

CS FOR SENATE BILL NO. 56(EDC)

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY THE SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Offered: 5/3/23

Referred: Finance

Sponsor(s): SENATORS DUNBAR, Gray-Jackson

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 **"An Act relating to the Alaska performance scholarship program."**

2 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

3 * **Section 1.** AS 14.43.820(a) is amended to read:

4 (a) Subject to appropriation, the commission shall award an Alaska
5 performance scholarship to an applicant who

6 (1) is a resident of the state as defined in AS 01.10.055;

7 (2) graduated or will graduate within **18** [SIX] months from a high
8 school in the state; **and**

9 (3) except as provided in (c) of this section, has completed, **is enrolled**
10 **in, or plans to enroll in** a core academic curriculum of high school level coursework
11 that includes

12 (A) four years of mathematics, four years of language arts, four
13 years of science, and four years of social studies, one year of which may
14 include a foreign language, an Alaska Native language, fine arts, [OR] cultural
15 heritage, **or career and technical education**; [OR]

1 (B) three years of mathematics, four years of language arts,
2 three years of science, four years of social studies, and two years of

3 (i) a foreign language or an Alaska Native language; or

4 (ii) career and technical education, one year of
5 which includes two semesters of sequentially more rigorous content
6 within a career cluster; or

7 (C) three years of mathematics, four years of language arts,
8 three years of science, four years of social studies, one year of which may
9 be career and technical education, and two years of a foreign language or
10 an Alaska Native language [;

11 (4) HAS A MINIMUM GRADE-POINT AVERAGE IN HIGH
12 SCHOOL OF 2.5 OR HIGHER; THE DEPARTMENT SHALL SET BY
13 REGULATION MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS BASED ON A SUBSTANTIALLY
14 SIMILAR STANDARD FOR DISTRICTS THAT DO NOT ASSIGN GRADES;

15 (5) HAS ACHIEVED A MINIMUM SCORE ON A

16 (A) COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMINATION; OR

17 (B) STANDARDIZED EXAMINATION DESIGNED TO
18 MEASURE A STUDENT'S LEVEL OF PREPAREDNESS TO MAKE THE
19 TRANSITION TO WORK, AS SELECTED BY THE DEPARTMENT; AND

20 (6) IS ENROLLED IN GOOD STANDING IN A COURSE OF
21 STUDY AT A QUALIFIED POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTION IN THIS STATE
22 THAT IS INTENDED TO RESULT IN THE AWARD OF A CERTIFICATE OR
23 DEGREE].

24 * **Sec. 2.** AS 14.43.820(g) is amended to read:

25 (g) In this section,

26 (1) "career cluster" means a group of jobs and industries that are
27 related by skills or products;

28 (2) "district" has the meaning given in AS 14.17.990.

29 * **Sec. 3.** AS 14.43.820 is amended by adding new subsections to read:

30 (h) Not later than January 15 of each year, a district shall provide to each
31 student in the district who is enrolled in grade nine or grade 10 information about the

1 Alaska performance scholarship.

2 (i) Not later than December 31 of each year, a district shall notify each student
3 in the district who is enrolled in grade 11 of the remaining academic requirements the
4 student must meet to be awarded an Alaska performance scholarship at each level
5 described in AS 14.43.825(a).

6 (j) Not later than August 15 of each year, the commission shall notify each
7 applicant awarded a scholarship under (a) of this section that the applicant has been
8 awarded an Alaska performance scholarship. The notice must

9 (1) identify the Alaska performance scholarship level awarded as
10 described in AS 14.43.825(a); and

11 (2) inform the applicant that

12 (A) the commission may disburse the award only if the
13 applicant meets the requirements described in (m) of this section; and

14 (B) the commission will adjust the applicant's award under the
15 circumstances described in (l) of this section.

16 (k) If a district provides information to or otherwise communicates with a
17 student regarding the Alaska performance scholarship, the district shall also provide
18 information about the requirements to increase an award level under AS 14.43.825(h)
19 - (j).

20 (l) If, at the time an applicant awarded an Alaska performance scholarship
21 graduates from high school, the applicant's grade-point average differs from the grade-
22 point average on which the commission based the applicant's award, the commission
23 shall adjust the applicant's award in accordance with the applicable Alaska
24 performance scholarship level described in AS 14.43.825(a).

