CERTIFICATION OF ENROLLMENT

**SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1289**

Chapter 176, Laws of 2023

68th Legislature

2023 Regular Session

OPPORTUNITY SCHOLARSHIP AND RURAL JOBS PROGRAMS—ADMINISTRATION

EFFECTIVE DATE: April 25, 2023

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| Passed by the House April 13, 2023  Yeas 96 Nays 0  LAURIE JINKINS  **Speaker of the House of Representatives**  Passed by the Senate April 5, 2023  Yeas 48 Nays 0  DENNY HECK  **President of the Senate** | CERTIFICATE  I, Bernard Dean, Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives of the State of Washington, do hereby certify that the attached is **SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1289** as passed by the House of Representatives and the Senate on the dates hereon set forth.  BERNARD DEAN  Chief Clerk |
| Approved April 25, 2023 3:31 PM | April 26, 2023 |
| JAY INSLEE  **Governor of the State of Washington** | **Secretary of State**  **State of Washington** |

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**SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1289**

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AS AMENDED BY THE SENATE

Passed Legislature - 2023 Regular Session

**State of Washington 68th Legislature 2023 Regular Session**

**By** House Postsecondary Education & Workforce (originally sponsored by Representatives Reed, Ybarra, Berry, Ortiz-Self, Riccelli, Paul, Reeves, Leavitt, and Timmons)

AN ACT Relating to program administration for the Washington state opportunity scholarship program; amending RCW 28B.145.010, 28B.145.020, 28B.145.040, 28B.145.100, and 28B.145.120; repealing RCW 28B.145.130; and declaring an emergency.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

**Sec.**  RCW 28B.145.010 and 2022 c 211 s 1 are each amended to read as follows:

The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "Board" means the opportunity scholarship board.

(2) "Council" means the student achievement council.

(3) "Eligible advanced degree program" means a health professional degree program beyond the baccalaureate level and includes graduate and professional degree programs.

(4) "Eligible county" has the same meaning as "rural county" as defined in RCW 82.14.370 and also includes any county that shares a common border with Canada and has a population of over 125,000.

(5) "Eligible education programs" means high employer demand and other programs of study as determined by the board.

(6) "Eligible expenses" means reasonable expenses associated with the costs of acquiring an education such as tuition, books, equipment, fees, room and board, and other expenses as determined by the program administrator in consultation with the council and the state board for community and technical colleges.

(7) "Eligible school district" means a school district of the second class as identified in RCW 28A.300.065(2).

(8)(a) "Eligible student" means a resident student who:

(i)(A) Received his or her high school diploma or high school equivalency certificate as provided in RCW 28B.50.536 in Washington and has been accepted at a four-year institution of higher education into an eligible education program leading to a baccalaureate degree;

(B) Received his or her high school diploma or high school equivalency certificate as provided in RCW 28B.50.536 in Washington and will attend a two-year institution of higher education and intends to transfer to an eligible education program at a four-year institution of higher education;

(C) Received his or her high school diploma or equivalent and has been accepted at an institution of higher education into a professional-technical certificate or degree program in an eligible education program; or

(D) Has been accepted at an institution of higher education into an eligible advanced degree program that leads to credentials in health professions;

(ii) Declares an intention to obtain a professional-technical certificate, professional-technical degree, baccalaureate degree, or an advanced degree; and

(iii) Has a family income at or below 125 percent of the state median family income at the time the student applies for an opportunity scholarship. For the advanced degree program, family income may be greater than 125 percent if the eligible student can demonstrate financial need through other factors such as a history of prior household income, income loss caused by entering the advanced degree program, level of student debt at application and annually thereafter, or other factors determined by the program.

(b) To remain eligible for scholarship funds under the opportunity scholarship program the student must meet satisfactory academic progress toward completion of an eligible program as determined by the office of student financial assistance in the Washington college grant program under chapter 28B.92 RCW.

(9) "Gift aid" means financial aid received from the federal Pell grant, the Washington college grant program in chapter 28B.92 RCW, the college bound scholarship program in chapter 28B.118 RCW, the opportunity grant program in chapter 28B.50 RCW, or any other state grant, scholarship, or worker retraining program that provides funds for educational purposes with no obligation of repayment. "Gift aid" does not include student loans, work-study programs, the basic food employment and training program administered by the department of social and health services, or other employment assistance programs that provide job readiness opportunities and support beyond the costs of tuition, books, and fees.

(10) "High employer demand program of study" has the same meaning as provided in RCW 28B.50.030.

(11) "Participant" means an eligible student who has received a scholarship under the opportunity scholarship program.

