

1 STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2 1st Session of the 60th Legislature (2025)

3 COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE
4 FOR

5 HOUSE BILL NO. 1282

6 By: Caldwell (Chad)

7 COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE

8 [scholarships - eligibility - program - awards -
9 amounts - waivers - award - name - rules - names -
10 effective date -
11 emergency]

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13
14 BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

15 SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2021, Section 2401,
16 is amended to read as follows:

17 Section 2401. Sections ~~4~~ 2401 through ~~10~~ 2407 of this
18 ~~act~~ title shall be known and may be cited as the "Oklahoma
19 ~~State Regents' Academic Rising Scholars Award Act-~~".

20 SECTION 2. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2021, Section 2402,
21 is amended to read as follows:

22 Section 2402. A. There is hereby created the Oklahoma
23 ~~State Regents' Academic Rising Scholars Award~~ Program. The
24 purpose of the Oklahoma ~~State Regents' Academic Rising~~

1 Scholars Award Program is to retain top-ranked students from
2 Oklahoma in Oklahoma colleges, enable Oklahoma institutions
3 of higher education to compete aggressively for top Oklahoma
4 scholars, attract high-caliber out-of-state students to
5 Oklahoma to attend colleges and universities, and enhance the
6 academic quality in Oklahoma colleges and universities. The
7 program shall provide participants funding for enrollment
8 fees, tuition and other fees, room and board and required
9 textbooks or materials for up to five (5) years of
10 undergraduate and/or graduate study at accredited
11 institutions of higher education in Oklahoma.

12 B. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education shall
13 administer the provisions of the Oklahoma ~~State Regents' Academic~~
14 Rising Scholars Award Program.

15 SECTION 3. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2021, Section 2403, is
16 amended to read as follows:

17 Section 2403. A. No person shall be eligible to participate in
18 the Oklahoma ~~State Regents' Academic~~ Rising Scholars Award Program
19 unless the person:

20 1. Has complied with all of the rules promulgated by the
21 Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education pursuant to the
22 provisions of the Oklahoma ~~State Regents' Academic~~ Rising Scholars
23 Award Act, Section 2401 et seq. of this title, for the award,
24 regulation, and administration of scholarships; and

1 2. Qualifies as one of the following:

2 a. an Individual Applicant Qualified Student, which shall
3 mean a student who is a resident of the State of
4 Oklahoma whose American College Testing Program score
5 or whose Scholastic Aptitude Test score falls within
6 the 99.5 to 100.0 percentile levels as administered in
7 the State of Oklahoma and whose grade point average
8 and/or class rank is exceptional, as determined by the
9 State Regents,

10 b. a Presidential Scholar, which shall mean a student
11 selected by the Commission on Presidential Scholars
12 administered by the United States Department of
13 Education,

14 c. a National Merit Scholar, which shall mean a student
15 designated as a National Merit Scholar by the National
16 Merit Scholarship Corporation,

17 d. a National Merit Finalist, which shall mean a student
18 designated as a National Merit Finalist by the
19 National Merit Scholarship Corporation, or

20 e. after October 1, 1999, an Institutional Nominee, which
21 shall mean a student nominated by an institution in
22 The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education:

- 1 (1) whose American College Testing Program or
2 Scholastic Aptitude Test score falls within the
3 95.0 to 99.49 percentile levels, or
4 (2) who shows exceptional academic achievement as
5 evidenced by factors, including, but not limited
6 to, grade point average, class rank, national
7 awards, scholastic achievements, honors, and who
8 shows exceptional promise based on documentation
9 that may include, but not be limited to, teacher
10 recommendations, extracurricular activities, and
11 evidence of overcoming economic and social
12 obstacles as determined by the State Regents.
13 The State Regents shall ensure that standards of
14 high academic ability are documented.
15 Scholarship awards to Institutional Nominees
16 shall become effective when appropriate
17 documentation is verified by the State Regents.

18 B. No person shall be eligible to receive a scholarship
19 pursuant to the provisions of the Oklahoma ~~State Regents' Academic~~
20 Rising Scholars Award Program unless the person is enrolled as a
21 full-time student at a public or private accredited institution of
22 higher education in Oklahoma.

