

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILLNo. 696 Session of
2005

INTRODUCED BY ALLEN, B. SMITH, ARGALL, DeWEESE, BALDWIN, BEBKO-JONES, BELARDI, BELFANTI, BOYD, BUNT, CALTAGIRONE, CAWLEY, CRAHALLA, DALEY, J. EVANS, FABRIZIO, FAIRCHILD, FRANKEL, FREEMAN, GEIST, GEORGE, GILLESPIE, GINGRICH, GOODMAN, GRUCELA, HERMAN, HESS, JAMES, KILLION, KOTIK, LEDERER, LEVDANSKY, MARKOSEK, S. MILLER, O'NEILL, PALLONE, PHILLIPS, PICKETT, PISTELLA, RAYMOND, READSHAW, REICHLEY, ROHRER, ROSS, SCAVELLO, SCHRODER, SEMMEL, SHANER, STABACK, SURRA, E. Z. TAYLOR, THOMAS, TURZAI, WALKO, WILT, YOUNGBLOOD, ZUG, SAMUELSON, MAHER AND DENLINGER, MARCH 1, 2005

AS REPORTED FROM COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES, AS AMENDED, JUNE 28, 2006

AN ACT

1 Establishing the Keystone Scholars Award to recognize and reward
2 excellence in academic achievement and performance among
3 graduating seniors in this Commonwealth's public secondary
4 schools.

5 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
6 hereby enacts as follows:

7 Section 1. Short title.

8 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Keystone
9 Scholars Award Act.

10 Section 2. Purpose.

11 The Keystone Scholars Award is hereby established within the
12 Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency to recognize and
13 reward excellence in academic achievement and performance by
14 selected public secondary school seniors in this Commonwealth

1 and to encourage them to attend institutions of higher education
2 within this Commonwealth.

3 Section 3. Definitions.

4 The following words and phrases when used in this act shall
5 have the meanings given to them in this section unless the
6 context clearly indicates otherwise:

7 "Agency." The Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance
8 Agency.

9 "Award." The Keystone Scholars Award established under this
10 act.

11 "Board." The board of school directors of a school district,
12 a joint board or an area vocational-technical school or the
13 board of trustees of a charter school.

14 "Eligible institution." A community college, State-owned or
15 State-related college or university, vocational or other
16 postsecondary institution located in this Commonwealth that is
17 authorized by the Department of Education to provide approved
18 courses of study and grant degrees.

19 "School entity." A public school district, joint school,
20 charter school or area vocational-technical school.

21 Section 4. Selection process.

22 (a) Member of senior class.--Each school entity shall
23 annually select, for each of its secondary schools, a student
24 who is a member of the senior class and who exemplifies
25 qualities of high academic achievement and excellence in
26 performance as the recipient of the award.

27 (b) Criteria and procedures.--Each board shall ~~adopt a~~ <—
28 ~~policy setting the criteria and procedures to be used in~~ DEVELOP <—
29 PROCEDURES SPECIFYING THE CRITERIA AND GUIDELINES TO BE USED IN
30 selecting its award recipient which shall, at a minimum, comply

1 with the requirements of section 5 (relating to minimum
2 qualifications). The award shall be made without regard to the
3 ~~student's race, creed, color, sex, national origin or ancestry.~~ <—
4 STUDENT'S RACE, COLOR, SEX, RELIGION, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, <—
5 NATIONAL ORIGIN OR DISABILITY.

6 (c) Presentation of award.--The award shall be presented to
7 ~~the recipient at the school entity's annual commencement~~ <—
8 ~~exercises.~~ THE RECIPIENT AT EITHER THE SCHOOL ENTITY'S ANNUAL <—
9 COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES OR AT ANY AWARD CEREMONY OR BANQUET
10 HONORING MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL ENTITY'S GRADUATING CLASS.

11 Section 5. Minimum qualifications.

12 At a minimum, a candidate for the award shall:

13 (1) Be a current twelfth grade student enrolled at a
14 Commonwealth public secondary school, charter school or area
15 vocational-technical school.

16 (2) Be a domiciliary of this Commonwealth.

17 (3) Hold a 3.5 grade point average, on a scale of 4.0,
18 by the end of the student's junior year.

19 (4) Attain a composite score of 1200 or higher on the
20 Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), or equivalent American
21 College Test (ACT) score, on any single test administration.

22 (5) Rank academically in the top 5% of the student's
23 graduating class.

24 (6) Have been accepted for admission in the fall term
25 immediately following secondary school graduation as a full-
26 time student in an eligible institution.

27 (7) Have a history of participation in extracurricular
28 activities, community service or work experience while
29 enrolled at the awarding high school.

30 Section 6. Award.

1 (a) Amount.--Each student selected by a school entity shall
2 be presented an initial award of up to \$1,000, to a lifetime
3 maximum of \$4,000, and shall be referred to as a Keystone
4 Scholar.

5 (b) Use of award.--The award recipient shall be free to
6 attend any eligible institution of the recipient's choice and
7 shall apply the award toward the tuition, room, board, books and
8 fees of that institution. The eligible institution is not
9 required to accept the award recipient, but is free to exact
10 compliance with its own admission requirements, standards and
11 policies.

12 Section 7. Renewal of award.

13 (a) Renewal period.--Each award is renewable annually for a
14 period not to exceed an additional three academic years beyond
15 the first year of the award.

16 (b) Qualifications for renewal.--Qualifications for annual
17 renewal of the award include the following:

18 (1) Maintaining full-time enrollment at an eligible
19 institution and a minimum grade point average of 3.0 or
20 higher on a scale of 4.0 or its equivalent.

21 (2) Making satisfactory academic progress toward
22 completion of a course of study.

23 (3) Continued eligibility as determined by the agency,
24 including continued Pennsylvania domicile and enrollment in
25 an institution of higher education located within this
26 Commonwealth.

27 Section 8. Powers and duties of agency.

28 (a) Public information.--The agency shall prepare and
29 supervise the issuance of public information concerning the
30 provisions of the award.

1 (b) Submission of information.--The agency shall prescribe
2 the form, set time lines and regulate the submission of
3 information from each school entity regarding the selection of
4 its recipient of the award.

5 (c) Initial award.--The agency shall establish procedures
6 for making the initial award to the recipients and for annual
7 renewal of the awards.

8 (d) Disbursement of funds.--The agency is authorized to
9 disburse awards from funds specifically appropriated for the
10 purposes of this act.

11 (e) Rules and regulations.--The agency shall have the power
12 to adopt rules and regulations to implement, administer and
13 enforce this act.

14 Section 9. Miscellaneous provisions.

15 (a) Exclusion from taxable income.--Awards received by a
16 student under this act shall not be considered taxable income
17 for purposes of Article III of the act of March 4, 1971 (P.L.6,
18 No.2), known as the Tax Reform Code of 1971.

19 (b) Eligible institution unaffected.--Awards received by
20 students under this act shall not be considered financial
21 assistance or appropriations to the eligible institutions.

22 (c) Student aid.--A Keystone Scholars Award shall not be
23 used when determining an applicant's eligibility and need for
24 student grant programs or other student aid programs
25 administered by the agency.

26 (d) Other student aid.--If other student aid must be
27 adjusted due to the receipt of funding under this act, loans
28 must be reduced first, then work-study or other employment and
29 then grant or scholarship aid.

30 Section 10. Effective date.

1 This act shall take effect ~~July 1, 2005, or immediately,~~

<—

2 ~~whichever is later.~~ IMMEDIATELY.

<—