

2026 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 325

BY REPRESENTATIVES BRASS, ADAMS, BERAULT, BILLINGS, BROUSSARD, CARLSON, WILFORD CARTER, CARVER, CHASSION, EDMONSTON, FISHER, FREEMAN, FREIBERG, GLORIOSO, GREEN, DANA HENRY, ILLG, JACKSON, TRAVIS JOHNSON, JORDAN, KNOX, LACOMBE, LAFLEUR, TERRY LANDRY, LYONS, MARCELLE, MARTINEZ, MENA, MOORE, MURRAY, PHELPS, ST. BLANC, TAYLOR, WALTERS, WYBLE, AND YOUNG AND SENATORS BARROW, BOUDREAUX, CARTER, CATHEY, DUPLESSIS, FOIL, HARRIS, HENSGENS, JACKSON-ANDREWS, LUNEAU, MIZELL, PRICE, AND REESE

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 17:5001 and 5042 and to enact R.S. 17:5024(D) and 5065(E),
3 relative to the Taylor Opportunity Program for Students; to revise academic initial
4 eligibility criteria for a TOPS-Tech award; to provide for qualification based on the
5 attainment of certain early college credits; to provide for initial and continuing
6 eligibility for certain students; to provide for funding of certain awards; to provide
7 for applicability; to provide for effectiveness; and to provide for related matters.

8 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

9 Section 1. R.S. 17:5001 and 5042 are hereby amended and reenacted and R.S.
10 17:5024(D) and 5065(E) are hereby enacted to read as follows:

11 §5001. Taylor Opportunity Program for Students

12 As part of the Louisiana Taylor Opportunity Program for Students, the state
13 shall provide financial assistance to any eligible student who enrolls on a full-time
14 basis, unless otherwise provided by law, in an eligible college or university to pursue

1 an academic undergraduate degree or skill or occupational training as defined by the
2 administering agency including a vocational or technical education certificate or
3 diploma program or a nonacademic undergraduate degree.

4 * * *

5 §5024. Academic requirements

6 * * *

7 D.(1) Notwithstanding any other provision of this Section, a student who is
8 otherwise eligible for a TOPS-Tech award pursuant to this Chapter shall qualify for
9 the award if he meets at least two of the following requirements as determined by the
10 administering agency:

11 (a) Attainment of a minimum grade point average on the core curriculum as
12 provided in Subsection A of this Section.

13 (b) Attainment of a minimum ACT score as provided in Subsection B of this
14 Section.

15 (c) Successful completion of either at least nine credit hours of early college
16 credit, which may be attained through academic or technical dual enrollment courses,
17 or equivalent validated skills and learning measures as approved by the Statewide
18 Articulation and Transfer Council.

19 (2) The provisions of Paragraph (1) of this Subsection are applicable to
20 students graduating from high school during or after the 2026-2027 academic year.

21 * * *

22 §5042. Maintaining eligibility; TOPS-Tech

23 A. Through the 2025-2026 academic year, to ~~to~~ maintain continued state
24 payment of any amount pursuant to a TOPS-Tech Award once enrolled in an
25 institution, a student shall meet all of the following:

26 (1) Make steady academic progress as defined by the administering agency
27 toward completion of the requirements of the program in which enrolled, earning not
28 less than the minimum number of hours of credit required for full-time standing or

1 the required number of hours needed to complete the program's requirements. If at
2 any time a student fails to maintain the cumulative grade point average required for
3 continuation in the program or as of the end of any term during the school year fails
4 to make steady academic progress as defined by the administering agency, the
5 student shall become ineligible for further payments. Payments may be reinstated
6 upon attainment of the grade point average required for continuation of the original
7 award and the standards for steady academic progress as defined by the
8 administering agency, provided that the student has maintained other continuation
9 requirements and the period of ineligibility did not persist for more than one year
10 from the date of loss of eligibility. If this one-year period is interrupted due to a
11 student's active duty service in the United States Armed Forces, the one-year period
12 shall be extended for a length of time equal to the student's active duty service, not
13 to exceed four years, unless the student reenlists in the United States Armed Forces
14 and maintains continuous active duty, in which case the period shall be extended for
15 a length of time equal to the student's active duty service; or unless the student is
16 granted an exception for cause by the administering agency.

17 (2) Maintain continuous enrollment as a full-time student unless granted an
18 exception for cause by the administering agency.

19 (3) Have a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.50 calculated on a
20 4.00 scale.

21 (4) Have no criminal conviction, except for misdemeanor traffic violations
22 and, if the student has been in the United States Armed Forces and has separated
23 from such service, has received an honorable discharge or general discharge under
24 honorable conditions.

25 B. Beginning with the 2026-2027 academic year, to maintain continued state
26 payment of any amount pursuant to a TOPS-Tech Award once enrolled in an
27 institution, a student shall meet all of the following:

28 (1) Make steady academic progress as defined by the administering agency
29 toward completion of the requirements of the program in which enrolled, while
30 enrolled either part-time or full-time. If at any time a student fails to maintain the

1 cumulative grade point average required for continuation in the program or as of the
 2 end of any term during the school year fails to make steady academic progress as
 3 defined by the administering agency, the student shall become ineligible for further
 4 payments. Payments may be reinstated upon attainment of the grade point average
 5 required for continuation of the original award and the standards for steady academic
 6 progress as defined by the administering agency, provided that the student has
 7 maintained other continuation requirements and the period of ineligibility did not
 8 persist for more than one year from the date of loss of eligibility. If this one-year
 9 period is interrupted due to a student's active duty service in the United States Armed
 10 Forces, the one-year period shall be extended for a length of time equal to the
 11 student's active duty service, not to exceed four years, unless the student reenlists in
 12 the United States Armed Forces and maintains continuous active duty, in which case
 13 the period shall be extended for a length of time equal to the student's active duty
 14 service; or unless the student is granted an exception for cause by the administering
 15 agency.

16 (2) Maintain continuous enrollment as a full-time or part-time student unless
 17 granted an exception for cause by the administering agency.

18 (3) Have a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.50 calculated on a
 19 4.00 scale.

20 (4) Have no criminal conviction, except for misdemeanor traffic violations
 21 and, if the student has been in the United States Armed Forces and has separated
 22 from such service, has received an honorable discharge or general discharge under
 23 honorable conditions.

24 * * *

25 §5065. Funding

26 * * *

27 E. Payment of TOPS-Tech awards for part-time students provided pursuant
 28 to the provisions of this Chapter shall be made only from monies remaining in the
 29 funds appropriated for the purpose of paying TOPS awards.

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

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

APPROVED: _____