

2017 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 117

BY REPRESENTATIVE FOIL

Prefiled pursuant to Article III, Section 2(A)(4)(b)(i) of the Constitution of Louisiana.

TOPS: Raises the minimum grade point average required for initial eligibility for a Taylor Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS) Opportunity Award

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 17:5024(A) and (B), to enact R.S. 17:5024.1, and to repeal R.S.  
3 17:5024(C), relative to the Taylor Opportunity Program for Students; to raise the  
4 minimum grade point average required for initial qualification for an Opportunity  
5 Award; and to provide for related matters.

6 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

7 Section 1. R.S. 17:5024(A) and (B) are hereby amended and reenacted and R.S.  
8 17:5024.1 is hereby enacted to read as follows:

9 §5024. Academic requirements

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

14 (a) For an Opportunity Award, a minimum cumulative grade point average  
15 of ~~2.50~~ 2.75.

16 (b) For a Performance Award, a minimum cumulative grade point average  
17 of 3.25.

18 (c) For an Honors Award, a minimum cumulative grade point average of  
19 3.50.

1 (d) For a TOPS-Tech Award, a minimum cumulative grade point average of  
2 2.50.

3 ~~(2)(a) For a student who graduated prior to the 2002-2003 school year, the~~  
4 ~~minimum cumulative grade point average shall be calculated by using the grades~~  
5 ~~obtained by the student in completing all classes taken.~~

6 ~~(b) For a student who graduated prior to the 2007-2008 school year, the~~  
7 ~~minimum cumulative high school grade point average necessary for such student to~~  
8 ~~be eligible for a Performance Award or Honors Award shall be 3.50 on a 4.00 scale.~~

9 ~~(c)(i) For a student who graduated during or after the 2007-2008 school year~~  
10 ~~but prior to the 2020-2021 school year, the minimum cumulative high school grade~~  
11 ~~point average necessary for such student to be eligible for an Opportunity Award~~  
12 ~~shall be 2.50 on a 4.00 scale.~~

13 ~~(ii) For a student who graduated during or after the 2007-2008 school year~~  
14 ~~but prior to the 2020-2021 school year, the minimum cumulative high school grade~~  
15 ~~point average necessary for such student to be eligible for a Performance Award~~  
16 ~~shall be 3.00 on a 4.00 scale.~~

17 ~~(iii) For a student who graduated during or after the 2007-2008 school year~~  
18 ~~but prior to the 2020-2021 school year, the minimum cumulative high school grade~~  
19 ~~point average necessary for such student to be eligible for an Honors Award shall be~~  
20 ~~3.00 on a 4.00 scale.~~

21 ~~(3)(a)~~ The calculation of the minimum cumulative grade point average  
22 specified in Paragraph (1) of this Subsection shall utilize a five-point scale for grades  
23 earned in certain Advanced Placement courses, International Baccalaureate courses,  
24 gifted and talented courses, honors courses, articulated courses for college credit, and  
25 dual enrollment courses as approved by the Board of Regents and the State Board of  
26 Elementary and Secondary Education, which may result in a student earning a  
27 cumulative grade point average that exceeds 4.00. For such courses, five quality  
28 points shall be assigned to a letter grade of "A", four quality points shall be assigned  
29 to a letter grade of "B", three quality points shall be assigned to a letter grade of "C",

1 two quality points shall be assigned to a letter grade of "D", and zero quality points  
2 shall be assigned to a letter grade of "F".

3 ~~(b) The provisions of Subparagraph (a) of this Paragraph do not apply to~~  
4 ~~students who graduated prior to the 2017-2018 school year.~~

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

7 ~~(a)~~ (1) For an Opportunity Award, a composite score on the 1990 version of  
8 the ACT which is at least equal to or higher than the state's average composite score,  
9 truncated to a whole number, reported for the prior year but never less than twenty  
10 or an equivalent concordant value on an enhanced or revised version of such test or  
11 on the SAT.

12 ~~(b)~~ (2) For a Performance Award, a composite score on the 1990 version of  
13 the ACT of twenty-three or higher or an equivalent concordant value on any  
14 enhanced or revised version of such test or on the SAT.

15 ~~(c)~~ (3) For an Honors Award, a score of twenty-seven or higher on the 1990  
16 version of the ACT or an equivalent concordant value on any enhanced or revised  
17 version of such test or on the SAT.

18 ~~(d)~~ (4) For a TOPS-Tech Award, a composite score on the specified ACT of  
19 seventeen or higher or an equivalent concordant value on any enhanced or revised  
20 version of such test or on the SAT. The student may, as an alternative requirement,  
21 have attained a silver level score on the assessments of the ACT WorkKeys system.

