

LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA
ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH LEGISLATURE
SECOND SESSION

LEGISLATIVE BILL 902

Introduced by Aguilar, 35; Flood, 19; Groene, 42; Halloran, 33; Linehan,
39; Sanders, 45; Slama, 1; Wishart, 27.

Read first time January 07, 2022

Committee: Education

- 1 A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to postsecondary education; to adopt the
- 2 Nebraska Career Scholarship Act; and to provide an operative date.
- 3 Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

1 Section 1. Sections 1 to 9 of this act shall be known and may be
2 cited as the Nebraska Career Scholarship Act.

3 Sec. 2. For purposes of the Nebraska Career Scholarship Act:

4 (1) Completion means, for a community college student, earning the
5 certificate, diploma, or degree that signifies completion of the program
6 of study;

7 (2) First-time freshman means a student who enrolled in an eligible
8 program of study as the student's first enrollment in any postsecondary
9 institution after graduating from high school or receiving a diploma of
10 high school equivalency;

11 (3) Nebraska Career Scholarship means a scholarship awarded under
12 the act or a scholarship awarded as a Nebraska Career Scholarship
13 pursuant to Laws 2021, LB380, or Laws 2020, LB1008;

14 (4) Nonscholarship student means a student who has never been
15 awarded a Nebraska Career Scholarship for the applicable eligible program
16 of study;

17 (5) Private postsecondary institution means a private nonprofit
18 postsecondary educational institution that meets the definition of an
19 eligible postsecondary educational institution pursuant to section
20 85-1906;

21 (6) Scholarship recipient means a student who has been awarded a
22 Nebraska Career Scholarship;

23 (7) Standard college admission test means the national assessment
24 instrument that is also used as the standard college admission test
25 selected by the State Board of Education and administered to students in
26 the eleventh grade pursuant to subsection (9) of section 79-760.03; and

27 (8) Transfer student means a student who transferred from another
28 postsecondary institution or another program of study in the same
29 postsecondary institution into an eligible program of study.

30 Sec. 3. (1)(a) The Board of Trustees of the Nebraska State Colleges
31 shall award a Nebraska Career Scholarship that does not exceed a maximum

1 of fifteen thousand dollars per year to any eligible state college
2 student who achieved a composite score on a standard college admission
3 test equivalent to a score of at least eighteen out of a maximum score of
4 thirty-six and who is enrolled in an eligible program of study.

5 (b) The board shall allocate funds appropriated to the board under
6 the Nebraska Career Scholarship Act between the state college campuses,
7 determine the eligibility of students enrolled in a state college,
8 receive and process applications for awards to individual students, and
9 disperse funds directly to scholarship recipients during the fiscal year.
10 Eligibility criteria shall include being a first-time freshman or a
11 transfer student and enrollment in an eligible program of study.

12 (c) For purposes of this section, an eligible program of study means
13 a program of study at a state college in rangeland management, industrial
14 technology, criminal justice, business administration, education,
15 communication, or computer information systems.

16 (2) Each scholarship recipient shall register with the appropriate
17 campus office to obtain a Nebraska-based internship, apprenticeship,
18 clinical position, or employment in a major-related field prior to
19 completion of the student's eligible program of study.

20 (3) A Nebraska Career Scholarship may be used by a scholarship
21 recipient for tuition, fees, required tools and equipment, room, and
22 board.

23 (4) Each scholarship awarded under this section shall be
24 automatically renewed on an annual basis if the student remains enrolled
25 in good standing in the eligible program of study for which such
26 scholarship was awarded, except that no student shall receive a
27 scholarship renewal after four years of participation in such eligible
28 program of study.

29 (5) Every four years, the board, in collaboration with the
30 Department of Economic Development, shall evaluate which state college
31 programs of study are needed to meet the workforce needs of the state and

1 shall suggest changes to the eligible programs of study in the report
2 required pursuant to subsection (6) of this section.

