

SENATE BILL NO. 126

BY SENATORS NEVERS AND THOMPSON AND REPRESENTATIVE COX

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 17:3048.1(A)(1)(e)(x) and (f)(vi) and (B)(2)(c)(introductory  
3 paragraph), (vi), and (x)(aa)(aaa) and 3048.5(B) and (D) through (G) and to repeal  
4 R.S. 17:3048.1(B)(2)(c)(v), relative to the Taylor Opportunity Program for Students;  
5 to provide relative to the high school core curriculum required for initial eligibility  
6 for certain program awards; to provide relative to the TOPS-Tech Early Start Award;  
7 to provide for purpose; to provide that certain courses offered at public and  
8 nonpublic postsecondary education institutions and by certain training providers may  
9 be funded by such award; to provide for the selection and approval of such training  
10 providers; to provide for rules and regulations; to provide for eligibility; to provide  
11 for reporting; and to provide for related matters.

12 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

13 Section 1. R.S. 17:3048.1(A)(1)(e)(x) and (f)(vi) and (B)(2)(c)(introductory  
14 paragraph), (vi), and (x)(aa)(aaa) and 3048.5(B) and (D) through (G) are hereby amended  
15 and reenacted to read as follows:

16 §3048.1. Program awards; eligibility; amounts; limitations; funding; administration

17 A.(1) As part of the Louisiana Taylor Opportunity Program for Students, the  
18 state shall financially assist any student who enrolls on a full-time basis in a public  
19 college or university in this state or a regionally accredited independent college or  
20 university in the state that is a member of the Louisiana Association of Independent  
21 Colleges and Universities, hereafter in this Chapter referred to collectively as  
22 "eligible colleges and universities", to pursue an academic undergraduate degree or,

1 as provided by this Subsection, skill or occupational training as defined by the Board  
 2 of Regents, including a vocational or technical education certificate or diploma  
 3 program or a nonacademic undergraduate degree, and who meets the qualifications  
 4 of Subparagraph (b), (c), or (d) of this Paragraph and all of the applicable following  
 5 qualifications:

6 \* \* \*

7 (e) Except as otherwise provided by this Section and through the 2006-2007  
 8 school year, has successfully completed at least sixteen and one-half units of high  
 9 school course work, which constitutes a core curriculum, and meets standards for  
 10 admission to the desired college or university. Except as otherwise provided by this  
 11 Section and beginning with the 2007-2008 school year through the 2012-2013 school  
 12 year, meets standards for admission to the desired college or university and has  
 13 successfully completed at least seventeen and one-half units of high school course  
 14 work as permitted by this Subparagraph, which constitutes a core curriculum.  
 15 Except as otherwise provided by this Section and beginning with the 2013-2014  
 16 school year through the 2016-2017 school year, meets the standards for admission  
 17 to the desired college or university and has successfully completed at least nineteen  
 18 units of high school course work as permitted by this Subparagraph, which  
 19 constitutes a core curriculum. For students qualifying under Subparagraph (A)(1)(c)  
 20 of this Section, the core curriculum requirements of this Subparagraph shall become  
 21 effective beginning with the high school graduating class of 1998, except that the  
 22 core curriculum requirement for a Performance Award shall be waived for any  
 23 student graduating during the 1997-1998 school year who is certified as having  
 24 graduated within the top five percent of his graduating class at a Louisiana public  
 25 high school or nonpublic high school which is approved by the State Board of  
 26 Elementary and Secondary Education. Except as otherwise provided by this Section,  
 27 the core curriculum shall be defined as follows:

28 \* \* \*

29 (x) Fine Arts Survey (one unit; or through the 2012-2013 school year  
 30 substitute two units of performance courses in music, dance, or theater; or substitute

1 two units of visual art courses; or substitute two units of studio art courses; or  
 2 substitute one unit as an elective from among the other subjects listed in this core  
 3 curriculum); beginning with the 2013-2014 school year and thereafter, Fine Arts  
 4 Survey (one unit or substitute one unit of a performance course in music, dance, or  
 5 theater; or substitute one unit of a visual art course; or substitute one unit of a studio  
 6 art course; **or substitute one unit of drafting**).

7 \* \* \*

8 (f) Except as otherwise provided by this Section and beginning with students  
 9 graduating in the 2017-2018 school year and thereafter, meets the standards for  
 10 admission to the desired college or university and has successfully completed a core  
 11 curriculum which consists of nineteen units of high school course work as follows:

12 \* \* \*

13 (vi) Art - One unit

14 One unit chosen from the following: Performance course in Music, Dance,  
 15 or Theatre; Fine Arts Survey ; Art I, II, III, and IV; Talented Art I, II, III, and IV;  
 16 Talented Music I, II, III, and IV; Talented Theater Arts I, II, III, and IV; Speech III  
 17 and Speech IV (one unit combined); AP Art History; AP Studio Art: 2-D Design; AP  
 18 Studio Art: 3-D Design; AP Studio Art: Drawing; AP Music Theory; Film Study I  
 19 IB; Film Study II IB; Music I IB; Music II IB; Art Design III IB; Art Design IV IB;  
 20 ~~or Theatre I IB;~~ **or Drafting**.

