

By: Taylor of Collin

S.B. No. 117

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to eligibility for a TEXAS grant.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Subchapter M, Chapter 56, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 56.3031 to read as follows:

Sec. 56.3031. FINANCIAL NEED. (a) The coordinating board by rule shall establish financial need requirements for applicants to demonstrate eligibility to receive initial or subsequent TEXAS grants under this subchapter.

(b) The rules must require each applicant to demonstrate eligibility for federal financial aid but may not require the applicant to meet a financial need requirement applicable to a particular federal financial aid program.

(c) Section 56.3045(b)(2) does not apply to the eligibility requirement described by Subsection (b).

SECTION 2. Section 56.304(a), Education Code, is amended to read as follows:

(a) To be eligible initially for a TEXAS grant, a person who graduated from high school before May 1, 2013, must:

(1) be a resident of this state as determined by coordinating board rules;

(2) meet either of the following academic requirements:

(A) be a graduate of a public or accredited

1 private high school in this state who graduated not earlier than the
2 1998-1999 school year and who completed the recommended or advanced
3 high school curriculum established under Section 28.002 or 28.025
4 or its equivalent; or

5 (B) have received an associate degree from a
6 public or private institution of higher education not earlier than
7 May 1, 2001;

8 (3) meet financial need requirements established [~~as~~
9 ~~defined~~] by the coordinating board under Section 56.3031;

10 (4) be enrolled in a baccalaureate degree program at
11 an eligible institution;

12 (5) be enrolled as:

13 (A) an entering undergraduate student for at
14 least three-fourths of a full course load for an entering
15 undergraduate student, as determined by the coordinating board, not
16 later than the 16th month after the date of the person's graduation
17 from high school; or

18 (B) an entering student for at least
19 three-fourths of a full course load for an undergraduate student as
20 determined by the coordinating board, not later than the 12th month
21 after the month the person receives an associate degree from a
22 public or private institution of higher education;

23 (6) have applied for any available financial aid or
24 assistance; and

25 (7) comply with any additional nonacademic
26 requirement adopted by the coordinating board under this
27 subchapter.

1 SECTION 3. Section 56.3041(a), Education Code, is amended
2 to read as follows:

3 (a) To be eligible initially for a TEXAS grant, a person
4 graduating from high school on or after May 1, 2013, and enrolling
5 in an eligible institution must:

6 (1) be a resident of this state as determined by
7 coordinating board rules;

8 (2) meet the academic requirements prescribed by
9 Paragraph (A), (B), (C), or (D) as follows:

10 (A) be a graduate of a public or accredited
11 private high school in this state who completed the foundation high
12 school program established under Section 28.025 or its equivalent
13 and have accomplished any two or more of the following:

14 (i) successful completion of the course
15 requirements of the international baccalaureate diploma program or
16 earning of the equivalent of at least 12 semester credit hours of
17 college credit in high school through courses described in Sections
18 28.009(a)(1), (2), and (3);

19 (ii) satisfaction of the Texas Success
20 Initiative (TSI) college readiness benchmarks prescribed by the
21 coordinating board under Section 51.3062(f) on any assessment
22 instrument designated by the coordinating board under Section
23 51.3062(c) or qualification for an exemption as described by
24 Section 51.3062(p), (q), or (q-1);

25 (iii) graduation in the top one-third of
26 the person's high school graduating class or graduation from high
27 school with a grade point average of at least 3.0 on a four-point

1 scale or the equivalent; or

2 (iv) completion for high school credit of
3 at least one advanced mathematics course following the successful
4 completion of an Algebra II course or at least one advanced career
5 and technical or technology applications course;

6 (B) have received an associate degree from a
7 public or private institution of higher education;

8 (C) be an undergraduate student who has:

9 (i) previously attended another
10 institution of higher education;

11 (ii) received an initial Texas Educational
12 Opportunity Grant under Subchapter P for the 2014 fall semester or a
13 subsequent academic term;

14 (iii) completed at least 24 semester credit
15 hours at any institution or institutions of higher education; and

16 (iv) earned an overall grade point average
17 of at least 2.5 on a four-point scale or the equivalent on all
18 course work previously attempted; or

19 (D) if sufficient money is available, meet the
20 eligibility criteria described by Section 56.304(a)(2)(A);

21 (3) meet financial need requirements established by
22 the coordinating board under Section 56.3031;

23 (4) be enrolled in an undergraduate degree or
24 certificate program at an eligible institution;

25 (5) except as provided under rules adopted under
26 Section 56.304(h), be enrolled as:

27 (A) an entering undergraduate student for at

1 least three-fourths of a full course load, as determined by the
2 coordinating board, not later than the 16th month after the
3 calendar month in which the person graduated from high school;

4 (B) an entering undergraduate student who
5 entered military service not later than the first anniversary of
6 the date the person graduated from high school and who enrolled for
7 at least three-fourths of a full course load, as determined by the
8 coordinating board, at the eligible institution not later than 12
9 months after being honorably discharged from military service;

10 (C) a continuing undergraduate student for at
11 least three-fourths of a full course load, as determined by the
12 coordinating board, not later than the 12th month after the
13 calendar month in which the person received an associate degree
14 from a public or private institution of higher education; or

15 (D) an undergraduate student described by
16 Subdivision (2)(C) who has never previously received a TEXAS grant;

17 (6) have applied for any available financial aid or
18 assistance; and

19 (7) comply with any additional nonacademic
20 requirements adopted by the coordinating board under this
21 subchapter.

22 SECTION 4. Section 56.305(a), Education Code, is amended to
23 read as follows:

24 (a) After initially qualifying for a TEXAS grant, a person
25 may continue to receive a TEXAS grant during each semester or term
26 in which the person is enrolled at an eligible institution only if
27 the person:

1 (1) meets financial need requirements as established
2 [~~defined~~] by the coordinating board under Section 56.3031;

3 (2) is enrolled in a baccalaureate degree program at
4 an eligible institution;

5 (3) is enrolled for at least three-fourths of a full
6 course load for an undergraduate student, as determined by the
7 coordinating board;

8 (4) makes satisfactory academic progress toward a
9 baccalaureate degree; and

10 (5) complies with any additional nonacademic
11 requirement adopted by the coordinating board.

12 SECTION 5. The change in law made by this Act in adding
13 Section 56.3031, Education Code, applies beginning with initial or
14 subsequent TEXAS grants awarded for the 2015 fall semester. Initial
15 or subsequent TEXAS grants awarded for a semester or term before the
16 2015 fall semester are governed by the applicable law in effect
17 immediately before the effective date of this Act, and the former
18 law is continued in effect for that purpose.

19 SECTION 6. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
20 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
21 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
22 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
23 Act takes effect September 1, 2015.