3 (6) The board shall collect information on each state college
4 scholarship recipient and shall report electronically to the Clerk of the
5 Legislature and the Governor on or before December 1 of each year the
6 following information:

7 (a) For each eligible program of study at a state college in the
8 current or prior academic year:

9 (i) The total number of students enrolled in the program in the
10 immediately prior academic year and the total number of students enrolled
11 in the program as of September 30 for the current academic year;

12 (ii) The total number of scholarship recipients in the program as of
13 September 30 for the current academic year and the total number of such
14 scholarship recipients who are newly enrolled in the program for such
15 academic year;

16 (iii) The total number of students retained in the program from the
17 immediately prior academic year to the current academic year and a
18 comparison of the retention rates between scholarship recipients and
19 nonscholarship students;

20 (iv) The number of students participating in an internship, an
21 apprenticeship, a clinical position, or employment in a major-related
22 field during the immediately prior academic year and a comparison of
23 participation rates for scholarship recipients and nonscholarship
24 students;

25 (v) The total number of graduates for the immediately prior academic
26 year, the number of scholarship recipient graduates for such academic
27 year, and a comparison of the graduation rates for scholarship recipients
28 and nonscholarship students; and

29 (vi) The number of graduates from the immediately prior academic
30 year who obtained employment in a major-related field in the state within
31 four months after graduation and the average starting salary for such

1 graduates; and

2 (b) Any suggested changes to the eligible programs of study pursuant
3 to subsection (5) of this section.

4 Sec. 4. (1)(a) The Board of Regents of the University of Nebraska
5 shall award a Nebraska Career Scholarship to any eligible university
6 student who is enrolled in an eligible program of study in an amount not
7 to exceed:

8 (i) Ten thousand dollars per year for any scholarship recipient who
9 is a transfer student; or

10 (ii) Except as provided in subdivision (1)(a)(i) of this section:

11 (A) Twenty-five thousand dollars per year for any scholarship
12 recipient who achieved a composite score on a standard college admission
13 test equivalent to a score of at least twenty-eight out of a maximum
14 score of thirty-six; or

15 (B) Ten thousand dollars per year for any scholarship recipient who
16 achieved a composite score on a standard college admission test
17 equivalent to a score of at least twenty and less than twenty-eight out
18 of a maximum score of thirty-six.

19 (b) The board shall allocate funds appropriated to the board under
20 the Nebraska Career Scholarship Act between the university campuses,
21 determine the eligibility of students enrolled in the university, receive
22 and process applications for awards to individual students, and disperse
23 funds directly to scholarship recipients during the fiscal year.
24 Eligibility criteria shall include (i) being a first-time freshman who
25 achieved a composite score on a standard college admission test
26 equivalent to a score of at least twenty out of a maximum score of
27 thirty-six or a transfer student and (ii) enrollment in an eligible
28 program of study.

29 (c) For purposes of this section, an eligible program of study means
30 a program of study offered by the University of Nebraska in math,
31 engineering, health care, computer information systems, business, or

1 education.

2 (2) Each scholarship recipient shall register with the appropriate
3 campus office to obtain a Nebraska-based internship, apprenticeship,
4 clinical position, or employment in a major-related field prior to
5 completion of the student's eligible program of study.

6 (3) A Nebraska Career Scholarship may be used by a scholarship
7 recipient for tuition, fees, required tools and equipment, room, and
8 board.

9 (4) Each scholarship awarded under this section shall be
10 automatically renewed on an annual basis if the student remains enrolled
11 in good standing in the eligible program of study for which such
12 scholarship was awarded, except that no student shall receive a
13 scholarship renewal after four years of participation in such eligible
14 program of study.

15 (5) Every four years, the board, in collaboration with the
16 Department of Economic Development, shall evaluate which university
17 programs of study are needed to meet the workforce needs of the state and
18 shall suggest changes to the eligible programs of study in the report
19 required pursuant to subsection (6) of this section.

20 (6) The board shall collect information on each university
21 scholarship recipient and shall report electronically to the Clerk of the
22 Legislature and the Governor on or before December 1 of each year the
23 following information:

24 (a) For each eligible program of study at the university in the
25 current or prior academic year:

26 (i) The total number of students enrolled in the program in the
27 immediately prior academic year and the total number of students enrolled
28 in the program as of September 30 for the current academic year;

29 (ii) The total number of scholarship recipients in the program as of
30 September 30 for the current academic year and the total number of such
31 scholarship recipients who are newly enrolled in the program for such

1 academic year;

2 (iii) The total number of students retained in the program from the
3 immediately prior academic year to the current academic year and a
4 comparison of the retention rates between scholarship recipients and
5 nonscholarship students;

