

RÉSUMÉ DIGEST

ACT 287 (SB 204)

2023 Regular Session

Hewitt

Existing law provides for the M.J. Foster Promise Award program which provides a financial award towards the costs of tuition and required fees to certain students who enroll in programs to pursue an associate degree or shorter-term postsecondary credential required for certain high-demand, high-wage occupations aligned to Louisiana's workforce priorities.

New law allows the award to be used for mandatory books and instructional materials.

Existing law provides a maximum annual award amount for students attending full-time. Further requires an award to students attending less than full-time to be an amount proportional to the hours the student is enrolled.

New law allows the administering agency to set the reduced award amount that shall be awarded to students attending part-time.

Prior law provided for award to be applied after all federal, state, and institutional aid is applied ("last dollar").

New law provides that the initial award payment is to be applied before any federal, state, and institutional aid is applied but limits the award to tuition, fees, and mandatory books and instructional materials costs ("first dollar"). Retains requirement for "last dollar" application for subsequent award payments. Specifies that federal financial aid shall not include funding from student loans, work-study, or the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

Prior law required an eligible student to have applied for federal student aid or demonstrate ineligibility for federal aid.

New law allows students enrolling in programs that do not qualify for federal student aid to not be required to apply for the aid. Further allows the administering agency to provide by rule alternative methods to establish need if an applicant is unable to complete an application for federal student aid due to extenuating circumstances as defined by the agency. Also, allows an eligible student to receive one award payment prior to completing the federal student aid application.

Prior law required for initial eligibility for a student to agree to annually perform at least twenty hours of community service or participate in a program-related apprenticeship, internship, or mentorship and to certify completion of the activity each year.

New law removes the initial and continued eligibility requirement for community service or program related apprenticeship, internship, or mentorship.

Existing law provides for an advisory council and prior law provided for a working group, comprised of many of the same members.

New law removes the working group and places the responsibility of the working group into the responsibilities of the advisory council.

Existing law provides relative to the funding of the program. Prior law provided that if the available funding was not sufficient to fully fund all eligible award recipients that the monies were to be provided on a first come, first served basis, with priority given to previous award recipients who met eligibility requirements and were continuing in a qualified program for which they were previously enrolled.

New law provides that if the available funding is not sufficient to fully fund all award recipients, awards will first be provided to previous award recipients who meet continuation eligibility requirements and who are continuing in a qualified program and then to other eligible students enrolled in a program as funds are available.

Existing law requires the administering agency to adopt regulations and guidelines for the distribution and allocation of monies appropriated for the program. Prior law required

regulations and guidelines to be approved by the Joint Legislative Committee on the Budget (JLCB).

New law limits JLCB approval to initial regulations and guidelines.

Existing law provides for coordination with other state agencies and requires memorandums of understanding (MOU) between the administering agency and the Department of Revenue, the Louisiana Workforce Commission, and the Department of Public Safety and Corrections.

New law adds residency information to the MOU with the Department of Revenue. Further, requires an MOU between the administering agency and the Department of Children and Family Services and the La. Department of Health to help verify if the student is eligible for certain aid as a proxy to demonstrate income requirements.

Existing law provides for a reporting system and provides for certain information to be reported, including demographic data of students.

New law expands the data that shall be collected and reported on by the administering agency.

Effective June 12, 2023.

(Amends R.S. 17:3047(B)(1), (C)(1)(a), (D), and (E)(1), 3047.2(A)(9), 3047.4(B) and (D)(3), 3047.6(A) and (B), and 3047.7(A)(2) and (B)(2); adds R.S. 17:3047.1(G); repeals R.S. 17:3047.2(A)(12) and 3047.3(A)(9))