O.S. Supp. 2016, Section 2632), which relates to
13 eligibility requirements; replacing certain
14 institution as eligible for an Oklahoma Tuition
15 Equalization Grant; requiring participating
16 institutions to have certain not-for-profit status;
17 providing an effective date; and declaring an
18 emergency.

19 BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

20 SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2011, Section 2632, as
21 amended by Section 1, Chapter 287, O.S.L. 2015 (70 O.S. Supp. 2016,
22 Section 2632), is amended to read as follows:

23 Section 2632. A. To be eligible for an Oklahoma Tuition
24 Equalization Grant, a student shall:

1. Be an Oklahoma resident as defined by the Oklahoma State
Regents for Higher Education;

1 2. Have enrolled as a full-time undergraduate student in an
2 eligible institution of higher education as prescribed in subsection
3 D of this section;

4 3. Meet the income eligibility level, which is the student's
5 parents' income from taxable and nontaxable sources which shall not
6 be more than Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000.00) per year or the
7 student's income if the student is independent and self-supporting
8 as determined by the State Regents consistent with federal financial
9 aid regulations;

10 4. Pay more tuition than is required at a comparable public
11 institution of higher education and pay no less than the regular
12 tuition required of all students enrolled at the institution where
13 the student is enrolled; and

14 5. Maintain at least minimum standards of academic performance
15 as required by the enrolling institution.

16 B. The enrolling institution shall forward a completed student
17 application, documentation of full-time enrollment status, and
18 certification of resident status to the State Regents no later than
19 October 15 for the fall semester and March 15 for the spring
20 semester of each academic year.

21 C. Subject to the availability of funds in the Oklahoma Tuition
22 Equalization Grant Trust Fund, an Oklahoma Tuition Equalization
23 Grant in the amount of Two Thousand Dollars (\$2,000.00) per academic
24 year, or One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00) per academic semester

1 shall be awarded by the State Regents by allocation from the
2 Oklahoma Tuition Equalization Grant Trust Fund, beginning with
3 eligible students enrolled in the 2003-2004 school year. No grants
4 pursuant to this act shall be provided to students for attending
5 summer terms or intersessions.

6 D. The State Regents shall implement policies and procedures
7 for the administration of this act. The State Regents shall approve
8 as eligible institutions of higher education only those private or
9 independent, not-for-profit colleges or universities that are
10 domiciled within this state, meet approved program and accreditation
11 standards as determined by the State Regents, and are fully
12 accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central
13 Association on Colleges and Schools or a national accrediting body
14 recognized by the United States Department of Education. To be
15 eligible, institutions must have been granted not-for-profit status
16 by the Internal Revenue Service and the U. S. Department of
17 Education prior to July 1, 2012. Additionally, eligible
18 institutions shall adhere to the complaint process policies and
19 procedures administered by the State Regents. The State Regents
20 shall review and take action, as authorized, on complaints
21 concerning eligible institutions. The eligible institutions shall
22 include Bacone College, Family of Faith College, Mid-America
23 Christian University, Oklahoma Baptist University, Oklahoma
24 Christian University, Oklahoma City University, Oklahoma Wesleyan

1 University, Oral Roberts University, Southern Nazarene University,
2 Southwestern Christian University, St. Gregory's University, the
3 University of Tulsa and ~~Hillsdale Free Will Baptist College~~ Randall
4 University.

5 E. If funds are not sufficient in the Oklahoma Tuition
6 Equalization Grant Trust Fund to provide grants for all eligible
7 applicants, the State Regents shall award grants on the basis of
8 need and take into consideration other grants and scholarships
9 received by an eligible applicant when awarding grants. Students
10 who have previously received a tuition equalization grant and who
11 continue to meet the requirements for eligibility shall have
12 absolute priority for continued financial support superior to any
13 student who is applying for a grant for the first time.

14 F. Students enrolling as first-time freshmen for the 2003-2004
15 school year shall be the first class of students eligible to apply
16 for Oklahoma Tuition Equalization Grants. In subsequent years, all
17 previously eligible students and the first-time enrolling freshmen
18 students shall be entitled to apply for a grant pursuant to this
19 section. Beginning in the 2007-2008 school year, all eligible
20 students shall be entitled to apply for a grant pursuant to this
21 section.

22 G. A grant provided by this section shall not be allowed for
23 courses or other postsecondary units taken in excess of the
24 requirements for completion of a baccalaureate program or taken more

1 than five (5) years after the student's first grant is received.

2 The State Regents may award an Oklahoma Tuition Equalization Grant
3 for courses of postsecondary units taken more than five (5) years
4 after the student's first grant is received only in hardship
5 circumstances. No Oklahoma Tuition Equalization Grant recipient may
6 receive benefits beyond a cumulative time period of five (5) years.

7 H. On or before February 1 after the first semester in which
8 grants are awarded pursuant to this act and every year thereafter,
9 the State Regents shall provide a report to the Governor, President
10 Pro Tempore of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of
11 Representatives to include, but not be limited to the number of
12 students awarded grants, grade point average, persistence rates,
13 degree completion rates, demographic data, and any other indicators
14 the State Regents deem appropriate.

15 SECTION 2. This act shall become effective July 1, 2017.

16 SECTION 3. It being immediately necessary for the preservation
17 of the public peace, health or safety, an emergency is hereby
18 declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and
19 be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

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21 COMMITTEE REPORT BY: COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION AND CAREER TECH,
22 dated 04/12/2017 - DO PASS.
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