

SENATE BILL 827

By Yager

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-4-708 and Title 49, Chapter 4, Part 9, relative to eligibility for postsecondary financial assistance from net lottery proceeds.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-4-708(b), is amended by adding the following language as a new subdivision:

“Middle college” means a program operated by an eligible public two-year postsecondary institution in partnership with a local education agency that permits rising high school juniors to enter the public two-year postsecondary institution and to earn both a high school diploma and an associate degree in two (2) years;

SECTION 2. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-4-708(c), is amended by deleting subdivision (1) in its entirety and substituting instead the following:

(1) To be eligible for the scholarship, a student shall be:

(A) Admitted to, and enrolled full-time in, an eligible postsecondary program in the fall term following graduation from an eligible high school, or completion of high school as a Tennessee home school student, or obtaining a GED[®] or HiSET[®] diploma; provided, that the student obtains the GED[®] or HiSET[®] diploma prior to the student reaching nineteen (19) years of age. Exceptions to initial enrollment may be made for extenuating circumstances as provided in rules promulgated by TSAC; or

(B) Admitted to, and enrolled in, a middle college program at an eligible public two-year postsecondary institution in the fall semester of the student's junior year in high school. TSAC shall promulgate rules for the award of

Tennessee Promise scholarships to middle college students, including the requirements for application for the scholarship and participation in the mentoring and community service programs by middle college students under subdivision (c)(4).

SECTION 3. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-4-910, is amended by designating the existing language as subsection (a) and adding the following language as a new subsection (b):

(b)

(1) A student who receives an associate degree at a public two-year postsecondary institution as a middle college student shall be eligible to receive a Tennessee HOPE scholarship at the time of transfer to an eligible four-year postsecondary institution in pursuit of a baccalaureate degree, if the student:

(A) Received the Tennessee Promise scholarship and maintained eligibility for the Tennessee Promise scholarship throughout the student's enrollment in the middle college program;

(B) Meets all nonacademic requirements for the Tennessee HOPE scholarship;

(C) Meets the requirements of § 49-4-911(a)(1) or (a)(2) at the time of transfer;

(D) Applies for the Tennessee HOPE scholarship; and

(E) Transfers to the eligible four-year institution within sixteen (16) months of receiving the associate degree.

(2) To continue to be eligible for a Tennessee HOPE scholarship at the end of subsequent semesters when eligibility is checked, the student shall meet the requirements of § 49-4-911.

(3) The student shall be eligible for the Tennessee HOPE scholarship until the student reaches a terminating event under § 49-4-913. Semester hours attempted and full-time equivalent semesters enrolled in as a middle college

student shall count toward the limits on semester hours attempted and full-time equivalent semesters under § 49-4-913. The five-year period in which a student is eligible for a Tennessee HOPE scholarship shall start at the time the student enrolled in the public two-year postsecondary institution as a middle college student.

SECTION 4. This act shall take effect July 1, 2015, at 12:01 a.m., the public welfare requiring it.