25 (m) Notwithstanding (a) of this section, and except as provided in (c) of this
26 section, the commission may disburse an Alaska performance scholarship awarded to
27 an applicant under this section only if the applicant

28 (1) has, at the time of the applicant's graduation from high school,

29 (A) completed the core academic curriculum of high school
30 level coursework described in (a)(3) of this section; and

31 (B) met the minimum

1 (i) grade-point average in high school described in
2 AS 14.43.825(a); or

3 (ii) score on a college entrance examination described
4 in AS 14.43.825(a); and

5 (2) is enrolled in good standing in a course of study at a qualified
6 postsecondary institution in this state that is intended to result in the award of a
7 certificate or degree.

8 * **Sec. 4.** AS 14.43.825(a) is amended to read:

9 (a) The maximum annual awards for the Alaska performance scholarships are
10 as follows:

11 (1) the first award level is **\$7,000** [\$4,755] and requires a

12 (A) 3.5 grade-point average or above, **or the equivalent**
13 **established under (g) of this section; or** [AND]

14 (B) very high minimum score on a college entrance
15 examination;

16 (2) the second award level is **\$5,250** [\$3,566] and requires a

17 (A) 3.0 grade-point average or above, **or the equivalent**
18 **established under (g) of this section; or** [AND]

19 (B) high minimum score on a college entrance examination;

20 (3) the third award level is **\$3,500** [\$2,378] and requires a

21 (A) 2.5 grade-point average or above, **or the equivalent**
22 **established under (g) of this section; or** [AND]

23 (B) moderately high minimum score on a college entrance
24 examination.

25 * **Sec. 5.** AS 14.43.825(b) is amended to read:

26 (b) A student's eligibility for a scholarship terminates **eight** [SIX] years after
27 the date the student graduates from high school unless the student qualifies for an
28 extension of time allowed by the department by regulation.

29 * **Sec. 6.** AS 14.43.825(c) is amended to read:

30 (c) Except as provided in (b) of this section, a student receiving a scholarship
31 may remain eligible for up to eight semesters of enrollment in good standing at a

1 qualified university or college, which may include graduate courses. **A student's**
 2 **eligibility under this subsection is extended by one semester for each semester the**
 3 **student is enrolled part time in good standing at a qualified university or college.**

4 * **Sec. 7.** AS 14.43.825 is amended by adding new subsections to read:

5 (g) For high schools that do not award grades on a four-point scale, or five-
 6 point scale for advanced placement classes, the department shall establish by
 7 regulation the equivalent rating required for a scholarship awarded under (a)(1)(A),
 8 (2)(A), and (3)(A) of this section.

9 (h) Each time a student who is an award recipient completes two semesters of
 10 full-time enrollment at a qualified postsecondary institution in this state, the
 11 postsecondary institution shall review and notify the commission of the student's
 12 postsecondary institution grade-point average. If the student's grades qualify under (i)
 13 of this section, the commission shall increase the award level for the student as
 14 described in (i) of this section and notify the student of the increase. In this subsection,
 15 "full-time enrollment" means enrollment in a course of study that is not less than 15
 16 credits.

17 (i) If an award recipient's postsecondary institution grade-point average is

18 (1) 3.5 or above, or the equivalent established under (j) of this section,
 19 the commission shall increase the student's award level to the amount described in
 20 (a)(1) of this section;

21 (2) 3.0 or above, or the equivalent established under (j) of this section,
 22 the commission shall increase the student's award level to the amount described in
 23 (a)(2) of this section.

24 (j) For qualified postsecondary institutions that do not award grades on a four-
 25 point scale, the commission shall establish by regulation the equivalent rating required
 26 to increase an award under (i) of this section.

27 (k) In this section,

28 (1) "award recipient" means a student who has received an Alaska
 29 performance scholarship at the second or third award level;

30 (2) "postsecondary institution grade-point average" means the average
 31 of all grades on a four-point scale, or the equivalent as established by the commission

1 by regulation, obtained by a student at a qualified postsecondary institution in this
2 state.

3 * **Sec. 8.** AS 14.43.849(2) is amended to read:

4 (2) "grade-point average" means the average of all grades on a four-
5 point scale, or five-point scale for advanced placement classes, **or the equivalent as**
6 **established by the department by regulation,** obtained by the student in high
7 school;