21 \* \* \*

22 B.

23 \* \* \*

24 (2) As part of the Louisiana Taylor Opportunity Program for Students, for  
 25 students graduating from high school through the 1999-2000 school year the state  
 26 shall award an amount determined by the administering agency to equal the actual  
 27 cost of tuition of any student who enrolls on a full-time basis in a Louisiana public  
 28 postsecondary institution to pursue skill or occupational training, including a  
 29 vocational or technical education certificate or diploma program or a nonacademic  
 30 undergraduate degree, and who meets the following qualifications and all other

1 applicable qualifications of this Chapter and for students graduating from high  
 2 school during the 2000-2001 school year and thereafter the state shall award an  
 3 amount determined by the administering agency in accordance with the provisions  
 4 of Subparagraph (f) of this Paragraph for any student who enrolls on a full-time basis  
 5 in an eligible college or university as defined in Subsection A of this Section to  
 6 pursue skill or occupational training as defined by the Board of Regents, including  
 7 a vocational or technical education certificate or diploma program or a nonacademic  
 8 undergraduate degree, and who meets the following qualifications and all other  
 9 applicable qualifications of this Chapter:

10 \* \* \*

11 (c) Except as otherwise provided by this Section, has successfully completed  
 12 a core curriculum, and meets standards for admission to the desired eligible college  
 13 or university. The core curriculum specified in Subparagraph (b) of this Paragraph  
 14 shall be effective only for high school graduates through the 2001-2002 school year;  
 15 thereafter, a student shall meet the core curriculum requirements as specified in this  
 16 Subparagraph. Except as otherwise provided by this Section, a student may qualify  
 17 for a TOPS-Tech Award by meeting the core curriculum requirements of  
 18 Subparagraph (A)(1)(e) **or (f)** of this Section or the core curriculum defined as  
 19 follows:

20 \* \* \*

21 (vi) Earth Science, Environmental Science, Agriscience I and II (both for one  
 22 unit), Physical Science, Integrated Science, Biology II, **Chemistry or Applied**  
 23 **Chemistry**, Chemistry II, Physics, Physics II, or Physics for Technology (~~one unit~~  
 24 **two units**).

25 \* \* \*

26 (x) Remaining core courses shall be selected from one of the following  
 27 options:

- 28 (aa) OPTION 1, consisting of four units as follows:
- 29 (aaa) Fine Arts Survey (one unit) **or drafting (one unit)** or substitute two  
 30 units of performance courses in music, dance, or theater; or substitute two units of

1 visual art courses; or substitute two units of studio art courses; or a course from the  
2 career and technical program of studies that is approved by the State Board of  
3 Elementary and Secondary Education; or substitute one unit as an elective from  
4 among the other subjects listed in this core curriculum.

5 \* \* \*

6 §3048.5. TOPS-Tech Early Start Award; purpose; eligibility; award amounts  
7 limitations; administration; implementation; reports

8 \* \* \*

9 B.(1) A TOPS-Tech Early Start Award may be used to fund any technical  
10 or applied course leading to an Industry-Based Certification, a Certificate of  
11 Applied Science, and a Certificate of Technical Sciences offered at a Louisiana  
12 public or nonpublic postsecondary education institution ~~for the purpose of pursuing~~  
13 ~~an industry-based occupational or vocational education credential as defined by the~~  
14 ~~Board of Regents~~ or by any Louisiana training provider recognized by the  
15 Louisiana Workforce Commission and approved by the State Board of  
16 Elementary and Secondary Education as provided in Paragraph (4) of this  
17 Subsection when such ~~credential also meets all of the following conditions~~  
18 certification or certificate is approved by the Workforce Investment Council as  
19 meeting the following requirements:

20 (a) Is identified by the Occupation Forecasting Conference as a credential for  
21 an occupation in top demand in Louisiana.

22 (b) Is recognized by the State Industry-Based Certification Leadership  
23 Council.

24 (c) ~~Is approved by the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education~~  
25 ~~and by the Board of Supervisors of Community and Technical Colleges.~~

26 (2) An eligible recipient may receive a TOPS-Tech Early Start Award for  
27 two semesters during the eleventh grade and two semesters during the twelfth grade,  
28 excluding summer sessions.

