An Act

ENROLLED SENATE
BILL NO. 414

By: Brinkley and Pittman of the Senate

and

Newell of the House

An Act relating to higher education; amending 70 O.S. 201, Section 2632, which relates to eligibility requirements; including certain institutions of higher education as eligible for an Oklahoma Tuition Equalization Grant.

SUBJECT: Higher education

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2011, Section 2632, is amended to read as follows:

Section 2632. A. To be eligible for an Oklahoma Tuition Equalization Grant, a student shall:

1. Be an Oklahoma resident as defined by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education;

2. Have enrolled as a full-time undergraduate student in an eligible institution of higher education as prescribed in subsection D of this section;

3. Meet the income eligibility level, which is the student's parents' income from taxable and nontaxable sources which shall not be more than Fifty Thousand Dollars ($50,000.00) per year or the student's income if the student is independent and self-supporting as determined by the State Regents consistent with federal financial aid regulations;

4. Pay more tuition than is required at a comparable public institution of higher education and pay no less than the regular tuition required of all students enrolled at the institution where the student is enrolled; and

5. Maintain at least minimum standards of academic performance as required by the enrolling institution.

B. The enrolling institution shall forward a completed student application, documentation of full-time enrollment status, and certification of resident status to the State Regents no later than October 15 for the fall semester and March 15 for the spring semester of each academic year.

C. Subject to the availability of funds in the Oklahoma Tuition Equalization Grant Trust Fund, an Oklahoma Tuition Equalization Grant in the amount of Two Thousand Dollars ($2,000.00) per academic year, or One Thousand Dollars ($1,000.00) per academic semester shall be awarded by the State Regents by allocation from the Oklahoma Tuition Equalization Grant Trust Fund, beginning with eligible students enrolled in the 2003-2004 school year. No grants pursuant to this act shall be provided to students for attending summer terms or intersessions.

D. The State Regents shall implement policies and procedures for the administration of this act. The State Regents shall approve as eligible institutions of higher education only those private or independent, not-for-profit colleges or universities that are domiciled within this state, meet approved program and accreditation standards as determined by the State Regents, and are fully accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association on Colleges and Schools or a national accrediting body recognized by the United States Department of Education. Additionally, eligible institutions shall adhere to the complaint process policies and procedures administered by the State Regents. The State Regents shall review and take action, as authorized, on complaints concerning eligible institutions. The eligible institutions shall include Bacone College, Family of Faith College, Mid-America Christian University, Oklahoma Baptist University, Oklahoma Christian University, Oklahoma City University, Oklahoma Wesleyan University, Oral Roberts University, Southern Nazarene University, Southwestern Christian University, St. Gregory's

University, the University of Tulsa and Hillsdale Free Will Baptist College.

E. If funds are not sufficient in the Oklahoma Tuition Equalization Grant Trust Fund to provide grants for all eligible applicants, the State Regents shall award grants on the basis of need and take into consideration other grants and scholarships received by an eligible applicant when awarding grants. Students who have previously received a tuition equalization grant and who continue to meet the requirements for eligibility shall have absolute priority for continued financial support superior to any student who is applying for a grant for the first time.

F. Students enrolling as first-time freshmen for the 2003-2004 school year shall be the first class of students eligible to apply for Oklahoma Tuition Equalization Grants. In subsequent years, all previously eligible students and the first-time enrolling freshmen students shall be entitled to apply for a grant pursuant to this section. Beginning in the 2007-2008 school year, all eligible students shall be entitled to apply for a grant pursuant to this section.

G. A grant provided by this section shall not be allowed for courses or other postsecondary units taken in excess of the requirements for completion of a baccalaureate program or taken more than five (5) years after the student's first grant is received. The State Regents may award an Oklahoma Tuition Equalization Grant for courses of postsecondary units taken more than five (5) years after the student's first grant is received only in hardship circumstances. No Oklahoma Tuition Equalization Grant recipient may receive benefits beyond a cumulative time period of five (5) years.

H. On or before February 1 after the first semester in which grants are awarded pursuant to this act and every year thereafter, the State Regents shall provide a report to the Governor, President Pro Tempore of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives to include, but not be limited to the number of students awarded grants, grade point average, persistence rates, degree completion rates, demographic data, and any other indicators the State Regents deem appropriate.

Passed the Senate the 30th day of April, 2015.

Presiding Officer of the Senate

Passed the House of Representatives the 13th day of April, 2015.

Presiding Officer of the House
of Representatives

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Received by the Office of the Governor this 4th

day of May, 2015, at 3:32 o'clock P M.

By: Audrey Rockwell

Approved by the Governor of the State of Oklahoma this 8th

day of May, 2015, at 10:41 o'clock A M.

Governor of the State of Oklahoma

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Received by the Office of the Secretary of State this 8th

day of May, 2015, at 3:21 o'clock P. M.

By: C. Benge