23 C. The For a student who qualifies pursuant to subparagraphs a
24 through d of paragraph 2 of subsection A of this section and subject

1 to the availability of funds, the Oklahoma State Regents' Academic
2 Rising Scholars Award Program shall provide a scholarship in an
3 amount not to exceed the average costs of all enrollment fees,
4 tuition and other fees, room and board, and all required textbooks
5 or materials for up to five (5) years of undergraduate and/or
6 graduate study at an accredited public or private institution of
7 higher education in Oklahoma as provided in subsection E of this
8 section. The State Regents may establish separate scholarship award
9 levels for each qualifying category.

10 1. If the student is attending an institution within The
11 Oklahoma State System of Higher Education, the total funding for the
12 scholarship provided in this subsection, exclusive of any
13 internships, shall not exceed the costs for items specified in this
14 subsection at the institution attended as determined annually by the
15 Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education.

16 2. If the student is attending a private institution of higher
17 education, the total funding for the scholarship provided in this
18 subsection, exclusive of any internships, shall not exceed the costs
19 for items specified in this subsection at an institution of The
20 Oklahoma State System of Higher Education of comparable type which
21 has the highest general enrollment fees of its type of institution
22 in The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education as determined
23 annually by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education.

24

1 D. For a student who qualifies pursuant to subparagraph e of
2 paragraph 2 of subsection A of this section and subject to the
3 availability of funds, the Oklahoma Rising Scholars Award Program
4 shall provide a scholarship in an amount not to exceed the average
5 costs of all enrollment fees and other fees, room and board, and all
6 required textbooks or materials for up to five (5) years of
7 undergraduate and/or graduate study at an accredited public or
8 private institution of higher education in Oklahoma. The State
9 Regents may establish separate scholarship award levels for each
10 qualifying category.

11 1. If the student is attending an institution within The
12 Oklahoma State System of Higher Education, the institution shall
13 provide a tuition waiver not to exceed the average cost of tuition.
14 The total funding for the scholarship and waiver provided for
15 students attending an institution within The Oklahoma State System
16 of Higher Education as provided in this subsection, exclusive of any
17 internships, shall not exceed the costs for items specified in this
18 subsection at the institution attended as determined annually by the
19 Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education.

20 2. If the student is attending a private institution of higher
21 education in Oklahoma, the scholarship shall include an amount not
22 to exceed the average cost of tuition. The total funding for
23 scholarships for students attending a private institution as
24 provided in this subsection, exclusive of any internships, shall not

1 exceed the costs for items specified in this subsection at an
2 institution within The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education of
3 comparable type which has the highest general enrollment fees of its
4 type of institution in The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education
5 as determined annually by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher
6 Education.

7 E. If a person identifies himself or herself as a student with
8 a disability and requests consideration for a scholarship under the
9 ~~Academic~~ Oklahoma Rising Scholars Program Award by means other than
10 standard testing procedures, the State Regents shall determine what
11 means of assessment are appropriate and upon the basis of said
12 assessment results, determine what level of award, if any, shall be
13 made.

14 ~~E. 1. If the student is attending an institution of The~~
15 ~~Oklahoma State System of Higher Education, the total funding for the~~
16 ~~scholarship provided in this section, exclusive of any internships,~~
17 ~~shall not exceed the costs for items specified in subsection C of~~
18 ~~this section at the institution attended as determined annually by~~
19 ~~the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education.~~

20 ~~2. If the student is attending a private institution of higher~~
21 ~~education, the total funding for the scholarship provided in this~~
22 ~~section, exclusive of any internships, shall not exceed the costs~~
23 ~~for items specified in subsection C of this section at an~~
24 ~~institution of The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education of~~

1 ~~comparable type which has the highest general enrollment fees of its~~
2 ~~type institution in The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education as~~
3 ~~determined annually by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher~~
4 ~~Education.~~

5 SECTION 4. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2021, Section 2404, is
6 amended to read as follows:

7 Section 2404. A. Scholarships awarded under the Oklahoma ~~State~~
8 ~~Regents' Academic~~ Rising Scholars Award Program shall be awarded to
9 all eligible applicants without any limitation on the number of
10 scholarships to be awarded in any year other than the amount of
11 funds available for the scholarship program and the number of
12 eligible applicants.

