

ADULT LEARNERS GRANT PROGRAM

2021 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: V. Lowry Snow

Senate Sponsor: Ann Millner

LONG TITLE

General Description:

This bill creates the Adult Learners Grant Program to provide financial assistance to adult students pursuing online education.

Highlighted Provisions:

This bill:

▶ creates the Adult Learners Grant Program (program) to provide financial assistance to students who:

- are at least 26 years old;
- are financially needy; and
- are pursuing an online degree or certificate in a field with an industry need;

▶ requires the Utah Board of Higher Education (board) to:

- make rules to administer the program;
- distribute grant money to eligible students; and
- prioritize grants to students from rural areas, minority students, low income

students, and first generation students; and

▶ defines terms.

Money Appropriated in this Bill:

This bill appropriates in fiscal year 2022:

▶ to the Utah Board of Higher Education - Student Assistance - Adult Learner Grant Program as an ongoing appropriation:

- from the Education Fund, \$1,000,000.

Other Special Clauses:

30 None

31 **Utah Code Sections Affected:**

32 ENACTS:

33 **53B-13c-101**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

34 **53B-13c-102**, Utah Code Annotated 1953



36 *Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

37 Section 1. Section **53B-13c-101** is enacted to read:

38 **CHAPTER 13c. ADULT LEARNERS GRANT PROGRAM**

39 **53B-13c-101. Definitions.**

40 As used in this chapter:

41 (1) (a) "Cost of attendance" means the estimated costs associated with taking an online
42 course, as established by an eligible institution in accordance with board policies.

43 (b) "Cost of attendance" includes tuition, costs payable to the eligible institution, and
44 other direct educational expenses related to taking an online course.

45 (2) "Eligible institution" means an institution that offers a postsecondary level course
46 of instruction using digital technology.

47 (3) "Eligible student" means a financially needy student who is:

48 (a) at least 26 years old;

49 (b) enrolled in an online course at an eligible institution;

50 (c) pursuing:

51 (i) an online postsecondary degree program in a field where there is a demonstrated
52 industry need; or

53 (ii) an online non-degree program that is designed to meet industry needs and leads to a
54 certificate or another recognized educational credential; and

55 (d) a resident student under Section **53B-8-102** and rules the board establishes.

56 (4) "Financially needy student" means a student who demonstrates the financial

57 inability to meet all or a portion of the cost of attendance at an eligible institution as defined by

58 the board, after utilizing family and personal resources, federal assistance, and scholarships.

59 (5) "Fiscal year" means the fiscal year of the state.

60 (6) "Institution" means:

61 (a) an institution described in Section [53B-1-102](#); or

62 (b) a Utah private, nonprofit postsecondary institution that is accredited by a regional
63 accrediting organization that the board recognizes.

64 (7) "Online course" means a postsecondary level course of instruction offered by an
65 eligible institution using digital technology.

66 (8) "Program" means the Adult Learners Grant Program established in Section
67 [53B-13c-102](#).

68 (9) "Tuition" means tuition and fees at the rate charged for residents of the state.

69 Section 2. Section **53B-13c-102** is enacted to read:

70 **53B-13c-102. Adult Learners Grant Program established -- Guidelines for**
71 **administration of the program.**

72 (1) There is created the Adult Learners Grant Program to provide financial assistance
73 to eligible students.

74 (2) (a) The board shall, in accordance with the guidelines in this section, develop and
75 administer the program.

76 (b) In accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act, the
77 board shall make rules to establish:

78 (i) how an individual establishes financial need for purposes of receiving a grant under
79 the program;

80 (ii) a requirement that an applicant complete the Free Application for Federal Student
81 Aid;

82 (iii) how to determine whether an individual is a Utah resident;

83 (iv) a process and requirements for an individual to apply for a grant under the
84 program;

85 (v) a formula to allocate money appropriated for the program to eligible students,

86 prioritizing:

87 (A) students from rural areas;

88 (B) minority students;

89 (C) low income students;

90 (D) first generation students; and

91 (E) students pursuing education that aligns with industry needs; and

92 (vi) a method of identifying industry needs for purposes of determining student
93 eligibility to receive a grant under this section.

94 (c) The board may not use more than 3% of money appropriated for the program for
95 administrative costs or overhead.

96 (3) To be eligible for a grant under this section, a student shall demonstrate, in
97 accordance with rules the board makes under Subsection (2)(b):

98 (a) that the student has completed the Free Application for Federal Student Aid; and

99 (b) that the student is financially needy.

100 (4) The board shall:

101 (a) annually establish the minimum and maximum amount for a grant;

102 (b) (i) award grants to eligible students on an annual basis; and

103 (ii) distribute grant money on a quarter or semester basis; and

104 (c) except as provided in Subsection (2)(b)(v), award all money appropriated for the
105 program without regard to an applicant's race, creed, color, religion, sex, or ancestry.

106 (5) The total sum of program grant money, financial aid from any source, and family or
107 personal contribution may not exceed the cost of attendance for an eligible student at an
108 eligible institution for a fiscal year.

109 (6) An eligible student that receives a grant under the program shall apply the grant
110 money to the cost of attendance.

111 (7) The board shall annually report program outcomes to the Higher Education
112 Appropriations Subcommittee, including:

113 (a) number of grant recipients at each eligible institution;

- 114 (b) average amount of grant money provided per grant recipient;
- 115 (c) benefits in fulfillment of the purposes for the program described in this chapter; and
- 116 (d) recommendations for program modification, including recommended funding
- 117 levels.

118 Section 3. **Appropriation.**

119 The following sums of money are appropriated for the fiscal year beginning July 1,
120 2021, and ending June 30, 2022. These are additions to amounts previously appropriated for
121 fiscal year 2022. Under the terms and conditions of Title 63J, Chapter 1, Budgetary Procedures
122 Act, the Legislature appropriates the following sums of money from the funds or accounts
123 indicated for the use and support of the government of the state of Utah.

124	<u>To Utah Board of Higher Education - Student Assistance</u>	
125	<u>From Education Fund</u>	<u>\$1,000,000</u>
126	<u>Schedule of Programs:</u>	
127	<u>Adult Learner Grant Program</u>	<u>\$1,000,000</u>