29 (3) The administering agency, on behalf of a TOPS-Tech Early Start Award  
30 recipient, shall pay to the Louisiana postsecondary education institution in which the

1 student is enrolled in an eligible program of studies or a training program provider  
 2 an amount of one hundred fifty dollars for each three credit-hour or equivalent time  
 3 course taken by the student, not to exceed two such courses per high school semester  
 4 for an eleventh-grade student and two such courses per high school semester for a  
 5 twelfth-grade student.

6 (4)(a) By January thirty-first annually, the State Board of Elementary  
 7 and Secondary Education shall determine which training program providers it  
 8 approves for the academic year that begins in the fall of that year.

9 (b) For the 2014-2015 academic year, the number of training program  
 10 providers at which a TOPS-Tech Early Start Award may be used shall be  
 11 limited to five providers as selected by the State Board of Elementary and  
 12 Secondary Education.

13 (c) The State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education shall  
 14 promulgate rules and regulations in accordance with the Administrative  
 15 Procedure Act to implement the provisions of this Paragraph.

16 (5) Implementation of the provisions of this Section shall be subject to the  
 17 appropriation of funds for this purpose.

18 \* \* \*

19 D. To be eligible for an initial TOPS-Tech Early Start Award, a student shall  
 20 meet each of the following conditions and comply with other applicable provisions  
 21 of this Section and administering agency rules:

22 (1) Be in the eleventh or twelfth grade in a Louisiana public school.

23 (2) Have prepared a five-year education and career plan, including a sequence  
 24 of related courses with a career focus as provided by Subpart A-1 of Part III of  
 25 Chapter 1 of this Title.

26 (3) Have a cumulative high school grade point average on all courses  
 27 attempted of not less than 2.0 when calculated on a 4.0 scale.

28 (4) ~~Have at least the minimum scores required to pass the mathematics and~~  
 29 ~~English portions of the graduation exit exam established by the State Board of~~  
 30 ~~Elementary and Secondary Education.~~

1                   (5) Score at least fifteen on the English subsection and fifteen on the  
2 mathematics subsection of the ACT PLAN assessment administered as part of  
3 Louisiana's Educational Planning and Assessment System.

4                   E. To maintain continuing eligibility for a TOPS-Tech Early Start Award,  
5 a student must meet each of the following conditions and comply with other  
6 applicable provisions of this Section and administering agency rules:

7                   (1) Be a student in good standing in a Louisiana public high school.

8                   (2) Maintain a cumulative high school grade point average on all courses  
9 attempted of not less than 2.0 when calculated on a 4.0 scale.

10                  (3) Be a student in good standing while enrolled in a Louisiana public **or**  
11 **nonpublic** postsecondary education institution **or training program** and continue  
12 to pursue one or more courses leading to an industry-based credential.

13                  F.(1) The provisions of this Section shall be administered by the Louisiana  
14 Student Financial Assistance Commission, herein referred to as the "administering  
15 agency". Except as otherwise provided by this Section, the authority granted to and  
16 limitations placed on the administering agency by R.S. 17:3048.1 relative to  
17 administering other awards pursuant to the Taylor Opportunity Program for Students  
18 shall be deemed to apply also to the administration of the TOPS-Tech Early Start  
19 Award.

20                  (2) The agency shall adopt, in accordance with the Administrative Procedure  
21 Act, rules to implement and administer the provisions of this Section. Such rules  
22 shall include but not be limited to necessary guidelines, policies, procedures, forms,  
23 and time lines.

24                  ~~(3) The administering agency, in accordance with a plan approved by the~~  
25 ~~Board of Regents, may implement the provisions of this Section initially on a pilot~~  
26 ~~basis. However, if implemented on a pilot basis, it is the intention of the legislature~~  
27 ~~that full implementation be achieved at the earliest time possible.~~

28                  G. Prior to the convening of each regular legislative session, ~~the Board of~~  
29 ~~Regents, in consultation with~~ the Louisiana Student Financial Assistance  
30 Commission; shall provide to the governor, the House Committee on Education, and

1 the Senate Committee on Education a written review and analysis of TOPS-Tech  
2 Early Start awards relative to award use by students and the benefits therefrom as  
3 well as the impact on subsequent use by students of TOPS-Tech awards.

4 Section 2. R.S. 17:3048.1(B)(2)(c)(v) is hereby repealed in its entirety.

5 Section 3. This Act shall become effective upon signature by the governor or, if not  
6 signed by the governor, upon expiration of the time for bills to become law without signature  
7 by the governor, as provided by Article III, Section 18 of the Constitution of Louisiana. If  
8 vetoed by the governor and subsequently approved by the legislature, this Act shall become  
9 effective on the day following such approval.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_