6 (iv) The number of students participating in an internship, an
7 apprenticeship, a clinical position, or employment in a major-related
8 field during the immediately prior academic year and a comparison of
9 participation rates for scholarship recipients and nonscholarship
10 students;

11 (v) The total number of graduates for the immediately prior academic
12 year, the number of scholarship recipient graduates for such academic
13 year, and a comparison of the graduation rates for scholarship recipients
14 and nonscholarship students; and

15 (vi) The number of graduates from the immediately prior academic
16 year who obtained employment in a major-related field in the state within
17 four months after graduation and the average starting salary for such
18 graduates; and

19 (b) Any suggested changes to the eligible programs of study pursuant
20 to subsection (5) of this section.

21 Sec. 5. The Department of Economic Development shall allocate one-
22 half of any amount appropriated to the department to carry out the
23 Nebraska Career Scholarship Act to community colleges and shall allocate
24 the remaining one-half of such appropriation to private postsecondary
25 institutions that elect to participate. The department shall establish a
26 separate budget subprogram for each of the allocations set forth in this
27 section.

28 Sec. 6. (1)(a) The Department of Economic Development, in
29 collaboration with the community colleges, shall award a Nebraska Career
30 Scholarship that does not exceed a maximum of five thousand dollars per
31 year to any eligible community college student who is enrolled in an

1 eligible program of study in an identified shortage area or skilled trade
2 that meets the workforce needs of the state.

3 (b) The department shall identify shortage areas and skilled trades
4 that meet workforce needs for purposes of this section and shall
5 periodically review and revise the identification of such shortage areas
6 and skilled trades.

7 (c) For purposes of this section, an eligible program of study means
8 a program of study offered by a community college in a shortage area or
9 skilled trade identified pursuant to subdivision (b) of this subsection.

10 (d) Each community college area, acting as an agent of the state,
11 shall determine the eligibility of students enrolled in the community
12 college, receive and process applications for awards to individual
13 students, and disperse funds directly to scholarship recipients during
14 the fiscal year. Eligibility criteria shall include being a first-time
15 freshman or a transfer student and enrollment in an eligible program of
16 study.

17 (2) Each scholarship recipient shall register with the appropriate
18 campus office to obtain a Nebraska-based internship, apprenticeship,
19 clinical position, or employment in a major-related field prior to
20 completion of the student's eligible program of study.

21 (3) A Nebraska Career Scholarship may be used by the scholarship
22 recipient for tuition, fees, required tools and equipment, room, and
23 board.

24 (4) Each scholarship awarded under this section shall be
25 automatically renewed on an annual basis if the student remains enrolled
26 in good standing in the eligible program of study for which such
27 scholarship was awarded, except that no student shall receive a
28 scholarship renewal after three years of participation in such eligible
29 program of study.

30 (5) Each community college area shall collect information on each
31 scholarship recipient who has been awarded a Nebraska Career Scholarship

1 by such community college area and shall share such information with the
2 department.

3 (6) The department shall report electronically to the Clerk of the
4 Legislature and the Governor on or before December 1 of each year the
5 following information:

6 (a) For each eligible program of study at a community college in the
7 current or prior academic year:

8 (i) The total number of students enrolled in the program in the
9 immediately prior academic year and the total number of students enrolled
10 in the program as of the most recent census date for the community
11 college area;

12 (ii) The total number of scholarship recipients in the program as of
13 the most recent census date for the community college area; and

14 (iii) The number of students participating in an internship, an
15 apprenticeship, a clinical position, or employment in a major-related
16 field during the immediately prior academic year and a comparison of
17 participation rates for scholarship recipients and nonscholarship
18 students;

19 (b) The total number of first-time freshman scholarship recipients
20 retained in year two of the scholarship recipient's eligible program of
21 study and a comparison of the retention rate for first-time freshman
22 scholarship recipients to the overall retention rate for first-time
23 freshman students;

24 (c) The total number of first-time freshman scholarship recipients
25 who reach completion and a comparison of the on-time completion rate for
26 scholarship recipients to the overall on-time completion rate for all
27 first-time freshman students;

28 (d) The number of scholarship recipients obtaining employment in the
29 state within five fiscal quarters of completion of an eligible program of
30 study using Department of Labor data;

31 (e) The average salary of scholarship recipients, as determined by

1 the Department of Labor, for the fifth fiscal quarter following
2 completion; and

3 (f) The shortage area and skilled trades identified pursuant to
4 subdivision (1)(b) of this section and any changes to such identified
5 shortage areas or skilled trades.

