

1 STATE OF OKLAHOMA

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

3 SENATE BILL 1054

By: Goodwin

7 AS INTRODUCED

8 An Act relating to the Tulsa Reconciliation Education  
9 and Scholarship Program; amending 70 O.S. 2021,  
10 Sections 2621, 2623, and 2625, which relate to  
11 creation of and eligibility for the program;  
12 modifying eligibility for program; updating statutory  
13 language; increasing income limit for certain  
14 eligibility; exempting certain applicants from  
15 certain income limit; allowing certain form to be  
16 used to verify income; removing certain eligibility  
17 criteria; directing the Oklahoma State Regents for  
18 Higher Education to give first priority status to  
19 certain applicants; modifying process for verifying  
20 documentation of lineage; requiring application form  
21 to include certain language; directing awards to be  
made in certain specified manner; directing the State  
Regents to involve certain community advisory  
committee in selection process; providing for  
composition of and appointments to advisory  
committee; directing certain university president to  
submit a list of proposed members; directing advisory  
committee to review certain applications and make  
certain recommendations; directing the State Regents  
to select recipients from certain list; allowing  
certain remaining scholarship award funds to be used  
for certain purposes; directing certain applicants to  
always be given first priority status; and declaring  
an emergency.

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

2 SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2021, Section 2621, is  
3 amended to read as follows:

4 Section 2621. There is hereby created the Tulsa Reconciliation  
5 Education and Scholarship Program. The purpose of the program is to  
6 provide a scholarship award to residents of the Tulsa School  
7 District, which was greatly impacted both socially and economically  
8 by the civil unrest that occurred in the City of Tulsa during 1921.  
9 Beginning with the 2002-2003 school year, or as soon thereafter as  
10 practicable, and subject to the availability of funds, the program  
11 shall each year make scholarships available to as many students as  
12 feasible, up to three hundred scholarships, to qualified residents  
13 of the Tulsa School District, and to qualified students of any other  
14 public school district in the United States who are direct lineal  
15 descendants as defined in subsection C of Section 2623 of this title  
16 and who meet the criteria set forth in Sections 2623 and 2624 of  
17 this title, and who are intending to pursue studies at an  
18 institution of higher education in The Oklahoma State System of  
19 Higher Education or a private institution of higher education, in  
20 this state or who are intending to pursue studies in a postsecondary  
21 career and technology education program in this state. The  
22 scholarship shall be an amount ~~of not more than~~ not exceeding the  
23 equivalent of the average amount of resident tuition for which an  
24 eligible Tulsa Reconciliation Education and Scholarship Program

1 participant enrolled at an institution of higher education in The  
2 Oklahoma State System of Higher Education or a postsecondary career  
3 and technology education program, whichever is applicable, is  
4 obligated to pay. The scholarship shall be paid as provided for in  
5 Section 2625 of this title. The further purpose of this program is  
6 to establish and maintain a variety of educational support services  
7 whereby ~~residents~~ students who qualify for the program will be  
8 prepared for success in postsecondary endeavors.

9 SECTION 2. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2021, Section 2623, is  
10 amended to read as follows:

11 Section 2623. A. Subject to the availability of funds, the  
12 Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education may annually award a  
13 maximum of three hundred full-time-equivalent scholarships for the  
14 Tulsa Reconciliation Education and Scholarship Program to residents  
15 of the Tulsa School District and to qualified students of any other  
16 public school district in the United States who are direct lineal  
17 descendants as defined in subsection C of this section and who are  
18 intending to pursue studies at an institution of higher education in  
19 The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education or a private  
20 institution of higher education in this state or who are intending  
21 to pursue studies in a postsecondary career and technology education  
22 program in this state.

23 B. To qualify for a scholarship, the family income of an  
24 applicant shall ~~satisfy the following criteria:~~

1       1. The family income of the applicant, from taxable sources is  
2       not more than Seventy Thousand Dollars (\$70,000.00), not exceed One  
3       Hundred Twenty-five Thousand Dollars (\$125,000.00) per year. There  
4       shall be no family income limit for an applicant who is a direct  
5       lineal descendant as defined in subsection C of this section. The  
6       Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form may be used to  
7       verify family income;

8       2. The applicant attended a Tulsa public school where seventy-  
9       five percent (75%) or more of the students enrolled in the school  
10      qualify for the free and reduced lunch program; and

11      3. The applicant resides in a census block area within the  
12      Tulsa School District where thirty percent (30%) or more of the  
13      residents are at or below the poverty level established by the  
14      United States Bureau of the Census.

