

SENATE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE

FOR

HOUSE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE

FOR

HOUSE BILL NO. 1569

AN ACT

To repeal sections 168.133, 170.014, 173.239, 173.1105, 173.1352, 173.2553, 178.786, and 178.787, RSMo, and to enact in lieu thereof twelve new sections relating to education.

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*Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Missouri, as follows:*

Section A. Sections 168.133, 170.014, 173.239, 173.1105, 173.1352, 173.2553, 178.786, and 178.787, RSMo, are repealed and twelve new sections enacted in lieu thereof, to be known as sections 161.355, 168.133, 170.014, 170.025, 173.239, 173.685, 173.836, 173.1105, 173.1352, 173.2553, 178.786, and 178.787, to read as follows:

161.355. 1. This section shall be known and may be cited as the "Media Literacy and Critical Thinking Act".

2. As used in this section, "media literacy" means the following:

(1) An individual's ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and participate with all forms of media, such as:

(a) News in print; and

(b) Social media content, such as images, text, video, and other media content;

(2) An individual's ability to recognize bias and stereotypes in media messages;

(3) The foundational skills of digital citizenship and internet safety; and

(4) In the classroom, media literacy includes integrating the process of critical analysis of media messages into the daily classroom curricula.

3. The department of elementary and secondary education shall establish the "Media Literacy and Critical Thinking" pilot program. Such pilot program shall be implemented and administered during the 2025-26 and 2026-27 school years.

4. Under the media literacy and critical thinking pilot program, the department of elementary and secondary education shall select five to seven diverse school districts to participate in the pilot program and from which to study data related to the outcomes of the pilot program in such school districts.

5. A pilot program site shall:

(1) Address each component of media literacy;

(2) Develop successful strategies for student learning within the daily classroom curricula in all grades or for a selected preschool to grade twelve level;

(3) Identify high-quality resources for such pilot program; and

(4) Demonstrate and report how such site addresses the following in the classroom:

(a) News content literacy, which is the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and distinguish verified information from opinion and propaganda and the opportunity to practice verification;

(b) Visual literacy, which is the ability to find, interpret, and evaluate images and visual media such as photographs, videos, illustrations, drawings, maps, diagrams, and advertisements;

(c) Digital fluency, which is the ability to understand and follow the norms of safe and responsible

technology use and how media influences attitudes and behaviors; and

(d) Digital literacy, which is the ability to be technically fluent and able to make informed decisions about content encountered online, recognize how networked technology affects behavior and perception, and create and effectively communicate with digital media tools.

6. The guidelines developed as a result of the study of the information gained from the pilot program shall provide students with the following information:

(1) The purpose and acceptable use of various social media platforms;

(2) Social media behavior that ensures cyber safety, cybersecurity, and cyber ethics;

(3) The potential negative consequences of failing to use various social media platforms responsibly, such as cyberbullying;

(4) The ability to access, analyze, evaluate, create, and act on all forms of digital and written communications;

(5) Digital ethics, etiquette, respectful discourse with individuals who have differing opinions, safety, security, digital footprints, and the identification of rhetoric that incites violence;

(6) Cyberbullying prevention and response;

(7) The significance of algorithms;

(8) Ways to identify online misinformation;

(9) A general knowledge of the economic structure of the digital landscape; and

(10) The importance of the right to freedom of speech contained in the Bill of Rights of the Constitution of the United States, including, but not limited to:

(a) The central role that the right to freedom of speech has in the history of the United States; and

(b) The applicability of protections for freedom of speech for online interaction in school settings that the department of elementary and secondary education shall provide to school districts.

7. The guidelines developed as a result of the study of the information gained from the pilot program shall provide school districts with samples of learning activities, resources, and training that promote critical thinking and the skills necessary to evaluate all forms of media.

8. Before August 1, 2027, each pilot program site shall submit a report to the department of elementary and secondary education describing the implementation of and the information gained from the pilot program.

9. Before January 1, 2028, the department of elementary and secondary education shall compile the reports submitted from the pilot program sites and submit a summary report to the general assembly containing at least the following information:

(1) Qualitative and quantitative insights on how the pilot program sites addressed media literacy;

(2) A compendium of high-quality strategies and resources used by educators;

(3) Any professional development used or required;

(4) Recommendations about which facilities, instructional materials, and technologies are needed to implement a media literacy and critical thinking program statewide;

(5) Exploration of additional policy, administrative mechanisms, and legislative recommendations for implementing best practices and standards statewide; and

(6) A draft of proposed clear, inclusive media literacy and critical thinking state standards for preschool

to grade twelve, compiled by drawing from key media literacy skills and competencies in existing state standards and from the pilot program results.

