

1 ENGROSSED HOUSE
2 BILL NO. 1247

By: McBride and Fincher of the
House

3 and

4 Pemberton of the Senate

5
6
7 [education scholarships - mandating quadrennial
8 submission of financial statement to Oklahoma Tax
9 Commission - requiring annual reporting by
10 scholarship-granting organization - effective date]
11
12

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

14 SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 68 O.S. 2011, Section 2357.206, as
15 last amended by Section 1, Chapter 288, O.S.L. 2017 (68 O.S. Supp.
16 2018, Section 2357.206), is amended to read as follows:

17 Section 2357.206 A. This act shall be known and may be cited
18 as the "Oklahoma Equal Opportunity Education Scholarship Act".

19 B. 1. Except as provided in subsection F of this section,
20 after August 26, 2011, there shall be allowed a credit for any
21 taxpayer who makes a contribution to an eligible scholarship-
22 granting organization. The credit shall be equal to fifty percent
23 (50%) of the total amount of contributions made during a taxable
24 year, not to exceed One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00) for single

1 individuals, Two Thousand Dollars (\$2,000.00) for married
2 individuals filing jointly, or One Hundred Thousand Dollars
3 (\$100,000.00) for any taxpayer which is a legal business entity
4 including limited and general partnerships, corporations, subchapter
5 S corporations and limited liability companies; provided, if total
6 credits claimed pursuant to this paragraph exceed the caps
7 established pursuant to paragraph 1 of subsection D of this section,
8 the credit shall be equal to the taxpayer's proportionate share of
9 the cap for the taxable year, as determined pursuant to subsection H
10 of this section.

11 2. For any taxpayer who makes a contribution to an eligible
12 scholarship-granting organization and makes a written commitment to
13 contribute the same amount for an additional year, the credit for
14 the first year and the additional year shall be equal to seventy-
15 five percent (75%) of the total amount of the contribution made
16 during a taxable year, not to exceed the amounts established in
17 paragraph 1 of this subsection for the taxable year in which the
18 credit provided in this subsection is claimed. The taxpayer shall
19 provide evidence of the written commitment to the Oklahoma Tax
20 Commission at the time of filing the refund claim.

21 3. The credits authorized pursuant to the provisions of this
22 subsection shall be allocable to the partners, shareholders, members
23 or other equity owners of a taxpayer that is authorized to be
24 treated as a partnership for purposes of federal income tax

1 reporting for the taxable year for which the tax credits authorized
2 by this subsection are claimed on the applicable return, together
3 with required schedules, forms or reports of the partners,
4 shareholders, members or other equity owners of the taxpayer. Tax
5 credits which are allocated to such equity owners shall only be
6 limited in amount for the income tax return of a natural person or
7 persons based upon the limitation of the total credit amount to the
8 entity from which the tax credits have been allocated and shall not
9 be limited to One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00) for single
10 individuals or limited to Two Thousand Dollars (\$2,000.00) for
11 married persons filing a joint return.

12 4. On or before December 31, 2017, and once every four (4)
13 years thereafter, such scholarship-granting organization and
14 educational improvement granting organization shall submit to the
15 Oklahoma Tax Commission, Governor, President Pro Tempore of the
16 Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, an audited
17 financial statement for the organization along with information
18 detailing the benefits, successes or failures of the program. The
19 Tax Commission shall publish and make publicly available on its
20 website the financial statement and information submitted pursuant
21 to this paragraph.

22 C. 1. Except as provided in subsection F of this section,
23 after August 26, 2011, there shall be allowed a credit for any
24 taxpayer who makes a contribution to an eligible educational

1 improvement grant organization. The credit shall be equal to fifty
2 percent (50%) of the total amount of contributions made during a
3 taxable year, not to exceed One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00) for
4 single individuals, Two Thousand Dollars (\$2,000.00) for married
5 individuals filing jointly, or One Hundred Thousand Dollars
6 (\$100,000.00) for any taxpayer which is a legal business entity
7 including limited and general partnerships, corporations, subchapter
8 S corporations and limited liability companies; provided, if total
9 credits claimed pursuant to this paragraph exceed the cap
10 established pursuant to paragraph ~~4~~ 2 of subsection D of this
11 section, the credit shall be equal to the taxpayer's proportionate
12 share of the cap for the taxable year, as determined pursuant to
13 subsection H of this section.