15      C. The State Regents may consider as a Regents' selection  
16      process shall factor, when determining the order of preference of  
17      give first priority status to applicants, whether an applicant who  
18      is a direct lineal descendant of a person who resided in the  
19      Greenwood Area in the City of Tulsa between April 30, 1921, and June  
20      1, 1921. If the Regents use Use of descent as a preference factor,  
21      it shall be applied to all applicants regardless of race. The  
22      applicants shall be required to present verifiable documentation of  
23      their lineage. The Oklahoma Historical Society An organization or  
24      individual engaged in genealogy and research of descendants and

1      history of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre and Greenwood Area shall  
2      verify the authenticity and accuracy of the documentation submitted  
3      by an applicant and shall ~~establish~~ confirm the boundaries of the  
4      Greenwood Area. Verifiable documentation shall include, but not be  
5      limited to, the following:

6            1. Family records including family bibles, vital records,  
7      correspondence, memoirs, journals, diaries, unrecorded deeds,  
8      diplomas, certificates, or testimonials;

9            2. Public records including censuses, government records,  
10     military records, pensions, land bounty records, passport  
11     applications, passenger lists, original grants, naturalization or  
12     immigration records, records of entry, or state, province, or local  
13     records; or

14            3. Institutional records including church records, cemetery  
15     records and inscriptions, education institutions, insurance records,  
16     or societies and fraternal organizations.

17            D. The State Regents shall promulgate rules establishing the  
18     application requirements for the program and the system for  
19     evaluating applications based on the preference factors. The  
20     application form shall include a small outlined box graphic,  
21     followed by the following language: "Mark the box if you are a  
22     direct lineal descendant of a person greatly impacted socially and  
23     economically during the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre who resided in the

1      Greenwood Area of Tulsa, Oklahoma, between April 30, 1921, and June  
2      1, 1921."

3      E. Applicants shall also meet the eligibility criteria  
4      established in Section 2624 of this title.

5      F. ~~The Oklahoma~~ In addition to the scholarships authorized  
6      pursuant to Section 2621 of this title and this section, the State  
7      Regents ~~for Higher Education~~ shall also be authorized to annually  
8      award scholarships for the Tulsa Reconciliation Education and  
9      Scholarship Program to two students at each of the high schools in  
10     the Tulsa School District for the purpose of preserving awareness of  
11     the history and meaning of the civil unrest that occurred in Tulsa  
12     in 1921. The following provisions shall apply to the scholarship  
13     scholarships provided in this subsection:

14     1. Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection B of this  
15     section, eligibility for the scholarships awarded pursuant to this  
16     subsection shall be:

- 17        a. enrollment in the appropriate high school,  
18        b. family income of the applicant from taxable sources  
19              not to exceed ~~Seventy Thousand Dollars (\$70,000.00)~~  
20              One Hundred Twenty-five Thousand Dollars (\$125,000.00)  
21              per year. There shall be no family income limit for  
22              an applicant who is a direct lineal descendant as  
23              defined in subsection C of this section,  
24        c. made as provided for in subsection C of this section,

d. satisfaction of the criteria specified in Section 2624  
of this title, and

d. e. any other relevant criteria determined by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education;

2. The State Regents shall involve the administration of the

Tulsa School District and a community advisory committee in the

selection process. The community advisory committee shall be

comprised of seven (7) members appointed by the Chancellor of Higher

Education. The community advisory committee shall be comprised of:

a. the President of Langston University or his or her  
designee,

b. the Superintendent of Tulsa Public Schools or his or her designee,

c. two members of the Legislature representing the Greenwood area in the City of Tulsa, Oklahoma, their designees,

d. two descendants of socially and economically adversely impacted persons who resided in the Greenwood Area in the City of Tulsa, Oklahoma, between April 30, 1921 and June 1, 1921 and

e. a citizen with ties to the historic Greenwood community who may be engaged in faith-based, education, or social, business, or advocacy w

1       The President of Langston University, or his or her designee,  
2       shall be responsible for coordinating with the community advisory  
3       committee and shall submit to the Chancellor of Higher Education a  
4       list of proposed committee members for review and approval. The  
5       community advisory committee shall review scholarship applications  
6       and make recommendations for scholarship recipients and scholarship  
7       award amounts. The State Regents shall select scholarship  
8       recipients from the list of recommendations provided pursuant to  
9       this paragraph;

10       3. The award shall be limited to a one-year full-time-  
11 equivalent period. Following successful completion of such award,  
12 recipients who meet the criteria provided in subsection B of this  
13 section shall be eligible to apply and be considered for continued  
14 participation in the full Tulsa Reconciliation Education and  
15 Scholarship Program. Any student subsequently awarded such  
16 scholarship shall have the duration of the scholarship provided  
17 pursuant to this subsection deducted from the limits set in  
18 subsection D of Section 2625 of this title;

19       4. The award may only be funded with state funds appropriated  
20 to the Tulsa Reconciliation Education and Scholarship Trust Fund and  
21 income therefrom, and shall be made subject to the availability of  
22 such funds; and

1       5. The awards made pursuant to this subsection shall be  
2 included within the maximum number of scholarships specified in  
3 subsection A of this section.