10. Standards developed under this section shall be included for consideration by the department of elementary and secondary education during the state standards review immediately following the termination of the pilot program.

11. The media literacy and critical thinking pilot program shall terminate on June 30, 2027.

12. This section shall expire on December 31, 2027.

168.133. 1. As used in this section, "screened volunteer" shall mean any person who assists a school by providing uncompensated service and who may periodically be left alone with students. The school district or charter school shall ensure that a criminal background check is conducted for all screened volunteers, who shall complete the criminal background check prior to being left alone with a student. [Screened volunteers include, but are not limited to, persons who regularly assist in the office or library, mentor or tutor students, coach or supervise a school-sponsored activity before or after school, or chaperone students on an overnight trip.] Screened volunteers may only access student education records when necessary to assist the district and while supervised by staff members. Volunteers that are not screened shall not be left alone with a student or have access to student records.

2. (1) The school district or charter school shall ensure that a criminal background check is conducted on any person employed after January 1, 2005, authorized to have contact with pupils and prior to the individual having contact with any pupil. [Such persons include, but are not limited to, administrators, teachers, aides,

paraprofessionals, assistants, secretaries, custodians, cooks, screened volunteers, and nurses.]

(2) The school district or charter school shall also ensure that a criminal background check is conducted for school bus drivers and drivers of other vehicles owned by the school district or charter school or operated under contract with a school district or charter school and used for the purpose of transporting school children. The school district or charter school may allow such drivers to operate buses pending the result of the criminal background check. **[For bus drivers,]** The school district or charter school shall be responsible for conducting the criminal background check on drivers employed by the school district or charter school under section 43.540.

(3) For drivers employed or contracted by a pupil transportation company under contract with the school district or the charter school, the criminal background check shall be conducted by the pupil transportation company pursuant to section **[43.540]** 43.539 and conform to the requirements established in the National Child Protection Act of 1993, as amended by the Volunteers for Children Act.

(4) Personnel who have successfully undergone a criminal background check and a check of the family care safety registry as part of the professional license application process under section 168.021 and who have received clearance on the checks within one prior year of employment shall be considered to have completed the background check requirement.

(5) A criminal background check under this section shall include a search of any information publicly available in an electronic format through a public index or single case display.

3. In order to facilitate the criminal history background check, the applicant shall submit a set of fingerprints collected pursuant to standards determined by the Missouri highway patrol. The fingerprints shall be used by the highway patrol to search the criminal history repository and shall be forwarded to the Federal Bureau of Investigation for searching the federal criminal history files.

4. The applicant shall pay the fee for the state criminal history record information pursuant to section 43.530 and sections 210.900 to 210.936 and pay the appropriate fee determined by the Federal Bureau of Investigation for the federal criminal history record when he or she applies for a position authorized to have contact with pupils pursuant to this section. The department shall distribute the fees collected for the state and federal criminal histories to the Missouri highway patrol.

5. The department of elementary and secondary education shall facilitate an annual check of employed persons holding current active certificates under section 168.021 against criminal history records in the central repository under section 43.530, the sexual offender registry under sections 589.400 to 589.426, and child abuse central registry under sections 210.109 to 210.183. The department of elementary and secondary education shall facilitate procedures for school districts to submit personnel information annually for persons employed by the school districts who do not hold a current valid certificate who are required by subsection 1 of this section to undergo a criminal background check, sexual offender registry check, and child abuse central registry check. The Missouri state highway patrol shall provide ongoing electronic updates to criminal history background checks of those persons

previously submitted, both those who have an active certificate and those who do not have an active certificate, by the department of elementary and secondary education. This shall fulfill the annual check against the criminal history records in the central repository under section 43.530.

6. The school district may adopt a policy to provide for reimbursement of expenses incurred by an employee for state and federal criminal history information pursuant to section 43.530.

7. If, as a result of the criminal history background check mandated by this section, it is determined that the holder of a certificate issued pursuant to section 168.021 has pled guilty or nolo contendere to, or been found guilty of a crime or offense listed in section 168.071, or a similar crime or offense committed in another state, the United States, or any other country, regardless of imposition of sentence, such information shall be reported to the department of elementary and secondary education.

