

House Bill 4363
Senate Amendments
Section-by-Section Analysis

HOUSE VERSION

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

SUBCHAPTER S. FUTURE TEXAS TEACHERS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Sec. 56.501. DEFINITIONS. In this subchapter:

(1) "Coordinating board" means the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

(2) "Eligible institution" means a general academic teaching institution or a private or independent institution of higher education, as those terms are defined by Section 61.003, that operates an eligible educator preparation program.

(3) "Enrolled full-time" means enrolled for at least 12 semester credit hours or participating in a clinical teaching assignment or internship that meets criteria established by State Board for Educator Certification rule for initial certification as a classroom teacher.

(4) "Scholarship program" means the Future Texas Teachers Scholarship Program authorized by this subchapter.

Sec. 56.502. PURPOSE. The Future Texas Teachers Scholarship Program is created to recruit, prepare, and retain a talented and diverse workforce of career teachers to be leaders in their field and to provide assistance for tuition, mandatory fees, and other usual and customary costs of attendance at an eligible institution as provided by Sections 56.506 and 56.507.

Sec. 56.503. ELIGIBLE EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAMS. To be eligible to participate in the scholarship program, an educator preparation program must:

(1) be operated by an eligible institution;

(2) provide a structured system of support to assist scholarship recipients to successfully complete the educator preparation program;

SENATE VERSION (IE)

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Sec. 56.502. PURPOSE. The Future Texas Teachers Scholarship Program is created to recruit, prepare, and retain a talented and diverse workforce of career teachers to be leaders in their field and to provide assistance for tuition, mandatory fees, and other usual and customary costs of attendance at an eligible institution as provided by Sections 56.506 and 56.507.

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CONFERENCE

House Bill 4363
Senate Amendments
Section-by-Section Analysis

HOUSE VERSION

(3) require additional hours of field-based experience for students above the minimum hours required by State Board for Educator Certification rule;

(4) require additional hours of clinical teaching experience for students above the minimum hours required by State Board for Educator Certification rule;

(5) provide or facilitate opportunities for scholarship recipients to participate in learning opportunities beyond the university classroom setting; and

(6) comply with other eligibility criteria established by coordinating board rule.

Sec. 56.504. INITIAL STUDENT ELIGIBILITY FOR SCHOLARSHIP. (a) To be eligible initially for a scholarship under the scholarship program, a person must:

(1) be a Texas resident under Section 54.052;

(2) either:

(A) be enrolled full-time in an eligible institution; or

(B) have applied for admission to an eligible institution and enroll full-time in that institution in the academic year immediately following the person's application;

(3) once enrolled full-time in an eligible institution, be working toward a baccalaureate or master's degree and on track to be admitted to an eligible educator preparation program, as verified by the eligible institution operating the educator preparation program;

(4) demonstrate a commitment to pursuing a career as a classroom teacher in a public school in this state:

(A) in a teaching field identified by the commissioner of education as experiencing a critical shortage of teachers in this state; or

(B) in a public school in this state in which a majority of students enrolled are educationally disadvantaged;

SENATE VERSION (IE)

(3) require additional hours of field-based experience for students above the minimum hours required by State Board for Educator Certification rule;

(4) require additional hours of clinical teaching experience for students above the minimum hours required by State Board for Educator Certification rule;

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(3) once enrolled full-time in an eligible institution, be working toward a baccalaureate or master's degree and on track to be admitted to an eligible educator preparation program, as verified by the eligible institution operating the educator preparation program;

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CONFERENCE

House Bill 4363
Senate Amendments
Section-by-Section Analysis

HOUSE VERSION

(5) comply with Section 28.0256; and

(6) comply with any other academic or nonacademic requirements adopted by the coordinating board under this subchapter.

