

2026 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 482

BY REPRESENTATIVE TURNER

TOPS: Revises the initial and continuing eligibility requirements for a TOPS-Tech award and raises the award amount at Louisiana Community and Technical College System (LCTCS) institutions

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 17:5027(A)(1) and 5042(1) through (3) and to enact R.S.  
3 17:5002(D)(1)(c) and 5024(D), relative to the Taylor Opportunity Program for  
4 Students; to revise award amounts at certain institutions; to revise criteria for initial  
5 and continuing eligibility for certain students; and to provide for related matters.

6 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

7 Section 1. R.S. 17:5027(A)(1) and 5042(1) through (3) are hereby amended and  
8 reenacted and R.S. 17:5002(D)(1)(c) and 5024(D) are hereby enacted to read as follows:

9 §5002. Awards and amounts

10 \* \* \*

11 D.(1) Except as otherwise provided in this Subsection, a student who is  
12 eligible for a TOPS-Tech Award pursuant to this Chapter and who is enrolled:

13 \* \* \*

14 (c) In an eligible program at a college under the supervision and  
15 management of the Board of Supervisors of Community and Technical Colleges as  
16 provided in R.S. 17:3217.1(A), notwithstanding any provision of this Subsection to  
17 the contrary, shall be awarded by the state four thousand five hundred dollars. The  
18 provisions of this Subparagraph are applicable to students enrolling as first-time  
19 freshmen during or after the 2026-2027 academic year.

20 \* \* \*

1 §5024. Academic requirements

2 \* \* \*

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

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

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

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

15 (2) The provisions of Paragraph (1) of this Subsection are applicable to  
16 students enrolling in an eligible college or university as first-time freshmen during  
17 or after the 2026-2027 academic year.

18 \* \* \*

19 §5027. Postsecondary institution enrollment

20 A.(1)(a) Except as otherwise provided by this Section, to be eligible for an  
21 award pursuant to this Chapter, the student shall enroll in an eligible college or  
22 university as a first-time freshman not later than the semester, excluding summer  
23 semesters or sessions, immediately following the first anniversary of the date that the  
24 student graduated from high school.

25 (b) Notwithstanding the provisions of Subparagraph (a) of this Paragraph,  
26 a student who is otherwise eligible for a TOPS-Tech award pursuant to this Chapter  
27 may defer his award acceptance and shall retain his award eligibility if he enrolls as  
28 a first-time freshman in a college under the supervision and management of the



1 (3) Have a cumulative grade point average of at least ~~2.50~~ 2.00 calculated  
2 on a 4.00 scale.

3 \* \* \*

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)]

HB 482 Original

2026 Regular Session

Turner

**Abstract:** Revises the initial and continuing eligibility requirements for a TOPS-Tech award and raises the award amount at La. Community and Technical Colleges System (LCTCS) institutions.

Present law provides for the Taylor Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS), a merit scholarship program for students who meet certain academic criteria in high school and other requirements. Provides that the Bd. of Regents is the administering agency of the program. Proposed law revises certain award amounts and eligibility criteria as explained below.

**Award amount**

Present law provides that award amounts at public postsecondary education institutions are equal to the tuition charged by the institution during the 2016-2017 academic year. Proposed law retains present law except provides that the award amount for a TOPS-Tech eligible student who enrolls at an LCTCS college shall be \$4,500, applicable to those enrolling as first-time freshmen during or after the 2026-2027 academic year.

**TOPS-Tech, initial eligibility**

Present law provides that academic initial eligibility criteria for a TOPS-Tech award include both of the following:

- (1) GPA of at least 2.50 on a specified high school core curriculum.
- (2) ACT score of at least 17 or silver on WorkKeys.

Proposed law adds a third academic criterion, at least nine credit hours of early college credit attained through dual enrollment courses or equivalent validated skills and learning measures as approved by the Statewide Articulation and Transfer Council. Provides that a student qualifies for a TOPS-Tech award if he meets at least two of the three requirements provided in present law and proposed law. Applicable to students enrolling in college as first-time freshmen beginning with the 2026-2027 academic year.

Present law provides that a student must enroll in college as a first-time freshman not later than the semester immediately following the first anniversary of his high school graduation. Proposed law provides than student who is otherwise eligible for a TOPS-Tech award may defer his award acceptance while retaining eligibility if he enrolls as a first-time freshman at any LCTCS college prior to turning 25 years old.

**TOPS-Tech, continuing eligibility**

Present law provides that to maintain eligibility for TOPS-Tech, a student must:

- (1) Make steady academic progress as defined by the administering agency, earning not less than the minimum hours required for full-time standing, and maintain continuous enrollment as a full-time student. Proposed law allows part-time enrollment.
- (2) Have a cumulative GPA of at least 2.50 calculated on a 4.00 scale. Proposed law lowers the minimum GPA from 2.50 to 2.00.

(Amends R.S. 17:5027(A)(1) and 5042(1)-(3); Adds R.S. 17:5002(D)(1)(c) and 5024(D))