8. Any school official making a report to the department of elementary and secondary education in conformity with this section shall not be subject to civil liability for such action.

9. For any teacher who is employed by a school district on a substitute or part-time basis within one year of such teacher's retirement from a Missouri school, the state of Missouri shall not require such teacher to be subject to any additional background checks prior to having contact with pupils. Nothing in this subsection shall be construed as prohibiting or otherwise restricting a school district from requiring additional background checks for such teachers employed by the school district.



10. A criminal background check and fingerprint collection conducted under subsections 1 to 3 of this section shall be valid for at least a period of one year and transferrable from one school district to another district. A school district may, in its discretion, conduct a new criminal background check and fingerprint collection under subsections 1 to 3 of this section for a newly hired employee at the district's expense. A teacher's change in type of certification shall have no effect on the transferability or validity of such records.

11. Nothing in this section shall be construed to alter the standards for suspension, denial, or revocation of a certificate issued pursuant to this chapter.

12. The state board of education may promulgate rules for criminal history background checks made pursuant to this section. Any rule or portion of a rule, as that term is defined in section 536.010, that is created under the authority delegated in this section shall become effective only if it complies with and is subject to all of the provisions of chapter 536 and, if applicable, section 536.028. This section and chapter 536 are nonseverable and if any of the powers vested with the general assembly pursuant to chapter 536 to review, to delay the effective date, or to disapprove and annul a rule are subsequently held unconstitutional, then the grant of rulemaking authority and any rule proposed or adopted after January 1, 2005, shall be invalid and void.

170.014. 1. This section shall be known as the "Reading Instruction Act" and is enacted to ensure that all public schools including charter schools establish reading programs in kindergarten through grade five based in scientific research. "Evidence-based reading instruction" includes practices that have been proven effective through

evaluation of the outcomes for large numbers of students and are highly likely to be effective in improving reading if implemented with fidelity. Such programs shall include the essential components of phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension, and all new teachers who teach reading in kindergarten through grade three shall receive adequate training in these areas.

2. (1) For purposes of this subsection, a "three-cueing system" is any model of teaching students to read based on meaning, structure and syntax, and visual cues, which may also be known as "MSV".

(2) A public school district shall not use a program of instruction for students in kindergarten through grade three that is based on any practice or intervention program that utilizes the three-cueing system model of reading and visual memory as the primary basis for teaching word recognition, or that is the three-cueing system model.

3. Every public school in the state shall offer a reading program as described in [subsection 1 of] this section for kindergarten through grade five.

170.025. Each school district and charter school may establish a program designed to ensure that:

(1) Each elementary school under the control of such school district or charter school provides instruction in cursive writing so that students create readable documents through legible cursive handwriting by the end of the fifth grade; and

(2) Each student passes with proficiency a teacher-constructed test demonstrating competency in both reading and writing cursive.

173.239. 1. Any member of the Missouri National Guard who possesses the qualifications set forth in this section

may, while he or she is a member of the Missouri National Guard, be awarded [an] educational assistance in the form of:

(1) A tuition and fee waiver for undergraduate courses at a postsecondary institution of higher education located in this state that directly receives funds appropriated by the general assembly. This tuition and fee waiver shall not be implemented prior to the 2025-2026 academic year. The tuition and fee waiver shall only be for tuition and fees that remain after the application of all payments from a tuition assistance program of the National Guard, the United States Army, or the United States Air Force; additional federal military tuition assistance; GI Bill educational entitlements; awarded external scholarships; and federal financial grants, including the federal Pell grant, that are available to the member in the current semester.

(2) A grant to an [approved public institution or an approved private] eligible institution[, as those terms are defined in either section 173.205 or section 173.778,] of his or her choice [while he or she is a member of the Missouri National Guard. Funding for educational assistance pursuant to this section may be requested annually in the budget of the Missouri National Guard. Educational assistance provided pursuant to this section shall not exceed funds appropriated for that purpose]. For purposes of this subdivision, the term "eligible institution" shall mean:

(a) An approved public institution or an approved private institution, as those terms are defined in section 173.1102; or

(b) Any institution of postsecondary education that is required by law to be, and currently is, certified to operate by the coordinating board for higher education; that is institutionally accredited by an accrediting commission

recognized by the United States Department of Education; that has operated continuously in this state for five or more years; that has no more than fifty percent of its students in correspondence programs; and that offers a one-year or two-year certificate, associate or baccalaureate degree programs, or graduate or professional degree programs.

