

AN ACT

RELATING TO LOTTERY TUITION FUND SCHOLARSHIPS; PROVIDING THAT CERTAIN STUDENTS MAY QUALIFY IF THEY ARE DEPENDENTS OF INDIVIDUALS ENGAGED IN ACTIVE DUTY IN THE UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES.

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

Section 1. Section 21-1-4.3 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1996, Chapter 71, Section 3) is amended to read:

"21-1-4.3. TUITION SCHOLARSHIPS AUTHORIZED-- CERTAIN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS. --

A. To the extent that funds are made available by the legislature from the lottery tuition fund, the boards of regents of New Mexico state university, New Mexico institute of mining and technology, eastern New Mexico university, western New Mexico university, the university of New Mexico, New Mexico highlands university and northern New Mexico state school shall award tuition scholarships for qualified resident students attending their respective institutions and branches of those institutions.

B. Except as authorized in Subsections C and D of this section, the tuition scholarships authorized in this section shall apply only to full-time resident students who, immediately upon completion of a high school curriculum at a public or accredited private New Mexico high school or upon

receiving a graduate equivalent diploma, are accepted for entrance to and attend one of the state educational institutions set forth in this section or one of the branches of those institutions. Each tuition scholarship shall be awarded for up to four consecutive years beginning the second semester of the recipient's first year of enrollment, provided that the recipient has maintained residency in New Mexico and maintained a grade point average of 2.5 or higher on a 4.0 scale during his first semester of full-time enrollment.

C. The tuition scholarships authorized in this section shall also apply to full-time resident students who, immediately upon completion of a high school curriculum at a public or accredited private New Mexico high school or upon receiving a graduate equivalent diploma, attend a two-year public post-secondary educational institution in New Mexico and who, upon the completion of that curriculum or at the end of two years, whichever is sooner, transfer to one of the post-secondary state educational institutions set forth in this section. Those students shall be eligible for a tuition scholarship for two consecutive years, provided that those students maintain residency in New Mexico, maintain a grade-point average of 2.5 or higher on a 4.0 scale and attend the institution full time during the regular academic year.

D. The tuition scholarships authorized in this

section shall also apply to a student who would not qualify for a scholarship under Subsection B or C of this section solely because the student completed a high school curriculum at a high school located outside of New Mexico if:

(1) while in high school the student was a dependent of an individual engaged in active duty in the United States armed forces; and

(2) the individual engaged in active duty was a resident of New Mexico immediately before entering the United States armed forces and, while the student was in high school, was absent from New Mexico because of the active duty in the United States armed forces.

E. The commission on higher education shall prepare guidelines setting forth explicit student continuing eligibility criteria and guidelines for administration of the tuition scholarship program. Guidelines shall be distributed to the board of regents of each institution to enable a uniform availability of the resident student tuition scholarships. "

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