

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

1st Session of the 58th Legislature (2021)

HOUSE BILL 1821

By: McBride and Hasenbeck

AS INTRODUCED

An Act relating to higher education; amending 70 O.S. 2011, Sections 626.4, 626.7 and 626.8, which relate to the Oklahoma Higher Education Tuition Aid Act; modifying process for awarding state tuition aid grants; permitting annual award of grants; removing prohibition to increase the annual maximum award amount; altering administration procedures for the grants; including factors to use in determining participation priorities; and providing an effective date.

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

SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2011, Section 626.4, is amended to read as follows:

Section 626.4 State tuition aid grants shall be awarded ~~to all~~ ~~eligible applicants~~ without any limitation on the number to be awarded in any year other than the amount of appropriations available therefor. The institution involved may appropriately schedule work to permit recipients to earn the amount of said tuition grants.

1 Definitions of full-time and part-time undergraduate and
2 graduate students shall be established by the Oklahoma State Regents
3 for Higher Education.

4 SECTION 2. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2011, Section 626.7, is
5 amended to read as follows:

6 Section 626.7 A college tuition aid grant ~~shall~~ may be awarded
7 annually to each eligible, qualified full-time or part-time
8 undergraduate or graduate student enrolled in a curriculum leading
9 to a degree or certificate in an institution of collegiate grade or
10 postsecondary institution providing a program of training to prepare
11 students for employment in a recognized occupation in Oklahoma
12 approved or accredited by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher
13 Education or appropriate postsecondary agency in accordance with the
14 following:

15 1. Eligibility. Each full-time or part-time resident student
16 will be eligible to receive a grant in an amount as provided in
17 paragraph 2 of this section. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher
18 Education shall determine by rules and regulations the maximum
19 number of semesters a student may be eligible for grants. No
20 student shall be eligible for grants unless the student maintains
21 such minimum standards of academic performance as are required by
22 the institution in which the student is enrolled.

1 In the event a student for any reason ceases to continue to be
2 enrolled during the course of an academic year, the student shall
3 cease to be eligible for tuition aid.

4 2. Amount of grant. The amount of tuition aid grant to any
5 student under this act for any semester shall represent a percentage
6 not greater than seventy-five percent (75%) of the tuition and
7 enrollment fees normally charged to residents of the State of
8 Oklahoma by the institution of attendance. The Oklahoma State
9 Regents for Higher Education shall determine by rules the annual
10 maximum award amount based on an annual assessment of funds
11 availability. ~~The State Regents shall not increase the annual~~
12 ~~maximum award amount unless funding is sufficient to serve at least~~
13 ~~the same number of students as the previous academic year.~~

14 ~~For the 2000-2001 academic year and each academic year~~
15 ~~thereafter, the percentage of aid shall be based on a need analysis~~
16 ~~system that is consistent with federal student financial aid~~
17 ~~regulations. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education shall~~
18 ~~set an annual award payment schedule based upon a maximum grant of~~
19 ~~seventy five percent (75%) of tuition and fees with grants based on~~
20 ~~lower percentages of tuition and fees being awarded to students who~~
21 ~~demonstrate lower financial need.~~

22 ~~Any student who receives an award for the 1999-2000 academic~~
23 ~~year shall not be denied additional awards because of inability to~~
24 ~~meet the financial standards established in this act as long as~~

~~other eligibility criteria continue to be met and as long as the award status of the student is renewed on an annual basis. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education are authorized to establish procedures to determine the financial need of the student under the standards used during the 1999-2000 academic year until the initial degree requirements are met by the student.~~

Financial assistance received under this act will be considered as part of a student's financial aid package.

SECTION 3. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2011, Section 626.8, is amended to read as follows:

Section 626.8 The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education may adopt rules and regulations, prescribe and provide appropriate forms for application and employ such persons, contract for such services and make such additional expenditures as may be necessary or appropriate for effectuating the provisions of this act.

The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education are hereby authorized to determine priorities for participation in this tuition aid program ~~by~~ based upon factors including, but not limited to, ~~full-time, or part-time enrollment status,~~ undergraduate and or graduate students enrollment status, unmet financial need, continuous enrollment, nearness to completion of a degree or certificate, state employment needs, eligibility for other state and institutional student financial aid and based on available state funding.

SECTION 4. This act shall become effective November 1, 2021.

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