14 2. For any taxpayer who makes a contribution to an eligible
15 educational improvement grant organization and makes a written
16 commitment to contribute the same amount for an additional year, the
17 credit for the first year and the additional year shall be equal to
18 seventy-five percent (75%) of the total amount of the contribution
19 made during a taxable year, not to exceed the amounts established in
20 paragraph 1 of this subsection for the taxable year in which the
21 credit provided in this subsection is claimed; provided, if total
22 credits claimed pursuant to this paragraph exceed the cap
23 established pursuant to paragraph 3 of this subsection, the credit
24 shall be equal to the taxpayer's proportionate share of the cap for

1 the taxable year, as determined pursuant to subsection H of this
2 section. The taxpayer shall provide evidence of the written
3 commitment to the Oklahoma Tax Commission at the time of filing the
4 refund claim.

5 3. The credits authorized pursuant to the provisions of this
6 subsection shall be allocable to the partners, shareholders, members
7 or other equity owners of a taxpayer that is authorized to be
8 treated as a partnership for purposes of federal income tax
9 reporting for the taxable year for which the tax credits authorized
10 by this subsection are claimed on the applicable return, together
11 with required schedules, forms or reports of the partners,
12 shareholders, members or other equity owners of the taxpayer. Tax
13 credits which are allocated to such equity owners shall only be
14 limited in amount for the income tax return of a natural person or
15 persons based upon the limitation of the total credit amount to the
16 entity from which the tax credits have been allocated and shall not
17 be limited to One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00) for single
18 individuals or limited to Two Thousand Dollars (\$2,000.00) for
19 married persons filing a joint return.

20 D. Except as otherwise provided pursuant to subsection H of
21 this section, for tax years 2017 and thereafter:

22 1. The total credits authorized pursuant to subsection B of
23 this section for all taxpayers shall not exceed Three Million Five
24 Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$3,500,000.00) annually;

1 2. The total credits authorized pursuant to subsection C of
2 this section for all taxpayers shall not exceed One Million Five
3 Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$1,500,000.00) annually; and

4 3. The cap on total credits provided for in this subsection
5 shall be allocated by the Tax Commission as provided in subsection H
6 of this section.

7 E. For credits claimed for eligible contributions made during
8 tax year 2014 and thereafter, a credit shall not be allowed by the
9 Oklahoma Tax Commission for contributions made to a scholarship-
10 granting organization or an educational improvement grant
11 organization if that organization's percentage of funds actually
12 awarded is less than ninety percent (90%). For purposes of this
13 section, the "percentage of funds actually awarded" shall be
14 determined by dividing the total amount of funds actually awarded as
15 educational scholarships or educational improvement grants over the
16 most recent twenty-four (24) months by the total amount available to
17 award as educational scholarships or educational improvement grants
18 over the most recent twenty-four (24) months.

19 F. Any tax credits which are earned by a taxpayer pursuant to
20 this section during the time period beginning on the effective date
21 of this act through December 31, 2012, may not be claimed for any
22 period prior to the taxable year beginning January 1, 2013. No
23 credits which accrue during the time period beginning on the
24 effective date of this act through December 31, 2012, may be used to

1 file an amended tax return for any taxable year prior to the taxable
2 year beginning January 1, 2013.

3 G. As used in this section:

4 1. "Eligible student" means a child of school age who is
5 lawfully present in the United States and who is a member of a
6 household in which the total annual income during the preceding tax
7 year does not exceed an amount equal to three hundred percent (300%)
8 of the income standard used to qualify for a free or ~~reduced~~
9 reduced-price school lunch or who, during the immediately preceding
10 school year, attended or, by virtue of the location of such
11 student's place of residence, was eligible to attend a public school
12 in this state which has been identified for school improvement as
13 determined by the State Board of Education pursuant to the
14 requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, P.L. No. 107-
15 110. Once a student has received an educational scholarship, as
16 defined in paragraph 3 of this subsection, the student and any
17 siblings who are members of the same household shall remain eligible
18 until they graduate from high school or reach twenty-one (21) years
19 of age, whichever occurs first;

20 2. "Eligible special needs student" means a child who has been
21 provided services under an Individual Family Service Plan through
22 the SoonerStart program and during transition was evaluated and
23 determined to be eligible for school district services, a child of
24 school age who has attended public school in our state with an