(b) A person is not eligible to receive a scholarship under the scholarship program if the person has been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor offense relating to the duties and responsibilities of the education profession, including:

(1) an offense involving moral turpitude;

(2) an offense involving a form of sexual or physical abuse of a minor or student or other illegal conduct in which the victim is a minor or student;

(3) a felony offense involving the possession, transfer, sale, or distribution of or conspiracy to possess, transfer, sell, or distribute a controlled substance, as defined by Chapter 481, Health and Safety Code, or by 21 U.S.C. Section 801 et seq.;

(4) an offense involving the illegal transfer, appropriation, or use of school district funds or other district property; or

(5) an offense involving an attempt by fraudulent or unauthorized means to obtain or alter a professional certificate or license issued under Subchapter B, Chapter 21.

SENATE VERSION (IE)

(5) comply with Section 28.0256; [FA1(1)]

(6) complete a criminal history background check from:

(A) any law enforcement or criminal justice agency; or

(B) a private entity that is a consumer reporting agency governed by the Fair Credit Reporting Act (15 U.S.C. Section 1681 et seq.);

(7) provide the educator preparation program with the completed background check report and any supplemental documentation the program may request to evaluate the background check report for the purposes of this section; and [FA1(2)]

(8) comply with any other academic or nonacademic requirements adopted by the coordinating board under this subchapter. [FA1(3)]

(b) A person is not eligible to receive a scholarship under the scholarship program if the person has been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor offense relating to the duties and responsibilities of the education profession, including:

(1) an offense involving moral turpitude;

(2) an offense involving a form of sexual or physical abuse of a minor or student or other illegal conduct in which the victim is a minor or student;

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CONFERENCE

House Bill 4363
Senate Amendments
Section-by-Section Analysis

HOUSE VERSION

Sec. 56.505. CONTINUING STUDENT ELIGIBILITY AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS.

(a) After initially qualifying for a scholarship under this subchapter, a person may continue to receive a scholarship under the scholarship program during each semester or term in which the person is enrolled at an eligible institution only if the person:

(1) demonstrates a continued commitment to pursuing a career as a classroom teacher:

(A) in a teaching field identified by the commissioner of education as experiencing a critical shortage of teachers in this state; or

(B) in a public school in this state in which a majority of students enrolled are educationally disadvantaged;

(2) remains enrolled full-time in an eligible institution;

(3) remains enrolled in or is on track to be admitted to an eligible educator preparation program, as verified by the eligible institution in which the person is enrolled;

(4) makes satisfactory academic progress toward completion of a baccalaureate or master's degree and approval to take a teacher certification exam, as verified by the eligible institution; and

(5) complies with any other academic or nonacademic requirements adopted by the coordinating board under this subchapter.

(b) A person is not eligible to continue to receive a scholarship under the scholarship program if the person has been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor offense described by Section 56.504(b).

SENATE VERSION (IE)

(c) An educator preparation program shall review the background check documentation provided under Subsection (a)(7) for the purposes of making a determination under Subsection (b). [FA1(4)]

Sec. 56.505. CONTINUING STUDENT ELIGIBILITY AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS.

(a) After initially qualifying for a scholarship under this subchapter, a person may continue to receive a scholarship under the scholarship program during each semester or term in which the person is enrolled at an eligible institution only if the person:

(1) demonstrates a continued commitment to pursuing a career as a classroom teacher:

(A) in a teaching field identified by the commissioner of education as experiencing a critical shortage of teachers in this state; or

(B) in a public school in this state in which a majority of students enrolled are educationally disadvantaged;

(2) remains enrolled full-time in an eligible institution;

(3) remains enrolled in or is on track to be admitted to an eligible educator preparation program, as verified by the eligible institution in which the person is enrolled;

(4) makes satisfactory academic progress toward completion of a baccalaureate or master's degree and approval to take a teacher certification exam, as verified by the eligible institution; and

(5) complies with any other academic or nonacademic requirements adopted by the coordinating board under this subchapter.