2. (1) Educational assistance provided under this section shall not exceed the [least] lesser of the following:

[(1)] (a) The actual tuition, as defined in section 173.260, charged at an approved institution where the [individual] member is enrolled or accepted for enrollment; or

[(2)] (b) The [amount] product of the number of credit hours taken multiplied by the average tuition cost per credit hour charged to a Missouri resident at the University of Missouri for attendance[/]; with such average cost determined by the Missouri National Guard.

[(3)] (2) The grants provided under this section may be prorated subject to appropriations in an amount no less than fifty percent of the limits set forth in this [section] subsection.

3. (1) For either type of educational assistance described in this section, a member of the Missouri National Guard [seeking educational assistance pursuant to this section] may apply to the appropriate office of the Missouri National Guard before each semester. The member shall:

(a) Provide a certificate of satisfactory service of his or her Missouri National Guard duties from his or her commanding officer [and shall];

(b) Possess all other necessary entrance requirements of the school of his or her choice [and shall maintain];

(c) Provide proof of maintaining a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of at least two point five on a [four

[point] four-point scale, or the equivalent on another scale approved by the program administrator, while attending the approved public or private institution;

(e) Have not yet earned a baccalaureate degree; and

(d) Have completed and submitted a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) for the academic term for which educational assistance is requested.

(2) For the tuition and fee waiver, the waiver shall be awarded if the member applies and is otherwise eligible pursuant to this section and shall be awarded only after the Missouri National Guard has distributed any moneys available for the member through the state tuition assistance program.

4. If the grade point average of a member who is receiving educational assistance pursuant to this section falls below two point five on a [four point] four-point scale, or the equivalent on another scale, such member shall retain the educational assistance and shall be placed on probation under the educational assistance program. Failure to achieve a current grade point average of at least two point five on a [four point] four-point scale or the equivalent on another scale for future semesters or equivalent academic terms shall result in termination of the [scholarship] educational assistance effective as of the next academic term. The member shall be removed from probation status upon achieving a cumulative grade point average of two point five on a [four point] four-point scale or the equivalent on another scale.

5. For the tuition and fee waiver, an applicant shall cease to be eligible if his or her total completed credit hours exceeds one hundred twenty credit hours. This limitation applies to credit hours earned either with the educational assistance described in this section or credit

earned outside of the educational assistance described in this section.

6. The tuition and fee waiver shall not be available in fiscal years in which the percentage of the total program costs covered by the state appropriation for the educational assistance pursuant to this section has decreased compared to the previous fiscal year.

7. If a recipient of either type of educational assistance pursuant to this section ceases to maintain their active military affiliation while enrolled in an academic semester or term for any reason except death, disability, or medical disqualification the educational assistance shall be terminated and the recipient shall repay any amounts awarded or waived for the academic semester or term.

[6. Applicants for educational assistance pursuant to this section shall meet the qualifications established by section 173.215, except the provisions of subdivisions (2) and (4) of subsection 1 of section 173.215, and shall be qualified, full-time or part-time students.

7.] 8. The educational assistance program established pursuant to this section shall be administered by the office of the adjutant general of the Missouri National Guard. The Missouri National Guard shall establish guidelines for equitable administrative distribution of educational assistance.

9. For purposes of this section, the terms "fee" and "fees" mean any mandatory fees charged by an institution to all full-time students as a condition of enrollment.

173.685. 1. As used in this section, the following terms mean:

(1) "Approved institution", any approved private institution, approved public institution, or approved virtual institution, as such terms are defined in section

173.1102, that is located in this state, has been approved under 6 CSR 10-2.140, and has been approved to participate in the federal student financial assistance programs created under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended;

(2) "CGPA", a student's cumulative grade point average as calculated based on the policies of the student's approved institution as such policies are applied to other students in similar circumstances;

(3) "Department", the department of higher education and workforce development;

(4) "Initial recipient", a student who qualifies for initial financial assistance under section 173.1104, has received an award under the access Missouri financial assistance program established in sections 173.1101 to 173.1107, and has not received a STEM grant in any prior academic year;

