

2018 Regular Session

SENATE BILL NO. 380

BY SENATOR BISHOP

TOPS. Creates the TOPS Second Chance Award. (gov sig)

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AN ACT

To amend and reenact R.S. 17:5002(E)(2) and the introductory paragraph of 5025, and to enact R.S. 17:5002(H), 5024(A)(1)(e) and (B)(1)(e), 5026.1, and 5042.1, relative to the Taylor Opportunity Program for Students; to create a new program award; to provide for initial award eligibility and continuation requirements; to provide relative to award amount; and to provide for related matters.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

Section 1. R.S. 17:5002(E)(2) and the introductory paragraph of 5025, are hereby amended and reenacted, and R.S. 17:5002(H), 5024(A)(1)(e) and (B)(1)(e), 5026.1, and 5042.1 are hereby enacted to read as follows:

§5002. Awards and amounts

* * *

E.(1) * * *

(2) No student shall be eligible for tuition payment pursuant to this Section for the TOPS-Tech Award **or the TOPS Second Chance Award** for more than **four semesters or an equivalent number of units in an eligible institution which operates on a schedule based on units other than semesters, or** two years unless

1 an extension is granted by the administering agency in accordance with its rules.

2 * * *

3 **H. Any student who is eligible for a TOPS Second Chance Award**
4 **pursuant to this Chapter and who has enrolled in any public four-year**
5 **institution in this state, any regionally accredited independent four-year**
6 **institution in the state which is a member of the Louisiana Association of**
7 **Independent Colleges and Universities, or in an out-of-state four-year**
8 **institution that is specifically designed to accommodate deaf and hard-of-**
9 **hearing students pursuant to R.S. 17:5027(C) shall be awarded by the state an**
10 **amount to be determined by the administering agency in the same manner as**
11 **provided in Subsection (B) of this Section.**

12 * * *

13 §5024. Academic requirements

14 A.(1) Except as otherwise provided by this Subsection, students shall meet
15 the following minimum grade point average requirements, calculated on a 4.00 scale
16 using only the grades obtained by the student in completing the core curriculum
17 requirements established by this Chapter, for the respective awards:

18 * * *

19 **(e) For a TOPS Second Chance Award, a minimum cumulative grade**
20 **point average of 2.50.**

21 * * *

22 B.(1) Except as otherwise provided by this Subsection, a student shall earn
23 the following minimum test scores for the respective awards:

24 * * *

25 **(e) For a TOPS Second Chance Award, a composite score on the**
26 **specified ACT of seventeen or higher or an equivalent concordant value on any**
27 **enhanced or revised version of such test or on the SAT.**

28 * * *

29 §5025. High school core curriculum requirements; Opportunity, Performance,

1 Honors, **TOPS Second Chance** Awards

2 To be eligible for an Opportunity, Performance, ~~or~~ **TOPS Second**
3 **Chance** Award pursuant to this Chapter, a student who graduates during or after the
4 2017-2018 school year shall have successfully completed a core curriculum which
5 consists of nineteen units of high school course work as follows:

6 * * *

7 **§5026.1 Initial Postsecondary eligibility requirements, TOPS Second Chance**

8 **To be eligible for a TOPS Second Chance Award pursuant to this**
9 **Chapter, a student who graduated from high school during or after the 2021-**
10 **2022 school year shall:**

11 **(1) Have enrolled in an eligible four-year postsecondary institution not**
12 **later than the semester, excluding summer semesters and sessions, immediately**
13 **following the first anniversary of the date that the student graduated from high**
14 **school.**

15 **(2) Have remained continuously enrolled in an eligible four-year**
16 **postsecondary institution and earned at least sixty hours of academic credit**
17 **within two consecutive academic years of enrolling in an eligible institution.**

18 **(3) Have maintained a cumulative grade point average of a 3.00 on a 4.00**
19 **scale as evaluated at the end of each academic year.**

20 **(4) Remain enrolled in a baccalaureate program at an eligible four-year**
21 **postsecondary institution.**

22 * * *

23 **§5042.1. Maintaining eligibility; TOPS Second Chance**

24 **(A) To maintain continued state payment of any amount pursuant to a**
25 **TOPS Second Chance Award, a student shall meet all of the following:**

26 **(1) Make steady academic progress toward a degree as defined by the**
27 **administering agency, earning not less than the minimum number of hours of**
28 **credit required for full-time standing in each academic year or the required**
29 **number of hours needed to complete the undergraduate degree during that**

1 semester or quarter.

2 (2) Maintain continuous enrollment for not less than two semesters or
3 three quarters in each successive academic year, unless granted an exception for
4 cause by the administering agency.

5 (3) Maintain a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.50 on a 4.00
6 scale as evaluated at the end of each academic year.

7 (4) Have no criminal conviction, except for misdemeanor traffic
8 violations.

9 (5) Receive an honorable discharge or general discharge under
10 honorable conditions if the student was in the United States Armed Forces and
11 separated from such service.

12 B. If at any time a student fails to maintain the requirements provided
13 in Subsection (A) of this Section, the student is ineligible for further payments.

14 Section 2. This Act shall become effective upon signature by the governor or, if not
15 signed by the governor, upon expiration of the time for bills to become law without signature
16 by the governor, as provided by Article III, Section 18 of the Constitution of Louisiana. If
17 vetoed by the governor and subsequently approved by the legislature, this Act shall become
18 effective on the day following such approval.

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part
of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Cheryl Serrett.

DIGEST

SB 380 Original

2018 Regular Session

Bishop

Present law provides for the Taylor Opportunity Program for Students.

Proposed law retains present law.

Proposed law creates a new award, the TOPS Second Chance Award.

Proposed law provides that a TOPS Second Chance Award recipient must have a 2.50 GPA based on the TOPS Opportunity, Performance, or Honors high school core curriculum, scored at least a 17 on the ACT test, and meet the following criteria:

- (1) Graduated from high school during or after the 2021-2022 school year.
- (2) Enrolled in an eligible four-year institution not later than the semester, excluding summer semesters and sessions, immediately following the first anniversary of the date that the student graduated from high school.

- (3) Remained continuously enrolled in an eligible four-year institution and earned at least sixty hours of academic credit within two consecutive academic years enrolling in an eligible institution.
- (4) Maintained a cumulative grade point average of 3.00 each academic year.
- (5) Remain enrolled in a baccalaureate program at a TOPS eligible four-year institution.

Proposed law provides that to maintain eligibility for the award, a student must:

- (1) Make steady academic progress toward a degree as defined by the administering agency.
- (2) Maintain a cumulative grade point average 2.50 on a 4.0 scale.
- (3) Maintain continuous enrollment.
- (4) Have no criminal conviction, except for misdemeanor traffic violations and,
- (5) Have received an honorable discharge or general discharge under honorable conditions, if the student was in the United States Armed Forces and separated from such service.

Effective upon signature of the governor or lapse of time for gubernatorial action.

(Amends R.S. 17:5002(E)(2) and 5025(intro para); adds R.S. 17:5002(H), 5024(A)(1)(e) and (B)(1)(e), 5026.1, and 5042.1)