(b) A person is not eligible to continue to receive a scholarship under the scholarship program if the person has

CONFERENCE

House Bill 4363
Senate Amendments
Section-by-Section Analysis

HOUSE VERSION

(c) If a person fails to meet any of the requirements of Subsection (a) after the completion of any semester or term, the person may not receive a scholarship under this subchapter during the next semester or term in which the person enrolls. A person may become eligible to receive a scholarship under this subchapter in a subsequent semester or term if the person:

(1) completes a semester or term during which the person is not eligible for a scholarship; and

(2) meets all the requirements of Subsection (a).

(d) For the purpose of this section, a person makes satisfactory academic progress toward a baccalaureate or master's degree only if:

(1) in the person's first academic year the person meets the satisfactory academic progress requirements of the eligible institution in which the person is enrolled; and

(2) in a subsequent academic year, the person:

(A) completes at least 75 percent of the semester credit hours attempted in the person's most recent academic year; and

(B) has earned an overall grade point average of at least 3.0 on a four-point scale or the equivalent on coursework previously attempted at an eligible institution.

(e) A person who is eligible to receive a scholarship under this subchapter continues to remain eligible to receive the scholarship if the person enrolls in or transfers to an eligible educator preparation program at another eligible institution.

(f) The coordinating board shall adopt rules to allow a person who is otherwise eligible to receive a scholarship under this subchapter, in the event of a hardship or for other good cause shown, including a showing of a severe illness or other debilitating condition that may affect the person's academic performance or that the person is responsible for

SENATE VERSION (IE)

been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor offense described by Section 56.504(b).

(c) If a person fails to meet any of the requirements of Subsection (a) after the completion of any semester or term, the person may not receive a scholarship under this subchapter during the next semester or term in which the person enrolls. A person may become eligible to receive a scholarship under this subchapter in a subsequent semester or term if the person:

(1) completes a semester or term during which the person is not eligible for a scholarship; and

(2) meets all the requirements of Subsection (a).

(d) For the purpose of this section, a person makes satisfactory academic progress toward a baccalaureate or master's degree only if:

(1) in the person's first academic year the person meets the satisfactory academic progress requirements of the eligible institution in which the person is enrolled; and

(2) in a subsequent academic year, the person:

(A) completes at least 75 percent of the semester credit hours attempted in the person's most recent academic year; and

(B) has earned an overall grade point average of at least 3.0 on a four-point scale or the equivalent on coursework previously attempted at an eligible institution.

(e) A person who is eligible to receive a scholarship under this subchapter continues to remain eligible to receive the scholarship if the person enrolls in or transfers to an eligible educator preparation program at another eligible institution.

(f) The coordinating board shall adopt rules to allow a person who is otherwise eligible to receive a scholarship under this subchapter, in the event of a hardship or for other good cause shown, including a showing of a severe illness or

CONFERENCE

House Bill 4363
Senate Amendments
Section-by-Section Analysis

HOUSE VERSION

the care of a sick, injured, or needy person and that the person's provision of care may affect the person's academic performance, to receive a scholarship under this subchapter: (1) while enrolled in a number of semester credit hours that is less than the number required to be enrolled full-time; or (2) if the person's grade point average or completion rate falls below the satisfactory academic progress requirements of Subsection (d).

(g) A person's eligibility for a scholarship under this subchapter ends on the earlier of:

(1) the fourth anniversary of the initial award of a scholarship under this subchapter to the person and the person's enrollment in an eligible institution; or

(2) the person's completion of the baccalaureate or master's degree program described by Section 56.504(a)(3).

Sec. 56.506. SCHOLARSHIP AMOUNT. (a) Beginning with the 2024-2025 academic year, the amount of a scholarship under this subchapter is equal to the amount of the scholarship for the preceding academic year, adjusted for inflation using the college tuition and fees index component of the consumer price index produced by the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics.

(a-1) For the 2023-2024 academic year, the amount of a scholarship under this subchapter is \$12,000. This subsection expires September 1, 2024.

