

House Engrossed

State of Arizona
House of Representatives
Forty-eighth Legislature
Second Regular Session
2008

HOUSE BILL 2736

AN ACT

AMENDING SECTION 15-105, ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES; RELATING TO THE EARLY GRADUATION SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM.

(TEXT OF BILL BEGINS ON NEXT PAGE)

1 Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Arizona:

2 Section 1. Section 15-105, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
3 read:

4 15-105. Early graduation scholarship program: fund: program
5 termination: definition

6 A. Each school district or charter school that provides instruction in
7 grades nine through twelve in this state shall participate in and promote to
8 students an early graduation scholarship program.

9 B. The commission for postsecondary education shall develop
10 application forms, procedures and deadlines to implement and administer the
11 early graduation scholarship program in conjunction with the department of
12 education ~~by November 1, 2007~~ and shall select eligible students each year
13 for participation in the early graduation scholarship program. The school
14 district or charter school that the student attends shall notify the
15 department of education and the commission for postsecondary education if the
16 student graduates at least one semester before the student's scheduled
17 graduation date.

18 C. Participating full-time students who graduate:

19 1. At least one year early shall receive a scholarship grant in an
20 amount not to exceed one thousand two hundred fifty dollars or the actual
21 cost of tuition, books and fees, whichever is less, in the first academic
22 year of postsecondary instruction, and an amount not to exceed seven hundred
23 fifty dollars or the actual cost of tuition, books and fees, whichever is
24 less, in the second academic year of postsecondary instruction, to be used to
25 pay all or a portion of the tuition, books and fees charged at a qualifying
26 postsecondary institution for a maximum of two academic years, which must be
27 completed within thirty-six months after the student's actual graduation date
28 from high school. The amount of a scholarship grant awarded to a
29 participating part-time student enrolled ~~in at least six credit hours~~ AT
30 LEAST HALF-TIME FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR AS DEFINED IN 20 UNITED STATES CODE
31 SECTION 1088 shall be prorated in accordance with the part-time status of the
32 student.

33 2. One semester early shall receive a scholarship grant in an amount
34 not to exceed one thousand dollars or the actual cost of tuition, books and
35 fees, whichever is less, in the first academic year of postsecondary
36 instruction, and an amount not to exceed five hundred dollars or the actual
37 cost of tuition, books and fees, whichever is less, in the second academic
38 year of postsecondary instruction, to be used to pay all or a portion of the
39 tuition, books and fees charged at a qualifying postsecondary institution for
40 a maximum of two academic years, which must be completed within thirty-six
41 months after the student's actual graduation date from high school. The
42 amount of a scholarship grant awarded to a participating part-time student
43 enrolled ~~in at least six credit hours~~ HALF-TIME FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR AS
44 DEFINED IN 20 UNITED STATES CODE SECTION 1088 shall be prorated in accordance
45 with the part-time status of the student.

1 D. A student who provides satisfactory proof to the commission for
2 postsecondary education that the student has met all of the following
3 criteria is eligible to submit an application for consideration for a
4 scholarship grant under the early graduation scholarship program:

5 1. The student has graduated from a charter school or a public high
6 school that is part of a school district in this state at least one semester
7 earlier than the student's class is scheduled to graduate.

8 2. The student has achieved a passing score on each component of the
9 Arizona instrument to measure standards test that is required for graduation
10 from high school.

11 3. The student is currently a resident of this state and has been a
12 resident of this state for at least the past twelve months.

13 4. The student submits a statement from the qualifying postsecondary
14 institution that details the cost of tuition, books and fees for that
15 student.

16 5. The student has completed and submitted a free application for
17 federal student aid.

18 6. The student or the student's parent or legal guardian **ANNUALLY**
19 signs a promissory note for reimbursement pursuant to subsection J of this
20 section.

21 E. The school district or charter school from which the student
22 graduated shall include the student who graduates early in the school
23 district's or charter school's student count until the student's class is
24 scheduled to graduate and shall continue to receive per pupil funding minus
25 two thousand two hundred dollars for a student who graduates at least one
26 year early or one thousand seven hundred dollars for a student who graduates
27 one semester early, whichever is applicable, until the student's class is
28 scheduled to graduate. The school district or charter school shall place the
29 per pupil funding received in the school district's or charter school's
30 maintenance and operations fund.