6 Sec. 7. (1)(a) The Department of Economic Development, in
7 collaboration with private postsecondary institutions that elect to
8 participate, shall award a Nebraska Career Scholarship that does not
9 exceed a maximum of ten thousand dollars per year to any private
10 postsecondary institution student who achieved a composite score on a
11 standard college admission test equivalent to a score of at least
12 eighteen out of a maximum score of thirty-six and who is enrolled in an
13 eligible program of study.

14 (b) Each participating private postsecondary institution, acting as
15 an agent of the state, shall determine the eligibility of students
16 enrolled in the private postsecondary institution, receive and process
17 applications for awards to individual students, and disperse funds
18 directly to scholarship recipients during the fiscal year. Eligibility
19 criteria shall include being a first-time freshman or a transfer student
20 and enrollment in an eligible program of study.

21 (c) For purposes of this section an eligible program of study means
22 a program of study at a private postsecondary institution in math, health
23 care, computer information systems, business, or education.

24 (2) Each scholarship recipient shall register with the appropriate
25 campus office to obtain a Nebraska-based internship, apprenticeship,
26 clinical position, or employment in a major-related field prior to
27 completion of the student's eligible program of study.

28 (3) A Nebraska Career Scholarship may be used by the scholarship
29 recipient for tuition, fees, required tools and equipment, room, and
30 board.

31 (4) Each scholarship awarded under this section shall be

1 automatically renewed on an annual basis if the student remains enrolled
2 in good standing in the eligible program of study for which such
3 scholarship was awarded, except that no student shall receive a
4 scholarship renewal after four years of participation in such eligible
5 program of study.

6 (5) Every four years, the department shall evaluate which private
7 postsecondary institution programs of study are needed to meet the
8 workforce needs of the state and shall suggest changes to the eligible
9 programs of study in the report required pursuant to subsection (6) of
10 this section.

11 (6) Each participating private postsecondary institution shall
12 collect information on each scholarship recipient who has been awarded a
13 Nebraska Career Scholarship by such private postsecondary institution and
14 shall share such information with the department.

15 (7) The department shall report electronically to the Clerk of the
16 Legislature and the Governor on or before December 1 of each year the
17 following information:

18 (a) For each eligible program of study at a private postsecondary
19 institution in the current or prior academic year:

20 (i) The total number of students enrolled in the program in the
21 immediately prior academic year and the total number of students enrolled
22 in the program as of September 30 for the current academic year;

23 (ii) The total number of scholarship recipients in the program as of
24 September 30 for the current academic year and the total number of such
25 scholarship recipients who are newly enrolled in the program for such
26 academic year;

27 (iii) The total number of students retained in the program and a
28 comparison of the retention rates between scholarship recipients and
29 nonscholarship students;

30 (iv) The number of students participating in an internship, an
31 apprenticeship, a clinical position, or employment in a major-related

1 field during the immediately prior academic year and a comparison of
2 participation rates for scholarship recipients and nonscholarship
3 students;

4 (v) The total number of graduates for the immediately prior academic
5 year, the number of scholarship recipient graduates for such academic
6 year, and a comparison of the graduation rates for scholarship recipients
7 and nonscholarship students; and

8 (vi) The number of graduates from the immediately prior academic
9 year who obtained employment in a major-related field in the state within
10 four months after graduation and the average starting salary for such
11 graduates; and

12 (b) Any suggested changes to the eligible programs of study pursuant
13 to subsection (5) of this section.

14 Sec. 8. It is the intent of the Legislature to appropriate three
15 million dollars to the Board of Trustees of the Nebraska State Colleges,
16 six million dollars to the Board of Regents of the University of
17 Nebraska, and four million dollars to the Department of Economic
18 Development each fiscal year for fiscal years 2023-24 and 2024-25 and to
19 appropriate amounts as determined by the Legislature to each of the three
20 agencies for each fiscal year thereafter for purposes of carrying out the
21 Nebraska Career Scholarship Act.

22 Sec. 9. This act becomes operative on July 1, 2023.