

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL OFFICE
Fiscal Note



Fiscal Note On: **HB 325** HLS 26RS 995

Bill Text Version: **REENGROSSED**

Opp. Chamb. Action:

Proposed Amd.:

Sub. Bill For.:

Date: April 27, 2026	12:30 PM	Author: BRASS
Dept./Agy.: Higher Education		Analyst: Tanesha Morgan
Subject: TOPS-Tech award		

TOPS RE INCREASE GF EX See Note Page 1 of 1
Revises initial academic eligibility requirements for a TOPS-Tech award

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 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. Proposed law additionally authorizes TOPS-Tech awards for qualifying part-time students beginning with the 2026-2027 academic year and restricts funding for part-time awards to monies remaining in funds appropriated for full-time TOPS awards.

EXPENDITURES	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	5 -YEAR TOTAL
State Gen. Fd.	INCREASE	INCREASE	INCREASE	INCREASE	INCREASE	
Agy. Self-Gen.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Ded./Other	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Federal Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Local Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Annual Total						
REVENUES	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	5 -YEAR TOTAL
State Gen. Fd.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Agy. Self-Gen.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Ded./Other	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Federal Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Local Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Annual Total	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

EXPENDITURE EXPLANATION

Under the proposed law, for every 41 additional students who qualify for the TOPS-Tech program, there would be a \$100,000 annual increase in SGF. The LFO cannot determine the total impact, because it is unknown how many additional students will qualify for the scholarship under the expanded eligibility criteria under this measure. Proposed law also authorizes TOPS-Tech awards for qualifying part-time students beginning with the 2026-2027 academic year and restricts payment of part-time awards to monies remaining in funds appropriated for full-time TOPS awards. The Board of Regents reports that in academic year 2024-2025, 496 TOPS-Tech students had their awards cancelled or were ruled ineligible for not meeting full-time enrollment or credit hour requirements. Using the average TOPS-Tech award value of \$2,437, an estimated \$1.2 M in awards could have been paid to these students under proposed law; however, the fiscal impact of this provision is dependent on the availability of remaining TOPS appropriations in any given year.

Proposed law expands the eligibility criteria to qualify for a TOPS-Tech award. Present law provides that students who earned a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.50 and a composite score of 17 or higher on the ACT qualify for a TOPS-Tech award. Proposed law adds a third criterion of at least nine (9) credit hours of early college credit attained through dual enrollment courses and provides that students must meet any two of the three criteria. Proposed law additionally authorizes TOPS-Tech awards for part-time students beginning with the 2026-2027 academic year. Over the past 3 years, the average TOPS-Tech award amount was approximately \$2,437 per student per year.

REVENUE EXPLANATION

There is no anticipated direct material effect on governmental revenues as a result of this measure.

Senate Dual Referral Rules
 13.5.1 >= \$100,000 Annual Fiscal Cost {S & H}
 13.5.2 >= \$500,000 Annual Tax or Fee Change {S & H}

House
 6.8(F)(1) >= \$100,000 SGF Fiscal Cost {H & S}
 6.8(G) >= \$500,000 Tax or Fee Increase or a Net Fee Decrease {S}


Patrice Thomas
Deputy Fiscal Officer