31 F. The department of education shall deposit two thousand two hundred
32 dollars for a student who graduates at least one year early or one thousand
33 seven hundred dollars for a student who graduates one semester early,
34 whichever is applicable, of the amount of per pupil funding provided to a
35 school district or charter school for a student who graduates at least one
36 semester early in the early graduation scholarship fund established by this
37 section.

38 G. The commission for postsecondary education shall make awards from
39 the early graduation scholarship fund for payment of tuition, books and fees
40 at qualifying postsecondary institutions to students who are selected to
41 participate in the early graduation scholarship program on verification of
42 admission and enrollment by the qualifying postsecondary institutions.

43 H. If the amount of monies available for scholarship grants in any
44 fiscal year is insufficient to provide scholarship grants to all eligible
45 applicants, the commission for postsecondary education shall award

1 scholarship grants to eligible students in the order in which the
2 applications were received by the commission, except that priority shall be
3 given to eligible students who received a scholarship grant in the previous
4 fiscal year and who are still in good academic standing at the same
5 qualifying postsecondary institution or who transferred to a different
6 qualifying postsecondary institution but remain in good academic standing at
7 the previous qualifying postsecondary institution. The commission for
8 postsecondary education shall maintain a waiting list for all other
9 applicants.

10 I. A qualifying postsecondary institution shall notify the commission
11 for postsecondary education if a student who has received a scholarship grant
12 is no longer in good academic standing at the qualifying postsecondary
13 institution or is no longer enrolled at the qualifying postsecondary
14 institution.

15 J. Not later than thirty-six months after the student's actual
16 graduation date from high school, the student or the qualifying postsecondary
17 institution shall reimburse the early graduation scholarship fund for any
18 scholarship grant received pursuant to subsection C of this section if the
19 student ~~is no longer in good academic standing at the qualifying~~
20 ~~postsecondary institution or is no longer enrolled at the qualifying~~
21 ~~postsecondary institution~~ HAS NOT COMPLETED THE ACADEMIC YEAR AS DEFINED IN
22 20 UNITED STATES CODE SECTION 1088. The commission for postsecondary
23 education may waive the reimbursement requirements of this subsection for
24 good cause shown. A student shall provide proof that the student completed
25 the first year in good academic standing from the qualifying postsecondary
26 institution to the commission for postsecondary education before receiving
27 monies for the second year from the early graduation scholarship fund.

28 K. A student who receives an early graduation scholarship grant shall
29 be allowed, at no additional cost except for fees charged to all students, to
30 both:

31 1. Participate in extracurricular activities until the student's high
32 school class is scheduled to graduate.

33 2. Participate in the student's high school class graduation
34 ceremonies.

35 L. The early graduation scholarship fund is established consisting of
36 monies deposited pursuant to subsection F of this section and all repayments
37 that are received pursuant to subsection J of this section. The commission
38 for postsecondary education shall administer the fund. Monies in the fund
39 are continuously appropriated and are exempt from the provisions of section
40 35-190 relating to lapsing of appropriations. On notice from the commission,
41 the state treasurer shall invest and divest monies in the fund as provided by
42 section 35-313, and monies earned from the investment shall be credited to
43 the fund. The commission may retain up to five per cent of the monies in the
44 fund for administrative costs. The commission may hire up to two full-time

1 equivalent positions for the implementation and administration of the early
2 graduation scholarship program.

3 M. The commission for postsecondary education shall submit an annual
4 report by December 1 to the governor, the president of the senate and the
5 speaker of the house of representatives and a copy of the report shall be
6 submitted to the secretary of state and the director of the Arizona state
7 library, archives and public records. The report shall contain at least the
8 following:

9 1. The number of students who graduated at least one year early and
10 the number of students who graduated at least one semester early for each
11 year of implementation of the program by each school district and charter
12 school.

13 2. The number of scholarships provided pursuant to this section.

14 3. The average amount per scholarship provided pursuant to this
15 section.

16 4. The balance in the early graduation scholarship fund.

17 5. The number of students using a scholarship to attend a regionally
18 or nationally accredited public or private postsecondary institution and the
19 number of students using a scholarship to attend a regionally or nationally
20 accredited vocational program.

21 6. A description of how the commission expended monies for
22 administrative costs of the program pursuant to subsection L of this section.

23 N. The program established by this section ends on July 1, 2017
24 pursuant to section 41-3102.

25 O. For the purposes of this section, "qualifying postsecondary
26 institution" means a regionally or nationally accredited public or private
27 postsecondary educational institution in this state or a regionally or
28 nationally accredited vocational program in this state.