(12) "Private sources," "private funds," "private contributions," or "private sector contributions" means donations from private organizations, corporations, federally recognized Indian tribes, municipalities, counties, and other sources, but excludes state dollars.

(13) "Professional-technical certificate" means a program as approved by the state board for community and technical colleges under RCW 28B.50.090(7)(c), that is offered by an institution of higher education or an eligible registered apprenticeship program under chapter 28B.92 RCW.

(14) "Professional-technical degree" means a program as approved by the state board for community and technical colleges under RCW 28B.50.090(7)(c), that is offered by an institution of higher education or an eligible registered apprenticeship program under chapter 28B.92 RCW.

(15) "Program administrator" means ((~~a~~)) one or more private nonprofit corporations registered under Title 24 RCW and qualified as a tax-exempt entity under section 501(c)(3) of the federal internal revenue code.

(16) "Resident student" means a student meeting the requirements under RCW 28B.92.200(5)(c) as defined in the Washington college grant program.

(17) "Rural jobs program" means the rural county high employer demand jobs program created in this chapter.

**Sec.**  RCW 28B.145.020 and 2019 c 406 s 64 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) The opportunity scholarship board is created. The board consists of eleven members:

(a) Six members appointed by the governor. For three of the six appointments, the governor shall consider names from a list provided by the president of the senate and the speaker of the house of representatives; and

(b) Five foundation or business and industry representatives appointed by the governor from among the state's most productive industries such as aerospace, manufacturing, health care, information technology, engineering, agriculture, and others, as well as philanthropy. The foundation or business and industry representatives shall be selected from among nominations provided by the private sector donors to the opportunity scholarship and opportunity expansion programs. However, the governor may request, and the private sector donors shall provide, an additional list or lists from which the governor shall select these representatives.

(2) Board members shall hold their offices for a term of four years from the first day of September and until their successors are appointed. No more than the terms of two members may expire simultaneously on the last day of August in any one year.

(3) The members of the board shall elect one of the business and industry representatives to serve as chair.

(4) Seven members of the board constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. In case of a vacancy, or when an appointment is made after the date of expiration of the term, the governor or the president of the senate or the speaker of the house of representatives, depending upon which made the initial appointment to that position, shall fill the vacancy for the remainder of the term of the board member whose office has become vacant or expired.

(5) The board shall be staffed by ((~~a~~)) one or more program administrators, under contract with the board and the council. The board may cause one or more tax-exempt nonprofit corporations to be created, organized, and operated exclusively to perform some or all of the program administrator duties under this act. The board and council may contract directly with any such nonprofit corporation.

(6) The purpose of the board is to provide oversight and guidance for the opportunity expansion program, the opportunity scholarship program, and the rural jobs program, in light of established legislative priorities and to fulfill the duties and responsibilities under this chapter, including but not limited to determining eligible education programs and eligible advanced degree programs for purposes of the opportunity scholarship program and rural jobs program. In determining eligible advanced degree programs, the board shall consider advanced degree programs that lead to credentials in health professions that include, but are not limited to, primary care, dental care, behavioral health, and public health. Duties, exercised jointly with the program administrator, include soliciting funds and setting annual fund-raising goals.

(7) The board may report to the governor and the appropriate committees of the legislature with recommendations as to:

(a) Whether some or all of the scholarships should be changed to conditional scholarships that must be repaid in the event the participant does not complete the eligible education program;

(b) A source or sources of funds for the opportunity expansion program in addition to the voluntary contributions of the high-technology research and development tax credit under RCW 82.32.800; and

(c) Whether the program should include a loan repayment or low-interest or no-interest loan component for the advanced degree portion of the program.

**Sec.**  RCW 28B.145.040 and 2019 c 406 s 66 are each amended to read as follows:

(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) ((~~The state match must be based on donations and pledges received as~~)) (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.

((~~(c) A state match, up to a maximum of fifty million dollars annually, shall be provided beginning the later of January 1, 2014, or January 1st next following the end of the fiscal year in which collections of state retail sales and use tax, state business and occupation tax, and state public utility tax exceed, by ten percent the amounts collected from these tax resources in the fiscal year that ended June 30, 2008, as determined by the department of revenue.~~))

**Sec.**  RCW 28B.145.100 and 2022 c 211 s 3 are each amended to read as follows:

(1)(a) The rural county high employer demand jobs program is created to meet the workforce needs of business and industry in rural counties by assisting students in earning certificates, associate degrees, or other industry-recognized credentials necessary for employment in high employer demand fields.

(b) Subject to the requirements of this section, the rural jobs program provides selected students scholarship funds and support services, as determined by the board, to help students meet their eligible expenses when they enroll in a community or technical college program that prepares them for high employer demand fields.