(b) The amount of a scholarship under this subchapter may not be reduced by any other scholarship, grant, or financial aid which the scholarship recipient receives.

(c) Not later than January 31 of each year, the coordinating board shall publish the amounts of each scholarship established by the board for the academic year beginning the next fall semester.

SENATE VERSION (IE)

other debilitating condition that may affect the person's academic performance or that the person is responsible for the care of a sick, injured, or needy person and that the person's provision of care may affect the person's academic performance, to receive a scholarship under this subchapter: (1) while enrolled in a number of semester credit hours that is less than the number required to be enrolled full-time; or (2) if the person's grade point average or completion rate falls below the satisfactory academic progress requirements of Subsection (d).

(g) A person's eligibility for a scholarship under this subchapter ends on the earlier of:

(1) the fourth anniversary of the initial award of a scholarship under this subchapter to the person and the person's enrollment in an eligible institution; or

(2) the person's completion of the baccalaureate or master's degree program described by Section 56.504(a)(3).

Sec. 56.506. SCHOLARSHIP AMOUNT. (a) Beginning with the 2024-2025 academic year, the amount of a scholarship under this subchapter is equal to the amount of the scholarship for the preceding academic year, adjusted for inflation using the college tuition and fees index component of the consumer price index produced by the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics.

(a-1) For the 2023-2024 academic year, the amount of a scholarship under this subchapter is \$12,000. This subsection expires September 1, 2024.

(b) The amount of a scholarship under this subchapter may not be reduced by any other scholarship, grant, or financial aid which the scholarship recipient receives.

(c) Not later than January 31 of each year, the coordinating board shall publish the amounts of each scholarship

CONFERENCE

House Bill 4363
Senate Amendments
Section-by-Section Analysis

HOUSE VERSION

Sec. 56.507. SCHOLARSHIP USE. A person receiving a scholarship under this subchapter may use the money to pay any usual and customary cost of attendance at an eligible institution incurred by the person. The institution may disburse all or part of the proceeds of a scholarship under this subchapter to an eligible person only if the tuition and required fees incurred by the person at the institution have been paid.

Sec. 56.508. ADMINISTRATION OF PROGRAM. (a) The coordinating board shall adopt any rules necessary to:

(1) establish eligibility criteria for educator preparation programs in accordance with Section 56.503 and for scholarship recipients in accordance with Sections 56.504 and 56.505;

(2) establish procedures for the application process and for selecting scholarship recipients from among eligible applicants; and

(3) administer the scholarship program.

(b) In establishing criteria for eligible educator preparation programs under Section 56.503, the coordinating board shall consult with the State Board for Educator Certification. The coordinating board shall consider the standards used by the State Board for Educator Certification in identifying effective, high-quality educator preparation programs grounded in evidence-based best practices and, to the maximum extent possible, align the eligibility criteria to those standards.

(c) In establishing criteria for eligible persons under Sections 56.504 and 56.505, the coordinating board shall consult with representatives of the educator preparation programs from eligible institutions.

SENATE VERSION (IE)

established by the board for the academic year beginning the next fall semester.

Sec. 56.507. SCHOLARSHIP USE. A person receiving a scholarship under this subchapter may use the money to pay any usual and customary cost of attendance at an eligible institution incurred by the person. The institution may disburse all or part of the proceeds of a scholarship under this subchapter to an eligible person only if the tuition and required fees incurred by the person at the institution have been paid.

Sec. 56.508. ADMINISTRATION OF PROGRAM. (a) The coordinating board shall adopt any rules necessary to:

(1) establish eligibility criteria for educator preparation programs in accordance with Section 56.503 and for scholarship recipients in accordance with Sections 56.504 and 56.505;

(2) establish procedures for the application process and for selecting scholarship recipients from among eligible applicants; and

(3) administer the scholarship program.