1 individualized education program pursuant to the Individuals With
2 Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C.A., Section 1400 et seq. or a
3 child who has been diagnosed by a clinical professional as having a
4 significant disability that will affect learning and who has been
5 approved by the board of a scholarship-granting organization;

6 3. "Educational scholarships" means:

- 7 a. scholarships to an eligible student of up to Five
8 Thousand Dollars (\$5,000.00) or eighty percent (80%)
9 of the statewide annual average per-pupil expenditure
10 as determined by the National Center for Education
11 Statistics, U.S. Department of Education, whichever is
12 greater, to cover all or part of the tuition, fees and
13 transportation costs of a qualified school which is
14 accredited by the State Board of Education or an
15 accrediting association approved by the Board pursuant
16 to Section 3-104 of Title 70 of the Oklahoma Statutes,
- 17 b. scholarships to an eligible student of up to Five
18 Thousand Dollars (\$5,000.00) or eighty percent (80%)
19 of the statewide annual average per-pupil expenditure
20 as determined by the National Center for Education
21 Statistics, U.S. Department of Education, whichever is
22 greater, to cover the educational costs of a qualified
23 school which does not charge tuition, which enrolls
24 special populations of students and which is

1 accredited by the State Board of Education or an
2 accrediting association approved by the Board pursuant
3 to Section 3-104 of Title 70 of the Oklahoma Statutes,
4 or

5 c. scholarships to an eligible special needs student of
6 up to Twenty-five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000.00) to
7 cover all or part of the tuition, fees and
8 transportation costs of a qualified school for
9 eligible special needs students which is accredited by
10 the State Board of Education or an accrediting
11 association approved by the Board pursuant to Section
12 3-104 of Title 70 of the Oklahoma Statutes;

13 4. "Low-income eligible student" means an eligible student or
14 eligible special needs student who qualifies for a free or reduced-
15 price lunch;

16 5. "Qualified school" means an early childhood, elementary or
17 secondary private school in this state, including schools which
18 provide special educational programs for three-year-olds or
19 prekindergarten educational programs for four-year-olds, which:

- 20 a. is accredited by the State Board of Education or an
21 accrediting association approved by the Board pursuant
22 to Section 3-104 of Title 70 of the Oklahoma Statutes,
23 b. is in compliance with all applicable health and safety
24 laws and codes,

- c. has a stated policy against discrimination in admissions on the basis of race, color, national origin or disability, and
- d. ensures academic accountability to parents and guardians of students through regular progress reports;

6. "Qualified school for eligible special needs students" means an early childhood, elementary or secondary private school in a county in this state, including schools which provide special educational programs for three-year-olds or prekindergarten educational programs for four-year-olds;

7. "Scholarship-granting organization" means an organization which:

- a. is a nonprofit entity exempt from taxation pursuant to the provisions of the Internal Revenue Code, 26 U.S.C., Section 501(c)(3),
- b. distributes periodic scholarship payments as checks made out to an eligible student's or eligible special needs student's parent or guardian and mailed to the qualified school where the student is enrolled,
- c. spends no more than ten percent (10%) of its annual revenue on expenditures other than educational scholarships as defined in paragraph 3 of this subsection,

- 1 d. spends each year a portion of its expenditures on
2 educational scholarships for low-income eligible
3 students, as defined in paragraph 4 of this
4 subsection, in an amount equal to or greater than the
5 percentage of low-income eligible students in the
6 state,
- 7 e. ensures that scholarships are portable during the
8 school year and can be used at any qualified school
9 that accepts the eligible student or at any qualified
10 school for special needs students that accepts the
11 eligible special needs student,
- 12 f. registers with the Oklahoma Tax Commission as a
13 scholarship-granting organization, and
- 14 g. has policies in place to:
- 15 (1) carry out criminal background checks on all
16 employees and board members to ensure that no
17 individual is involved with the organization who
18 might reasonably pose a risk to the appropriate
19 use of contributed funds, and
- 20 (2) maintain full and accurate records with respect
21 to the receipt of contributions and expenditures
22 of those contributions and supply such records
23 and any other documentation required by the Tax
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1 Commission to demonstrate financial
2 accountability;

3 8. "Annual revenue" means the total amount or value of
4 contributions received by an organization from taxpayers awarded
5 credits during the organization's fiscal year and all amounts earned
6 from interest or investments;