(c) The source of funds for the rural jobs program shall be a combination of private donations, grants, and contributions and state matching funds.

(d) The state ((~~match must be based on donations and pledges received~~)) must provide an annual appropriation for the state match, on an equal dollar basis, not to exceed $1,000,000 each fiscal biennium.

(i) 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.

(ii) 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.

(iii) The purpose of this subsection (1)(d) 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 to ensure the program is budgeted at maintenance level.

(2) The program administrator has the duties and responsibilities provided under this section, including but not limited to:

(a) Publicize the rural jobs program and conducting outreach to eligible counties;

(b) In consultation with the state board for community and technical colleges, any interested community or technical college located in an eligible county, and the county's workforce development council, identify high employer demand fields within the eligible counties. When identifying high employer demand fields, the board must consider:

(i) County-specific employer demand reports issued by the employment security department or the list of statewide high-demand programs for secondary career and technical education established under RCW 28A.700.020; and

(ii) The ability and capacity of the community and technical college to meet the needs of qualifying students and industry in the eligible county;

(c) Develop and implement an application, selection, and notification process for awarding rural jobs program scholarship funds. In making determinations on scholarship recipients, the board shall use county-specific employer high-demand data;

(d) Determine the annual scholarship fund amounts to be awarded to selected students;

(e) Distribute funds to selected students;

(f) Notify institutions of higher education of the rural jobs program recipients who will attend their institutions of higher education and inform them of the scholarship fund amounts and terms of the awards; and

(g) Establish and manage an account as provided under RCW 28B.145.110 to receive donations, grants, contributions from private sources, and state matching funds, and from which to disburse scholarship funds to selected students.

(3) To be eligible for scholarship funds under the rural jobs program, a student must:

(a) Either:

(i) Be a resident of an eligible county;

(ii) Have attended and graduated from a school in an eligible school district; or

(iii) Be enrolled in either a community or technical college established under chapter 28B.50 RCW located in an eligible county or participating in an eligible registered apprenticeship program under chapter 28B.92 RCW in an eligible county;

(b) Be a resident student as defined in the Washington college grant program in RCW 28B.92.200(5)(c);

(c) Be in a certificate, degree, or other industry-recognized credential or training program that has been identified by the board as a program that prepares students for a high employer demand field;

(d) Have a family income that does not exceed seventy percent of the state median family income adjusted for family size; and

(e) Demonstrate financial need according to the free application for federal student aid or the Washington application for state financial aid.

(4) To remain eligible for scholarship funds under the rural jobs program, the student must meet satisfactory academic progress toward completion of an eligible program as established by the program. Rural jobs program eligibility may not extend beyond five years or 125 percent of the published length of the program in which the student is enrolled or the credit or clock-hour equivalent.

(5) A scholarship award under the rural jobs program may not result in a reduction of any gift aid. Nothing in this section creates any right or entitlement.

**Sec.**  RCW 28B.145.120 and 2018 c 254 s 6 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) The rural jobs program match transfer account is created in the custody of the state treasurer as a nonappropriated account to be used solely and exclusively for the rural jobs program created in RCW 28B.145.100. The purpose of the rural jobs program match transfer account is to provide state matching funds for the rural jobs program.

(2) Revenues to the rural jobs program match transfer account shall consist of appropriations by the legislature into the rural jobs program match transfer account.

(3) No expenditures from the rural jobs program match transfer account may be made except upon receipt of proof, by the executive director of the council from the program administrator, of private contributions to the rural jobs program. Expenditures, in the form of matching funds, may not exceed the total amount of private contributions.

(4) Only the executive director of the council or the executive director's designee may authorize expenditures from the rural jobs program match transfer account. Such authorization must be made as soon as practicable following receipt of proof as required under this section.

(5)(a) The council shall enter into an appropriate agreement with the program administrator to demonstrate exchange of consideration for the matching funds.

(b) Once moneys in the rural jobs program match transfer account are subject to an agreement under this subsection and are deposited in the student support pathways account, the state acts in a fiduciary rather than ownership capacity with regard to those assets. Assets in the student support pathways account are not considered state money, common cash, or revenue to the state.

((~~(6) The state match must not exceed one million dollars in a single fiscal biennium and must be based on donations and pledges received by the rural jobs program 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. Nothing in this section expands or modifies the responsibilities of the caseload forecast council.~~))

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  RCW 28B.145.130 (Rural jobs program—State matching funds) and 2018 c 254 s 7 are each repealed.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately.

**--- END ---**

Passed by the House April 13, 2023.

Passed by the Senate April 5, 2023.

Approved by the Governor April 25, 2023.

Filed in Office of Secretary of State April 26, 2023.