
DIGEST

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HB 325 Reengrossed

2026 Regular Session

Brass

Abstract: Expands eligibility criteria for a TOPS-Tech award to include the attainment of early college credit in high school through completion of dual enrollment courses or other approved skills and learning measures. Authorizes TOPS-Tech awards for qualifying part-time students beginning with the 2026-2027 academic year.

Present law provides for the Taylor Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS), a merit scholarship program for full-time students who meet certain academic criteria in high school and other requirements. Proposed law authorizes TOPS awards for part-time students in certain circumstances.

Present law provides for four award levels, including TOPS-Tech, for which academic initial eligibility criteria include both of the following:

- (1) GPA of at least 2.5 on the specific TOPS-Tech high school core curriculum provided in present law.
- (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 graduating from high school during or after the 2026-2027 academic year.

Present law establishes criteria for continued receipt of TOPS-Tech awards. Proposed law provides that, beginning with the 2026-2027 academic year, this criteria also applies to part-time students.

Proposed law restricts funding for TOPS-Tech awards for part-time students to remaining funding appropriated for full-time TOPS awards.

Effective upon signature of governor or lapse of time for gubernatorial action.

(Amends R.S. 17:5001 and 5042; Adds R.S. 17:5024(D) and 5065(E))

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

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

1. Change applicable students from those enrolling in college as first-time freshmen beginning with the 2026-2027 academic year to students graduating from high school during the 2026-2027 academic year and thereafter.

The Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on Appropriations to the engrossed bill:

1. Add provision authorizing part-time students to receive TOPS-Tech awards beginning with the 2026-2027 academic year.
2. Add requirement that funding for part-time TOPS-Tech awards be made from remaining funds appropriated for full-time TOPS awards.
3. Make technical changes.