

1 **HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - FLOOR VERSION**

2 STATE OF OKLAHOMA

3 1st Session of the 60th Legislature (2025)

4 COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE
FOR
5 HOUSE BILL NO. 1282

By: Caldwell (Chad) of the
House

6 and

7 **Rader** of the Senate

10 COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE

11 [scholarships - eligibility - program - awards -
12 amounts - waivers - award - name - rules - names -
13 effective date -

14 emergency]

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

18 SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2021, Section 2401,

19 is amended to read as follows:

20 Section 2401. Sections 4 2401 through 10 2407 of this
21 ~~aet~~ title shall be known and may be cited as the "Oklahoma
22 ~~State Regents' Academic~~ Rising Scholars Award Act.".

23 SECTION 2. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2021, Section 2402,

24 is amended to read as follows:

1 Section 2402. A. There is hereby created the Oklahoma
2 ~~State Regents' Academic~~ Rising Scholars Award Program. The
3 purpose of the Oklahoma ~~State Regents' Academic~~ Rising
4 Scholars Award Program is to retain top-ranked students from
5 Oklahoma in Oklahoma colleges, enable Oklahoma institutions
6 of higher education to compete aggressively for top Oklahoma
7 scholars, attract high-caliber out-of-state students to
8 Oklahoma to attend colleges and universities, and enhance the
9 academic quality in Oklahoma colleges and universities. The
10 program shall provide participants funding for enrollment
11 fees, tuition and other fees, room and board and required
12 textbooks or materials for up to five (5) years of
13 undergraduate and/or graduate study at accredited
14 institutions of higher education in Oklahoma.

15 B. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education shall
16 administer the provisions of the Oklahoma ~~State Regents' Academic~~
17 Rising Scholars Award Program.

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

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

23 1. Has complied with all of the rules promulgated by the
24 Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education pursuant to the

provisions of the Oklahoma ~~State Regents' Academic Rising~~ Scholars
Award Act, Section 2401 et seq. of this title, for the award,
regulation, and administration of scholarships; and

2. Qualifies as one of the following:

- a. an Individual Applicant Qualified Student, which shall mean a student who is a resident of the State of Oklahoma whose American College Testing Program score or whose Scholastic Aptitude Test score falls within the 99.5 to 100.0 percentile levels as administered in the State of Oklahoma and whose grade point average and/or class rank is exceptional, as determined by the State Regents,
- b. a Presidential Scholar, which shall mean a student selected by the Commission on Presidential Scholars administered by the United States Department of Education,
- c. a National Merit Scholar, which shall mean a student designated as a National Merit Scholar by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation,
- d. a National Merit Finalist, which shall mean a student designated as a National Merit Finalist by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation, or

1 e. after October 1, 1999, an Institutional Nominee, which
2 shall mean a student nominated by an institution in
3 The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education:
4 (1) whose American College Testing Program or
5 Scholastic Aptitude Test score falls within the
6 95.0 to 99.49 percentile levels, or
7 (2) who shows exceptional academic achievement as
8 evidenced by factors, including, but not limited
9 to, grade point average, class rank, national
10 awards, scholastic achievements, honors, and who
11 shows exceptional promise based on documentation
12 that may include, but not be limited to, teacher
13 recommendations, extracurricular activities, and
14 evidence of overcoming economic and social
15 obstacles as determined by the State Regents.

16 The State Regents shall ensure that standards of
17 high academic ability are documented.

18 Scholarship awards to Institutional Nominees
19 shall become effective when appropriate
20 documentation is verified by the State Regents.

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

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

14 1. If the student is attending an institution within The
15 Oklahoma State System of Higher Education, the total funding for the
16 scholarship 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, the total funding for the scholarship provided in this
22 subsection, exclusive of any internships, shall not exceed the costs
23 for items specified in this subsection at an institution of The
24 Oklahoma State System of Higher Education of comparable type which

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

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

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

23 2. If the student is attending a private institution of higher
24 education in Oklahoma, the scholarship shall include an amount not

1 to exceed the average cost of tuition. The total funding for
2 scholarships for students attending a private institution as
3 provided in this subsection, exclusive of any internships, shall not
4 exceed the costs for items specified in this subsection at an
5 institution within The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education of
6 comparable type which has the highest general enrollment fees of its
7 type of institution in The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education
8 as determined annually by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher
9 Education.

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

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

23 2. If the student is attending a private institution of higher
24 education, the total funding for the scholarship provided in this

1 section, exclusive of any internships, shall not exceed the costs
2 for items specified in subsection C of this section at an
3 institution of The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education of
4 comparable type which has the highest general enrollment fees of its
5 type institution in The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education as
6 determined annually by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher
7 Education.

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

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

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

1 by the Oklahoma ~~State Regents' Academic Rising~~ Scholars Award
2 Program superior to any students who are applying for such academic
3 ~~scholarships awards~~ for the first time.

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

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

21 Section 2405. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education
22 may adopt rules and regulations, prescribe and provide appropriate
23 forms for application, and employ such persons, contract for such
24 services and make such additional expenditures as may be necessary

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

1 SECTION 6. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2021, Section 2406, is
2 amended to read as follows:

3 Section 2406. The Oklahoma ~~State Regents' Academic Rising~~
4 Scholars Award Act shall not be construed as granting any authority
5 to control or influence the policies of any educational institution
6 because it accepts students who are participating in the scholarship
7 program, or to require any such institution to admit, or once
8 admitted to continue in such institution, any participant in the
9 scholarship program.

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

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

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

21 SECTION 9. It being immediately necessary for the preservation
22 of the public peace, health or safety, an emergency is hereby
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1 declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and
2 be in full force from and after its passage and approval.
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4 COMMITTEE REPORT BY: COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS AND BUDGET, dated
03/06/2025 - DO PASS, As Amended and Coauthored.
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