

RCW 28B.145.040 Opportunity scholarship program. (1) The opportunity scholarship program is established.

(2) The purpose of this scholarship program is to provide scholarships that will help low and middle-income Washington residents earn professional-technical certificates, professional-technical degrees, baccalaureate degrees in high employer demand and other programs of study, and advanced degrees in health professions, and encourage them to remain in the state to work. The program must be designed for students starting professional-technical certificate or degree programs, students starting at two-year institutions of higher education and intending to transfer to four-year institutions of higher education, students starting at four-year institutions of higher education, and students enrolled in eligible advanced degree programs.

(3) The opportunity scholarship board shall determine which programs of study, including but not limited to high employer demand programs, are eligible for purposes of the opportunity scholarship. For eligible advanced degree programs, the board shall limit scholarships to eligible students enrolling in programs that lead to credentials in health professions.

(4) (a) The source of funds for the program shall be a combination of private grants and contributions and state matching funds. A state match may be earned under this section for private contributions made on or after June 6, 2011.

(b) (i) The state must provide an annual appropriation for a state match, on an equal dollar basis, not to exceed \$50,000,000 per fiscal year.

(ii) Appropriations for the state match in the biennial omnibus operating appropriations act must be based on estimated donations and pledges for those fiscal years as reported by the board to the office of financial management as of the date each official state caseload forecast is submitted by the caseload forecast council to the legislative fiscal committees, as provided under RCW 43.88C.020.

(iii) Annually in the supplemental omnibus operating appropriations act, the state match must be adjusted to donations received and estimated pledges committed for the current fiscal biennium as reported by the board to the office of financial management as of the date each official state caseload forecast is submitted by the caseload forecast council to the legislative fiscal committees, as provided under RCW 43.88C.020. Additionally, the state match for the current fiscal year must be adjusted to reflect the excess or deficit between donations and pledges actually received in the prior fiscal year and the state match provided in the prior fiscal year.

(iv) The purpose of this subsection (4)(b) is to ensure the predictable treatment of the program in the budget process by clarifying the calculation process of the state match required by this section and ensuring the program is budgeted at maintenance level. [2023 c 176 s 3; 2019 c 406 s 66. Prior: 2018 c 209 s 9; 2018 c 114 s 5; 2011 1st sp.s. c 13 s 5.]

Effective date—2023 c 176: See note following RCW 28B.145.010.

Findings—Intent—2019 c 406: See note following RCW 43.79.195.

Findings—Short title—2019 c 406: See notes following RCW 28B.92.200.

Findings—2019 c 406: See note following RCW 28B.94.020.

Findings—Intent—2019 c 406: See note following RCW 28C.30.050.

Findings—Intent—2019 c 406: See note following RCW 43.216.135.