

2020 Regular Session

# ACT No. 346

HOUSE BILL NO. 870 (Substitute for House Bill No. 786 by Representative Garofalo)

BY REPRESENTATIVE GAROFALO

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 17:5024(A)(2)(c) and the heading of Part IV of Chapter 50 of  
3 Title 17 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950 and to enact R.S. 17:5103, relative  
4 to the Taylor Opportunity Program for Students; to provide relative to eligibility for  
5 awards; to waive or modify certain eligibility provisions in response to  
6 circumstances related to the public health emergency; and to provide for related  
7 matters.

8 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

9 Section 1. R.S. 17:5024(A)(2)(c) and the heading of Part IV of Chapter 50 of Title  
10 17 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950 are hereby amended and reenacted and R.S.  
11 17:5103 is hereby enacted to read as follows:

12 §5024. Academic requirements

13 A.

14 \* \* \*

15 (2)

16 \* \* \*

17 (c)(i) For a student who graduated during or after the 2007-2008 school year  
18 but prior to the ~~2020-2021~~ 2021-2022 school year, the minimum cumulative high  
19 school grade point average necessary for such student to be eligible for an  
20 Opportunity Award shall be 2.50 on a 4.00 scale.

21 (ii) For a student who graduated during or after the 2007-2008 school year  
22 but prior to the ~~2020-2021~~ 2021-2022 school year, the minimum cumulative high

1 school grade point average necessary for such student to be eligible for a  
2 Performance Award shall be 3.00 on a 4.00 scale.

3 (iii) For a student who graduated during or after the 2007-2008 school year  
4 but prior to the ~~2020-2021~~ 2021-2022 school year, the minimum cumulative high  
5 school grade point average necessary for such student to be eligible for an Honors  
6 Award shall be 3.00 on a 4.00 scale.

7 \* \* \*

8 PART IV. STUDENTS ~~DISPLACED~~ AFFECTED BY CERTAIN  
9 ~~NATURAL~~ DISASTERS AND EMERGENCIES

10 \* \* \*

11 §5103. Eligibility under declared health emergency

12 A. The legislature finds that due to the effects of the public health emergency  
13 declared by the governor on March 11, 2020, relative to the novel coronavirus,  
14 COVID-19, it is in the best interest for the education of the people of the state that  
15 initial and continuing eligibility requirements established in Part I of this Chapter for  
16 awards pursuant to the Taylor Opportunity Program for Students be modified as  
17 provided by this Section for students impacted as a result of the public health  
18 emergency.

19 B.(1) In response to the public health emergency, provisions of this Chapter  
20 that provide for initial eligibility are modified or waived as more fully specified in  
21 this Subsection:

22 (a) Notwithstanding the provisions of R.S. 17:5062, the deadline for taking  
23 the ACT or SAT for consideration for an award for the 2020-2021 academic year is  
24 September 30, 2020. The administering agency shall not reduce the time period of  
25 eligibility for the award, as set forth in R.S. 17:5002, of an applicant who qualifies  
26 for an award pursuant to authority granted by this Subparagraph.

27 (b) Notwithstanding the provisions of R.S. 17:5026, a student on a Jump  
28 Start graduation track shall not be required to complete any Jump Start course,  
29 experience, or credential that was waived by the student's high school for high school  
30 graduation purposes.

1           (c) The administering agency may waive the home study requirements of  
2           R.S. 17:5029 for a student if it determines that the student's failure to meet those  
3           requirements was, more likely than not, due solely to consequences of measures  
4           taken to limit the spread of COVID-19.

5           (2) The provisions of this Subsection apply only to students who meet one  
6           of the following criteria:

7           (a) The student was enrolled in a Louisiana public high school.

8           (b) The student was enrolled in a nonpublic high school in Louisiana having  
9           the approval by the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education required by  
10           Part I of this Chapter for program eligibility purposes.

11           (c) The student resided in the state of Louisiana and was enrolled in a home  
12           study program approved by the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education.

13           (d) The student resided out of state during the 2019- 2020 academic year but  
14           is able to meet the residency requirements to qualify for an award provided for in  
15           R.S. 17:5023.

16           C.(1) In response to the public health emergency, provisions of this Chapter  
17           relative to continuing eligibility are modified or waived with respect to the 2019-  
18           2020 academic year as more fully specified in this Subsection:

19           (a) The provisions of R.S. 17:5041 or 5042 requiring that a student meet  
20           steady academic progress as defined by the administering agency are waived.

21           (b) The provisions of R.S. 17:5041 or 5042 requiring that a student achieve  
22           a certain cumulative grade point average to continue eligibility for his award are  
23           waived.

24           (c) For a student whose program award was suspended due to a low grade  
25           point average or failure to make steady academic progress, the time periods provided  
26           in Part I of this Chapter for the student to meet such requirement before losing  
27           program eligibility shall be extended by one semester for each semester the student  
28           is unable to enroll or complete due to measures taken to limit the spread of  
29           COVID-19.

1           (d) The administering agency may, by rule, waive any provision of Part I of  
2           this Chapter that imposes a program requirement or condition that a student cannot  
3           comply with or meet if the administering agency determines that the failure to  
4           comply with the requirement or meet the condition is, more likely than not, due  
5           solely to a consequence of measures taken to limit the spread of COVID-19.

6           (2) The provisions of this Subsection apply only to students who meet one  
7           of the following criteria:

8           (a) The student was enrolled full time as of the census date at an eligible  
9           college or university during the spring semester of 2020.

10           (b) The student was enrolled full time at an out-of-state college or university  
11           as of the census date during the spring semester of 2020.

12           (c) The student was scheduled to be enrolled full time at a school operating  
13           on a basis other than semesters during the spring of 2020.

14           D. The administering agency may adopt any rule, policy, or guideline  
15           necessary to implement the provisions of this Section and shall disseminate  
16           information regarding program changes pursuant to the provisions of this Section in  
17           the most timely manner possible.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

\_\_\_\_\_  
GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_