

## RÉSUMÉ DIGEST

ACT 347 (HB 77)

2025 Regular Session

Turner

### TOPS award levels

Existing law provides for the Taylor Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS), a merit scholarship program. Provides for four award levels based on high school academic criteria, including completion of a specific core curriculum, a minimum GPA on that core curriculum, and a minimum ACT score: TOPS-Tech, Opportunity, Performance, and Honors, which is the highest award level for students who score a 27 or higher on the ACT. New law creates Excellence, a new award level, for students who score 31 or higher on the ACT and enroll in a public college or university or an institution that is a member of the La. Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (LAICU) and provides that qualification for an Excellence Award applies to students graduating from high school during or after the 2024-2025 school year.

### Award amounts

Existing law ties the calculation of award amounts for TOPS-Tech, Opportunity, Performance, and Honors awards to the amount of tuition charged at a given institution during the 2016-2017 academic year. New law provides that for the Excellence award, the award amount is \$12,000 or the amount of tuition and mandatory fees, whichever is less, at a public institution and \$8,500 or the amount of tuition and mandatory fees, whichever is less, at a LAICU institution.

### Classic Learning Test

Existing law sets a minimum ACT score for each award level and allows qualification upon attainment of an equivalent concordant score on the SAT. New law also allows qualification upon the attainment of an equivalent concordant score on the Classic Learning Test for students graduating from high school during or after the 2024-2025 school year.

### National Guard stipends

Existing law provides that students who qualify for both TOPS and a National Guard tuition exemption as provided in existing law receive the latter tuition exemption but also receive a stipend based on the TOPS award level for which they qualify. New law adds a higher stipend for these students who qualify for an Excellence award.

Effective August 1, 2025.

(Amends R.S. 17:5002(A), (E)(1) and (3), and (G), 5024(B)(1), 5025(intro. para.), 5029(B)(3)(b)(ii) and (iii) and (D)(1)(intro. para.), 5041(intro. para.), (1)(c), and (4), and 5043(1); Adds R.S. 17:5002(I) and 5024(A)(1)(e))