7 9. "Public school" means public schools as defined in Section
8 1-106 of Title 70 of the Oklahoma Statutes;

9 10. "Eligible school" means any public school that is not
10 located within a ten-mile radius of a qualified school in this
11 state, or any public school that is located within a ten-mile radius
12 of a qualified school in this state but offers grade-level
13 instruction different from the qualified school or any public school
14 located within a public school district with fewer than four
15 thousand five hundred (4,500) students;

16 11. "Early childhood education program" means a special
17 educational program for eligible special needs students who are
18 three (3) years of age or a prekindergarten educational program
19 provided to children who are at least four (4) years of age but not
20 more than five (5) years of age on or before September 1;

21 12. "Innovative educational program" means an advanced academic
22 or academic improvement program that is not part of the regular
23 coursework of a public school but that enhances the curriculum or
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1 academic program of the school or provides early childhood education
2 programs to students;

3 13. "Educational improvement grant" means a grant to an
4 eligible public school to implement an innovative educational
5 program for students, including the ability for multiple public
6 schools to make an application and be awarded a grant to jointly
7 provide an innovative educational program; and

8 14. "Educational improvement grant organization" means an
9 organization which:

10 a. is a nonprofit entity exempt from taxation pursuant to
11 the provisions of the Internal Revenue Code, 26
12 U.S.C., Section 501(c)(3), and

13 b. contributes at least ninety percent (90%) of its
14 annual receipts as grants to eligible schools for
15 innovative educational programs. For purposes of this
16 subparagraph, an educational improvement grant
17 organization contributes its annual cash receipts when
18 it expends or otherwise irrevocably encumbers those
19 funds for expenditure during the then current fiscal
20 year of the organization or during the next succeeding
21 fiscal year of the organization.

22 H. Total credits authorized by this section shall be allocated
23 as follows:

24

1 1. By January 10 of the year immediately following each
2 calendar year, a scholarship-granting organization or an educational
3 improvement grant organization which accepts contributions pursuant
4 to this section shall provide electronically to the Tax Commission
5 information on each contribution accepted during such taxable year.
6 At least once each taxable year, the scholarship-granting
7 organization or the educational improvement grant organization shall
8 notify each contributor that Oklahoma law provides for a total,
9 statewide cap on the amount of income tax credits allowed annually;

10 2. a. If the Tax Commission determines the total combined
11 credits claimed for contributions made to scholarship-
12 granting organizations during the most recently
13 completed calendar year by all taxpayers are in excess
14 of the statewide caps provided in paragraph 1 of
15 subsection D of this section, the Tax Commission shall
16 first allocate any amount of credits not claimed for
17 contributions made to educational improvement-granting
18 organizations, then shall determine the percentage of
19 the contribution which establishes the proportionate
20 share of the credit which may be claimed by any
21 taxpayer so that the total maximum credits authorized
22 by this section are not exceeded.

23 b. If the Tax Commission determines the total combined
24 credits claimed for contributions made to educational

1 improvement grant organizations during the most
2 recently completed calendar year by all taxpayers are
3 in excess of the statewide caps provided in paragraph
4 2 of subsection D of this section, the Tax Commission
5 shall first allocate any amount of credits not claimed
6 for contributions made to scholarship-granting
7 organizations, then shall determine the percentage of
8 the contribution which establishes the proportionate
9 share of the credit which may be claimed by any
10 taxpayer so that the maximum credits authorized by
11 this section are not exceeded.

12 c. Beginning for tax year 2016, credits earned, but not
13 allowed due to the application of statewide caps
14 provided in subsection D of this section will be
15 considered suspended and authorized to be used in the
16 next immediate tax year and applied to the next year's
17 statewide cap; and

18 3. The Tax Commission shall publish the percentage of the
19 contribution which may be claimed as a credit by contributors for
20 the most recently completed calendar year on the Tax Commission
21 website no later than February 15 of each calendar year for
22 contributions made the previous year. Each scholarship-granting
23 organization or educational improvement grant organization shall
24 notify contributors of that amount annually.

1 I. The credit authorized by this section shall not be used to
2 reduce the tax liability of the taxpayer to less than zero (0).

3 J. Any credits allowed but not used in any tax year may be
4 carried over, in order, to each of the three (3) years following the
5 year of qualification.