(b) In establishing criteria for eligible educator preparation programs under Section 56.503, the coordinating board shall consult with the State Board for Educator Certification. The coordinating board shall consider the standards used by the State Board for Educator Certification in identifying effective, high-quality educator preparation programs grounded in evidence-based best practices and, to the maximum extent possible, align the eligibility criteria to those standards.

(c) In establishing criteria for eligible persons under Sections 56.504 and 56.505, the coordinating board shall

CONFERENCE

House Bill 4363
Senate Amendments
Section-by-Section Analysis

HOUSE VERSION

(d) In developing rules related to distributing a scholarship, the coordinating board shall consult with financial aid coordinators of eligible institutions.

(e) The total amount of scholarships awarded may not exceed the amount available for the program from appropriations, gifts, grants, or other funds.

(f) From money appropriated by the legislature for the purposes of this subchapter, the coordinating board annually shall determine the allocation of money available for scholarships among eligible institutions and shall distribute the money accordingly.

(g) In determining who should receive a scholarship under this subchapter, the coordinating board shall give priority to awarding scholarships to:

(1) persons who demonstrate the greatest financial need and whose expected family contribution, as determined according to the methodology used for federal student financial aid, does not exceed 60 percent of the average statewide amount of tuition and required fees;

(2) first-generation college students, as defined by coordinating board rule; and

(3) persons who demonstrate a commitment both to entering a teaching field identified by the commissioner of education as experiencing a critical shortage of teachers and to teaching in a public school in this state in which a majority of students enrolled are educationally disadvantaged.

SECTION 2. Section 56.308(b), Education Code, is amended to read as follows:

SENATE VERSION (IE)

consult with representatives of the educator preparation programs from eligible institutions.

(d) In developing rules related to distributing a scholarship, the coordinating board shall consult with financial aid coordinators of eligible institutions.

(e) The total amount of scholarships awarded may not exceed the amount available for the program from appropriations, gifts, grants, or other funds.

(f) From money appropriated by the legislature for the purposes of this subchapter, the coordinating board annually shall determine the allocation of money available for scholarships among eligible institutions and shall distribute the money accordingly.

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(2) first-generation college students, as defined by coordinating board rule; and

(3) persons who demonstrate a commitment both to entering a teaching field identified by the commissioner of education as experiencing a critical shortage of teachers and to teaching in a public school in this state in which a majority of students enrolled are educationally disadvantaged.

SECTION 2. Same as House version.

CONFERENCE

House Bill 4363
Senate Amendments
Section-by-Section Analysis

HOUSE VERSION

(b) Each school district shall:

(1) notify its middle school students, junior high school students, and high school students, those students' teachers and school counselors, and those students' parents of the TEXAS grant, ~~and~~ Teach for Texas grant, and Future Texas Teachers Scholarship programs, the eligibility requirements of each program, the need for students to make informed curriculum choices to be prepared for success beyond high school, and sources of information on higher education admissions and financial aid in a manner that assists the district in implementing a strategy adopted by the district under Section 11.252(a)(4); and

(2) ensure that each student's official transcript or diploma indicates whether the student has completed or is on schedule to complete:

(A) the recommended or advanced high school curriculum required for grant eligibility under Section 28.002 or 28.025; or

(B) for a school district covered by Section 56.304(f)(1), the required portion of the recommended or advanced high school curriculum in the manner described by Section 56.304(f)(2).

SECTION 3. (a) The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board shall adopt rules to administer Subchapter S, Chapter 56, Education Code, as added by this Act, as soon as practicable after the effective date of this Act.

(b) The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board shall begin awarding scholarships under Subchapter S, Chapter 56, Education Code, as added by this Act, beginning with the 2023-2024 academic year.

SENATE VERSION (IE)

SECTION 3. Same as House version.

CONFERENCE

House Bill 4363
Senate Amendments
Section-by-Section Analysis

HOUSE VERSION

SECTION 4. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this Act takes effect September 1, 2023.

SENATE VERSION (IE)

SECTION 4. Same as House version.

CONFERENCE