

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2nd Session of the 60th Legislature (2026)

POLICY COMMITTEE

RECOMMENDATION

FOR

HOUSE BILL NO. 2398

By: Hill

POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

An Act relating to education; defining terms; authorizing the State Regents for Higher Education and the Department of Career and Technology Education to designate a credential of value; listing criteria for a credential of value; permitting the designation of a credential of value if the credential is determined to be essential to meeting documented state workforce needs; authorizing the State Regents and the Department to adopt a definition of self-sufficient wage; authorizing the State Regents and the Department to promulgate rules and determine procedures to implement the section; requiring annual report from institutions, agencies, and schools on data required to evaluate credentials under this section; requiring the State Regents and the Department to annually publish a statewide credential of value list; authorizing the State Regents and the Department to enter into data-sharing agreements; and providing for codification.

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

SECTION 1. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 9201 of Title 70, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

A. As used in this section:

1        1. "Coordinating entity" means the Oklahoma State Regents for  
2 Higher Education or the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology  
3 Education;

4        2. "Credential of value" means a certificate, degree, license,  
5 industry-recognized credential, apprenticeship credential, or other  
6 postsecondary or career-technical award issued by an educational  
7 provider that meets the criteria established under this section;

8        3. "Educational provider" means any institution, agency, or  
9 school coordinated by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher  
10 Education or governed by the Oklahoma Department of Career and  
11 Technology Education; and

12       4. "Net cost of attendance" means the cost of attendance minus  
13 all grants, scholarships, fee waivers, or other aid received by the  
14 individual.

15       B. A coordinating entity may designate a credential as a  
16 credential of value if the credential satisfies the following  
17 criteria:

18       1. The credential provides a positive return on investment for  
19 individuals who complete the credential, demonstrated by:

- 20           a. cumulative earnings within a time period specified by  
21 the coordinating entity that coordinates or governs  
22 the educational provider that are equal to or exceed  
23 the statewide median earnings for Oklahoma high school  
24 graduates, and

b. earnings that allow the credential holder to recoup the net cost of attendance within a time period specified by the coordinating entity that coordinates or governs the educational provider; and

2. The credential is aligned with state and regional labor market demand, as determined by the coordinating entity that coordinates or governs the educational provider, using data from the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission, the Oklahoma Workforce Commission, or other labor market sources recognized by the coordinating entity.

C. A coordinating entity may designate a credential as a credential of value even if it does not meet one or more criteria under subsection B of this section if the credential is determined by the coordinating entity to be essential to meeting documented state workforce needs.

D. A coordinating entity may adopt a definition of a self-sufficient wage for purposes of this section that aligns with:

1. Statewide self-sufficiency wage benchmarks; or
2. Regional economic and labor market data that reflect the cost of living and labor market conditions in Oklahoma.

E. A coordinating entity may promulgate rules and determine procedures to implement the provisions of this section, including:

1. Standard methodologies for calculating return on investment and net cost of attendance;

2. Criteria and data sources for assessing alignment with workforce demand;

3. A unified statewide process for designating and periodically reviewing credentials of value; and

4. A shared reporting structure and timeline for all education providers under the coordination or governance of the coordinating entity.

F. 1. Each educational provider shall annually report the data required to evaluate credentials under this section to the coordinating entity that coordinates or governs the educational provider. Such data shall include, but is not limited to, the following:

- a. enrollment, completion, and credential attainment,
- b. graduate employment rate and earnings outcomes, and
- c. program cost information.

2. A coordinating entity shall annually publish a statewide credential of value list, accessible to the public, identifying all credentials designated under this section.

G. A coordinating entity may enter into data-sharing agreements with the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission, the Oklahoma Workforce Commission, and other state agencies to support the evaluation and designation of credentials of value.

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