22 ~~(2)(a) For a student who graduated prior to the 2010-2011 school year, the~~  
23 ~~ACT WorkKeys system is not an alternative assessment for establishing eligibility~~  
24 ~~for a TOPS-Tech Award.~~

25 ~~(b) For a student who graduated prior to the 2000-2001 school year, the~~  
26 ~~minimum ACT score for a TOPS-Tech Award is nineteen.~~

27 \* \* \*

CODING: Words in ~~struck through~~ type are deletions from existing law; words underscored are additions.

1       §5024.1. Academic requirements; exceptions

2           A. Exceptions to R.S. 17:5024(A), academic eligibility requirements  
3       pertaining to a student's grade point average, are as follows:

4           (1) For an Opportunity Award, a student who graduates from high school  
5       prior to the 2020-2021 school year shall have a minimum grade point average of  
6       2.50, calculated on a 4.00 scale using only the grades obtained by the student in  
7       completing the core curriculum requirements established by this Chapter.

8           (2) For a Performance Award or an Honors Award, a student shall meet the  
9       following minimum grade point average requirement, calculated on a 4.00 scale  
10      using only the grades obtained by the student in completing the core curriculum  
11      requirements established by this Chapter:

12          (a) For a student graduating during or after the 2007-2008 school year and  
13      prior to the 2020-2021 school year, a minimum cumulative grade point average of  
14      3.00.

15          (b) For a student graduating prior to the 2007-2008 school year, a minimum  
16      cumulative grade point average of 3.50.

17          (3) The provisions of R.S. 17:5024(A)(2) do not apply to students graduating  
18      prior to the 2017-2018 school year.

19          (4) For a student who graduated prior to the 2002-2003 school year, the  
20      minimum cumulative grade point average shall be calculated by using the grades  
21      obtained by the student in completing all classes taken.

22           B. Exceptions to R.S. 17:5024(B), academic requirements pertaining to a  
23      student's ACT score, are as follows:

24          (1) For a student who graduated prior to the 2010-2011 school year, the ACT  
25      WorkKeys system is not an alternative assessment for establishing eligibility for a  
26      TOPS-Tech Award.

27          (2) For a student who graduated prior to the 2000-2001 school year, the  
28      minimum ACT score for a TOPS-Tech Award is nineteen.

1           C. Notwithstanding R.S. 17:5024, a student who graduated after the 2002-  
2           2003 school year but prior to the 2006-2007 school year is eligible to receive a  
3           Performance Award pursuant to this Chapter if he meets the other requirements of  
4           this Chapter and each of the following conditions is met:

5           (1) The student achieved a minimum cumulative high school grade point  
6           average of 3.00 on a 4.00 scale when calculated in accordance with applicable rules  
7           adopted by the administering agency and such calculation is based on ten or more of  
8           the grades being grades for completion of honors curriculum courses, gifted  
9           curriculum courses, or advanced placement courses, or any combination of such  
10           courses, and the high school awards grades for such courses on a 4.00 scale or  
11           higher.

12           (2) The student has a composite score on the 1990 version of the ACT of  
13           twenty-four or higher or an equivalent concordant value on any enhanced or revised  
14           version of such test or on the SAT.

15           Section 2. R.S. 17:5024(C) is hereby repealed in its entirety.

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#### DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

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HB 117 Engrossed

2017 Regular Session

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**Abstract:** Raises the minimum GPA required for initial eligibility for a Taylor Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS) Opportunity Award from 2.50 to 2.75; applicable to students graduating from high school during or after the 2020-2021 school year.

Present law provides for the Taylor Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS) as a program of merit scholarships for students attending certain postsecondary education institutions who meet specific initial eligibility requirements pertaining to grade point average (GPA), ACT score, and core curriculum requirements and certain other qualifications. For initial award eligibility, requires a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.50 for both a TOPS-Tech Award and an Opportunity Award and a 3.00 for both a Performance Award and an Honors Award. Increases, effective with students graduating from high school in the 2020-2021 school year, the minimum GPA for initial eligibility for a Performance Award from 3.00 to 3.25 and for an Honors Award from 3.00 to 3.50.

Proposed law raises the minimum GPA requirement for initial eligibility for the Opportunity Award from 2.50 to 2.75 and is applicable to students graduating from high school during or after the 2020-2021 school year.

(Amends R.S. 17:5024(A) and (B); Adds R.S. 17:5024.1; Repeals R.S. 17:5024(C))

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on Education to the original bill:

1. Change the proposed law minimum GPA required for initial eligibility for a TOPS Opportunity Award from 3.00 to 2.75.