4       SECTION 3.       AMENDATORY       70 O.S. 2021, Section 2625, is  
5 amended to read as follows:

6       Section 2625. A. Subject to the availability of funds, an  
7 amount of not more than the equivalent of the average amount of  
8 resident tuition for which an eligible Tulsa Reconciliation  
9 Education and Scholarship Program participant enrolled in an  
10 institution in The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education, or  
11 enrolled in a postsecondary career and technology education program,  
12 whichever is applicable, is obligated to pay shall be awarded by  
13 allocation from the Tulsa Reconciliation Education and Scholarship  
14 Trust Fund.

15       B. Subject to the availability of funds, for each eligible  
16 Tulsa Reconciliation Education and Scholarship Program participant  
17 enrolled at a private institution of higher education, the Oklahoma  
18 State Regents for Higher Education shall award from the Tulsa  
19 Reconciliation Education and Scholarship Trust Fund an amount of not  
20 more than the equivalent of the average amount of resident tuition  
21 for which the participant would be eligible if the participant were  
22 enrolled in a program at an institution of The Oklahoma State System  
23 of Higher Education.

1       C. Subject to the availability of funds, an amount of not more  
2 than the equivalent of the average amount of tuition for which an  
3 eligible Tulsa Reconciliation Education and Scholarship Program  
4 participant enrolled in a postsecondary career and technology  
5 education program is obligated to pay shall be awarded by allocation  
6 from the Tulsa Reconciliation Education and Scholarship Trust Fund.  
7 The allocation shall not exceed the amount a participant would have  
8 received for enrollment at a two-year institution within The  
9 Oklahoma State System of Higher Education.

10      D. Benefits awarded under the Tulsa Reconciliation Education  
11 and Scholarship Program shall not be allowed for courses or other  
12 postsecondary units taken in excess of the requirements for  
13 completion of a baccalaureate program or taken more than five (5)  
14 years after the student's first semester of participation in the  
15 program. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education may award  
16 the Tulsa Reconciliation Education and Scholarship Program benefits  
17 for courses of postsecondary units taken more than five (5) years  
18 after the student's first semester of participation in the program  
19 only in hardship circumstances. No Tulsa Reconciliation Education  
20 and Scholarship Program participant may receive benefits beyond a  
21 cumulative time period of five (5) years. The Oklahoma State  
22 Regents for Higher Education may establish a maximum limit on the  
23 number of courses or other postsecondary units to which Tulsa  
24 Reconciliation Education and Scholarship Program benefits will

1 apply. An award to an eligible Tulsa Reconciliation Education and  
2 Scholarship Program participant who is enrolled in a postsecondary  
3 career and technology education program may be used to pay for both  
4 career and technology education and college work if both are  
5 required by the program.

6 E. Benefits awarded under the Tulsa Reconciliation Education  
7 and Scholarship Program shall be awarded to not more than ~~300~~ three  
8 hundred (300) eligible participants annually, subject to the amount  
9 of funds available for the program and the number of eligible  
10 participants. Subject to the provisions of subsection F of this  
11 section, if funds are not sufficient to provide awards for the  
12 maximum number of eligible participants each year, the Oklahoma  
13 State Regents for Higher Education shall make awards on the basis of  
14 need. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education shall take  
15 into consideration other grants and scholarships received by an  
16 eligible student when making awards. If ~~an eligible student~~  
17 ~~receives other grants and scholarships~~ scholarship award funds  
18 remain after payment of resident tuition, the benefits awarded under  
19 the Tulsa Reconciliation Education and Scholarship Program may cover  
20 any additional educational costs not covered by the other grants and  
21 scholarships including fees, required textbooks or materials, and  
22 room and board. If the family of an eligible Tulsa Reconciliation  
23 Education and Scholarship Program participant may qualify for the  
24 federal Hope Scholarship or Lifetime Learning tax credit as provided

1 for in the Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997, P.L. No. 105-34, the  
2 participant may elect to use the award allowed by this section to  
3 pay for fees, required textbooks or materials and, if any funds  
4 remain, to pay for room and board instead of resident tuition.

5 F. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education may, at the  
6 time an award is made on behalf of a Tulsa Reconciliation Education  
7 and Scholarship Program participant, set aside in the Tulsa  
8 Reconciliation Education and Scholarship Trust Fund funds for the  
9 full commitment made to such Tulsa Reconciliation Education and  
10 Scholarship Program participant. For all academic years,  
11 participants who have previously received awards under the  
12 provisions of the Tulsa Reconciliation Education and Scholarship Act  
13 and who have continued at all times to fulfill the requirements for  
14 eligibility to receive awards provided pursuant to this program  
15 shall be given ~~an absolute~~ priority for continued financial support  
16 by the Tulsa Reconciliation Education and Scholarship Program  
17 superior to any ~~residents~~ students who are applying for such  
18 benefits for the first time; provided, however, that scholarship  
19 applicants who are direct lineal descendants as defined in  
20 subsection C of Section 2623 of this title shall always be given  
21 first priority status.

22 SECTION 4. It being immediately necessary for the preservation  
23 of the public peace, health, or safety, an emergency is hereby  
24

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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