6 K. 1. In order to qualify under this section, an educational
7 improvement grant organization shall submit an application with
8 information to the Oklahoma Tax Commission on a form prescribed by
9 the Tax Commission that:

10 a. enables the Tax Commission to confirm that the
11 organization is a nonprofit entity exempt from
12 taxation pursuant to the provisions of the Internal
13 Revenue Code, 26 U.S.C., Section 501(c)(3), and

14 b. describes the proposed innovative educational program
15 or programs supported by the organization.

16 2. The Tax Commission shall review and approve or disapprove
17 the application, in consultation with the State Department of
18 Education.

19 3. In order to maintain eligibility under this section, an
20 educational improvement grant organization shall annually report the
21 following information to the Tax Commission by September 1 of each
22 year:

23 a. the name of the innovative educational program or
24 programs and the total amount of the grant or grants

1 made to those programs during the immediately
2 preceding school year,

3 b. a description of how each grant was utilized during
4 the immediately preceding school year and a
5 description of any demonstrated or expected innovative
6 educational improvements,

7 c. the names of the public ~~school~~ schools and school
8 districts where innovative educational programs that
9 received grants during the immediately preceding
10 school year were implemented,

11 d. where the organization collects information on a
12 county-by-county basis, and

13 e. the total number and total amount of grants made
14 during the immediately preceding school year for
15 innovative educational programs at public ~~school~~
16 schools by each county in which the organization made
17 grants.

18 4. The information required under paragraph 3 of this
19 subsection shall be submitted on a form provided by the Tax
20 Commission. No later than May 1 of each year, the Tax Commission
21 shall annually distribute sample forms together with the forms on
22 which the reports are required to be made to each approved
23 organization.

1 5. The Tax Commission shall not require any other information
2 be provided by an organization, except as expressly authorized in
3 this section.

4 L. 1. In order to maintain registration, a scholarship-
5 granting organization shall annually report to the Tax Commission by
6 September 1 of each year the following information regarding the
7 educational scholarships funded by the organization in the previous
8 academic year:

9 a. the name and address of the scholarship-granting
10 organization,

11 b. the names of the qualifying schools that received
12 funding for educational scholarships, the total amount
13 of funds paid to each qualifying school and the total
14 number of scholarship recipients enrolled in each
15 qualifying school,

16 c. the total number and total dollar amount of
17 contributions received during the previous academic
18 year,

19 d. the total number and total dollar amount of
20 educational scholarships awarded and funded during the
21 previous academic year,

22 e. the total number, total dollar amount and percentage
23 of educational scholarships awarded and funded during
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1 the previous academic year disaggregated into the
2 following categories:

3 (1) students who qualify for the federal free and
4 reduced-price lunch program,

5 (2) students who during the immediately preceding
6 school year attended or who were eligible by
7 virtue of the residence of the student to attend
8 a public school in the state which was identified
9 for school improvement by the State Board of
10 Education,

11 (3) eligible special needs students, and

12 (4) students who were first-time recipients of a
13 scholarship, including information about the type
14 of public or private school the student was
15 enrolled in during the entire previous academic
16 year,

17 f. the percentage of the total amount of education
18 scholarship expenditures spent on low-income eligible
19 students, and

20 g. the percentage of annual revenue received by the
21 organization which was not expended on scholarships.

22 2. The Tax Commission shall publish and make available on its
23 website:

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- 1 a. the information submitted by the scholarship-granting
2 organization pursuant to paragraph 1 of this
3 subsection,
- 4 b. a list of participating schools, and
- 5 c. all other application information submitted to the Tax
6 Commission by a scholarship-granting organization.

7 3. A scholarship-granting organization shall annually submit
8 verification to the Tax Commission that the organization still meets
9 the criteria set forth in paragraph 7 of subsection G of this
10 section.

11 M. In consultation with the State Department of Education, the
12 Tax Commission shall promulgate rules necessary to implement this
13 act. The rules shall include procedures for the registration of a
14 scholarship-granting organization or an educational improvement
15 grant organization for purposes of determining if the organization
16 meets the requirements of this act or for the revocation of the
17 registration of an organization, if applicable, and for notice as
18 required in subsection H of this section.

19 SECTION 2. This act shall become effective November 1, 2019.
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1 Passed the House of Representatives the 13th day of March, 2019.

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3 _____
4 Presiding Officer of the House
of Representatives

5 Passed the Senate the ____ day of _____, 2019.

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8 _____
9 Presiding Officer of the Senate