

1 SENATE BILL 147

2 **54TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2020**

3 INTRODUCED BY

4 Cliff R. Pirtle

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10 AN ACT

11 RELATING TO HIGHER EDUCATION; ENACTING THE VOCATIONAL TRAINING  
12 SCHOLARSHIP ACT; MAKING AN APPROPRIATION.

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14 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

15 SECTION 1. [NEW MATERIAL] SHORT TITLE.--This act may be  
16 cited as the "Vocational Training Scholarship Act".

17 SECTION 2. [NEW MATERIAL] DEFINITIONS.--As used in the  
18 Vocational Training Scholarship Act:

19 A. "community college" means a branch community  
20 college of a four-year state educational institution, a two-  
21 year state educational institution or a community college or  
22 technical and vocational institute established pursuant to  
23 Chapter 21, Article 13 or 16 NMSA 1978, respectively;

24 B. "department" means the higher education  
25 department;

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1 C. "fund" means the vocational training scholarship  
2 fund;

3 D. "program semesters" means those semesters for  
4 which a student may receive a tuition scholarship;

5 E. "tuition scholarship" means the scholarship that  
6 provides tuition assistance per program semester for a student  
7 enrolled in a vocational training program at a community  
8 college; and

9 F. "vocational training programs" means career  
10 technical education courses offered at a community college.

11 SECTION 3. [NEW MATERIAL] TUITION SCHOLARSHIPS

12 AUTHORIZED--STUDENTS.--

13 A. To the extent that funds are made available by  
14 the legislature from the fund, the board of regents or  
15 governing bodies of community colleges shall award tuition  
16 scholarships in department-approved amounts to students  
17 attending vocational training programs at their respective  
18 community colleges.

19 B. A tuition scholarship may be awarded to a  
20 student who:

- 21 (1) has completed tenth grade;
- 22 (2) had a cumulative grade point average of  
23 2.0 or higher on a scale of 4.0 in ninth and tenth grades;
- 24 (3) has earned a high school equivalency  
25 credential;

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1 (4) maintains residency in New Mexico; and  
2 (5) completes any other requirements required  
3 by the respective community college.

4 C. The residency requirement in Paragraph (4) of  
5 Subsection B of this section notwithstanding, a New Mexico  
6 resident who had to leave the state to receive an education  
7 pursuant to the federal Individuals With Disabilities Education  
8 Act shall be eligible for a tuition scholarship if the student  
9 otherwise meets the qualifications for a tuition scholarship  
10 pursuant to this act.

11 SECTION 4. [NEW MATERIAL] TUITION SCHOLARSHIP AMOUNT.--

12 A. Based on the amount appropriated by the  
13 legislature from the fund and on the projected enrollment in  
14 vocational training programs at all community colleges, the  
15 department shall:

- 16 (1) determine the total amount of money  
17 available for all tuition scholarships;
- 18 (2) determine the award amount for each  
19 community college; and
- 20 (3) notify all community colleges of the  
21 determinations made pursuant to Paragraphs (1) and (2) of this  
22 subsection.

23 B. In determining distribution and award amounts  
24 for the tuition scholarship program, the department shall:

- 25 (1) distribute to all participating community

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1 colleges an amount not to exceed the balance in the fund; and  
2 (2) subject to the provisions of Paragraph (1)  
3 of this subsection, distribute to each community college an  
4 amount based on the projected enrollment at that community  
5 college of students enrolled in vocational training programs in  
6 their first through fourth program semesters.

7 C. If the total amount available pursuant to  
8 Paragraph (1) of Subsection A of this section is less than the  
9 amount available in the fund, the department shall decrease the  
10 scholarship award amounts in a manner that maintains as equal  
11 as possible the percentage of unpaid tuition for students  
12 enrolled in vocational training programs in community colleges.

13 SECTION 5. [NEW MATERIAL] FUND--CREATED.--The "vocational  
14 training scholarship fund" is created as a nonreverting fund in  
15 the state treasury. The fund consists of appropriations,  
16 gifts, grants, donations and income from investment of the  
17 fund. The department shall administer the fund and, subject to  
18 appropriation by the legislature, shall provide tuition  
19 scholarships. Expenditures from the fund shall be by warrant  
20 of the secretary of finance and administration pursuant to  
21 vouchers signed by the secretary of higher education or the  
22 secretary's authorized representative.

23 SECTION 6. APPROPRIATION.--Two million five hundred fifty  
24 thousand dollars (\$2,550,000) is appropriated from the general  
25 fund to the vocational training scholarship fund for

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1 expenditure in fiscal year 2021 and subsequent fiscal years to  
2 carry out the provisions of the Vocational Training Scholarship  
3 Act. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the  
4 end of a fiscal year shall not revert to the general fund.

5 SECTION 7. EFFECTIVE DATE.--The effective date of the  
6 provisions of this act is July 1, 2020.

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