

1 HB533  
2 219712-1  
3 By Representative Ball  
4 RFD: Ways and Means Education  
5 First Read: 05-APR-22

SYNOPSIS: This bill would establish a program to provide microgrants to participating K-12 public school students for defraying the costs of certain academic and educational enrichment activities and programs.

A BILL  
TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT

Relating to public K-12 education; to establish a program to provide microgrants to participating K-12 public school students for defraying the costs of certain academic and educational enrichment activities and programs.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

Section 1. For the purposes of this act, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

- (1) BOARD. The State Board of Education.
- (2) DEPARTMENT. The State Department of Education.

1                   (3) LOCAL BOARD OF EDUCATION. A city or county board  
2 of education.

3                   (4) MICROGRANT. A small, one time only, monetary  
4 award given to participating students to defray certain  
5 authorized academic and educational enrichment activities and  
6 programs.

7                   (5) PARENT. The parent or legal guardian of a  
8 student.

9                   (6) PARTICIPATING SCHOOL DISTRICT. A public K-12  
10 school district that elects to participate in the program.

11                   (7) PROGRAM. The microgrant program created by this  
12 act.

13                   (8) STUDENT. A public school student.

14                   Section 2. (a) The department shall provide funds,  
15 in an amount determined by a separate appropriation, for use  
16 in providing microgrants to students. These funds shall be  
17 administered through the local board of education and may be  
18 spent on a range of academic and educational enrichment  
19 activities and programs. Funding shall be available to  
20 students on a first come, first served basis and shall be  
21 distributed to Title I schools as a priority.

22                   (b) The board, by rule, shall authorize the use of  
23 microgrants for specific services including, but not limited  
24 to, all of the following:

25                   (1) Ongoing services provided by a local board of  
26 education including, but not limited to, individual classes  
27 and extracurricular activities and programs.

1                   (2) Tuition or fees, or both, at a school.

2                   (3) Tutoring services provided by a tutoring  
3 facility or an individual, who is not an immediate family  
4 member of the student.

5                   (4) Fees for nationally standardized tests, advanced  
6 placement examinations, any examinations related to college or  
7 university admission, and tuition or fees, or both, for  
8 preparatory courses relating to the tests, assessments, or  
9 examinations, in the same manner as those fees would be paid  
10 by the parent of a student.

11                   (5) Tuition or fees, or both, for programs of study  
12 or the curriculum of vocational courses including, but not  
13 limited to, courses that lead to an industry-recognized  
14 credential that satisfies a workforce need.

15                   (6) Tuition or fees, or both, for nonpublic online  
16 learning programs.

17                   (7) Tuition or fees, or both, for alternative  
18 education programs.

19                   (8) Fees for after school or summer education  
20 programs.

21                   (9) Educational services and therapies including,  
22 but not limited to, occupational, behavioral, physical,  
23 speech-language, and audiology therapies.

24                   (10) Curriculum.

25                   (11) Any activity authorized by the Educational  
26 Learning Opportunities Act.

1           (12) Any other qualified expense approved by the  
2 local board of education.

3           Section 3. (a) The program is established to assist  
4 local boards of education in satisfying the individual  
5 education needs of eligible students and shall be operational  
6 commencing on or before August 1, 2022.

7           (b) The department shall create a standard  
8 application form that a parent may submit to the department to  
9 establish the eligibility of a student to participate in the  
10 program. Microgrant funds shall be deposited into an account,  
11 held by the department, for each participating student. For  
12 the 2022-2023 school year, only students who are entering  
13 kindergarten or enrolled in and attending a school under the  
14 jurisdiction of a participating school district may apply for  
15 participating student status for that school year.

16           (c) Each participating student shall receive a  
17 microgrant, in the amount of one thousand five hundred dollars  
18 (\$1,500) per academic year. Microgrant funds may only be used  
19 by a participating student for academic and educational  
20 enrichment activities and programs authorized under this act.

21           Section 4. A participating school district may  
22 refuse to provide a microgrant to a participating student who  
23 resides outside of the participating school district or may  
24 establish a policy to provide educational services to  
25 nonresident students under certain conditions including, but  
26 not limited to, the payment of reasonable fees for attendance.

1           Section 5. (a) In any legal proceeding challenging  
2 the application of this act to a participating education  
3 service provider, the state bears the burden of establishing  
4 that the challenged action, rule, or requirement is necessary  
5 and does not impose any undue burden on the education service  
6 provider.

7           (b) No liability arises on the part of the state,  
8 the board, or any local board of education based on the award  
9 or use of a microgrant pursuant to this act.

10          (c) If any part of this act is challenged in a state  
11 court as violating either the state or federal constitution,  
12 the parent of an eligible or participating student may  
13 intervene in the lawsuit for the purposes of defending the  
14 constitutionality of this act. For the purposes of judicial  
15 administration, a court may limit the number of parents  
16 permitted to intervene or require that all parents file a  
17 joint brief, so long as they are not required to join any  
18 brief filed on behalf of any named state defendant.

19          Section 6. This act shall become effective on the  
20 first day of the first month following its passage and  
21 approval by the Governor, or its otherwise becoming law.