13 B. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education may, at the
14 time a scholarship is awarded to a student, set aside in the
15 Oklahoma ~~State Regents' Academic~~ Rising Scholars Award Trust Fund
16 funds for the full five-year commitment made to such eligible
17 scholar. For all academic years, students who have previously
18 received academic scholarships under the provisions of this act and
19 who have continued at all times to fulfill the requirements for
20 eligibility to receive academic scholarships provided in this act
21 shall be given an absolute priority for continued financial support
22 by the Oklahoma ~~State Regents' Academic~~ Rising Scholars Award
23 Program superior to any students who are applying for such academic
24 ~~scholarships~~ awards for the first time.

1 C. In addition to the qualifications specified in Section 2403
2 of this title, the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education may
3 adopt additional criteria for selection and allocation of awards
4 which may include, but are not limited to, consideration of high
5 school academic performance and personal interviews. The Oklahoma
6 State Regents for Higher Education shall annually report on the
7 number of former ~~Academic~~ Rising Scholars Award Program participants
8 who stay in state as compared to those who leave Oklahoma within
9 five (5) years of leaving the Award Program. In addition, the
10 Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education are hereby authorized to
11 determine a maximum number of awards or a maximum amount of funding
12 which may go to nonresident students. Such maximum limitations
13 shall not exceed twenty-five percent (25%) of the awards or amount
14 of funding in any category provided in paragraph 2 of subsection A
15 of Section 2403 of this title.

16 SECTION 5. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2021, Section 2405, is
17 amended to read as follows:

18 Section 2405. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education
19 may adopt rules and regulations, prescribe and provide appropriate
20 forms for application, and employ such persons, contract for such
21 services and make such additional expenditures as may be necessary
22 or appropriate for implementing the provisions of the Oklahoma ~~State~~
23 ~~Regents' Academic~~ Rising Scholars Award Act; provided, as part of
24 the regulations adopted for administration of the provisions of the

1 Oklahoma ~~State Regents' Academic~~ Rising Scholars Award Program, the
2 Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education shall require that each
3 scholarship recipient make continuing and satisfactory progress
4 toward a degree, including the establishment of an annual minimum
5 grade point average and annual minimum credit hours to be maintained
6 by the participants. Such regulations shall also provide for
7 revoking or rescinding assistance to any scholarship recipient who
8 fails to meet such required standards. Such regulations shall also
9 provide that the funds made available to students as part of the
10 Oklahoma ~~State Regents' Academic~~ Rising Scholars Award Program shall
11 be paid directly to the institution of the student's choice, in
12 trust for the student, and on the student's behalf, and shall
13 contain appropriate restrictions and conditions that such monies are
14 expended only for the purposes authorized by this act. Such
15 regulations shall also provide for portability of award for a
16 recipient among accredited institutions of higher education in
17 Oklahoma in which the recipient may enroll as long as the recipient
18 meets requirements of the program; however, waivers shall only be
19 portable between institutions in The Oklahoma State System of Higher
20 Education and waiver portability may be further limited by the
21 Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education rules and regulations.

22 SECTION 6. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2021, Section 2406, is
23 amended to read as follows:
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1 Section 2406. The Oklahoma ~~State Regents' Academic~~ Rising
2 Scholars Award Act shall not be construed as granting any authority
3 to control or influence the policies of any educational institution
4 because it accepts students who are participating in the scholarship
5 program, or to require any such institution to admit, or once
6 admitted to continue in such institution, any participant in the
7 scholarship program.

8 SECTION 7. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2021, Section 2407, is
9 amended to read as follows:

10 Section 2407. As part of its duties in administering the
11 Oklahoma ~~State Regents' Academic~~ Rising Scholars Award Program, the
12 Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, in cooperation with the
13 State Board of Education, shall encourage Oklahoma high school
14 juniors who plan to attend college to take the Preliminary
15 Scholastic Aptitude Test/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test
16 in their junior year in high school as preparation for taking the
17 Scholastic Aptitude Test their senior year in high school.

18 SECTION 8. This act shall become effective July 1, 2025.

19 SECTION 9. It being immediately necessary for the preservation
20 of the public peace, health or safety, an emergency is hereby
21 declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and
22 be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

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