(5) "Renewal recipient", a student who qualifies for renewed financial assistance under section 173.1104, has received an award under the access Missouri financial assistance program established in sections 173.1101 to 173.1107, and has received a STEM grant;

(6) "Satisfactory academic progress":

(a) For a student's grade point average, a CGPA of at least two and one-half on a four-point scale or the equivalent on another scale; and

(b) For determinations of academic progress other than grade point average, the institution's measures of a student's academic progress as otherwise determined by the approved institution's policies as applied to other students at the approved institution receiving assistance from federal student financial assistance programs created under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended;

(7) "STEM degree", an associate's degree, bachelor's degree, or certificate in a STEM field;

(8) "STEM field", a field of study involving science, technology, engineering, or mathematics including, but not limited to:

(a) Agriculture and related sciences;

(b) Computer science;

(c) Information technology and information systems;

(d) STEM-related education;

(e) Engineering;

(f) Biological and biomedical sciences;

(g) Mathematics and statistics; and

(h) Physical sciences;

(9) "STEM grant", a renewable award of five hundred dollars of financial assistance granted under this section.

2. Subject to appropriation, the department shall make available a STEM grant to a student of an approved institution who is an initial recipient or a renewal recipient and who has committed to a program of study that will result in a STEM degree at an approved institution as provided in this section. No student shall receive more than two thousand dollars of STEM grants under this section.

3. A renewal recipient may continue to receive a STEM grant as long as such recipient:

(1) Maintains satisfactory academic progress;

(2) Continues to meet eligibility criteria under the access Missouri financial assistance program established under sections 173.1101 to 173.1107; and

(3) Has not exceeded five semesters at an approved two-year institution or a total of ten semesters or fifteen quarters at an approved four-year institution or any combination of approved institutions.



4. No STEM grant shall be awarded under this section to a student who also received an award under the access Missouri financial assistance program after:

(1) A baccalaureate degree has been granted to the student;

(2) The hours or the equivalent to the hours required for a baccalaureate degree have been completed by the student; or

(3) The student has completed coursework equal to:

(a) One hundred fifty semester hours or the equivalent; or

(b) Two hundred twenty-five quarter hours or the equivalent.

5. The department may promulgate all necessary rules and regulations for the administration of this section. Any rule or portion of a rule, as that term is defined in section 536.010, that is created under the authority delegated in this section shall become effective only if it complies with and is subject to all of the provisions of chapter 536 and, if applicable, section 536.028. This section and chapter 536 are nonseverable and if any of the powers vested with the general assembly pursuant to chapter 536 to review, to delay the effective date, or to disapprove and annul a rule are subsequently held unconstitutional, then the grant of rulemaking authority and any rule proposed or adopted after August 28, 2024, shall be invalid and void.

6. Under section 23.253 of the Missouri sunset act:

(1) The provisions of the new program authorized under this section shall automatically sunset six years after the effective date of this section unless reauthorized by an act of the general assembly; and

(2) If such program is reauthorized, the program authorized under this section shall automatically sunset

twelve years after the effective date of the reauthorization of this section; and

(3) This section shall terminate on September first of the calendar year immediately following the calendar year in which the program authorized under this section is sunset.

173.836. 1. This section shall be known and may be cited as the "Career-Tech Certificate (CTC) Program".

2. As used in this section, the following terms mean:

(1) "Approved institution", an institution of postsecondary education that is subject to the coordinating board for higher education under section 173.005, offers eligible programs of study or training programs, and is at least one of the following:

(a) A public community college or vocational or technical school as provided under subsection 8 of section 160.545;

(b) A two-year private vocational or technical school authorized to obtain reimbursements under subsection 8 of section 160.545 as provided under subsection 10 of section 160.545;

(c) An approved virtual institution, as defined in section 173.1102; or

(d) An eligible training provider;

(2) "Department", the department of higher education and workforce development;

(3) "Eligible program of study", a program of instruction for which the required length for completion of such program does not exceed the equivalent of sixty credit hours or the equivalent under a different measure of student progress and that results in the award of a non-graduate-level certificate or other industry-recognized credential below the graduate level that has been designated by the coordinating board for higher education as preparing

students to enter an area of occupational shortage as determined and updated annually by such board under subdivision (5) of subsection 2 of section 173.2553;

(4) "Eligible student", any student that meets the eligibility requirements for reimbursement of tuition, books, and fees under the "A+ Schools Program" created in section 160.545, provided that such student has not received a reimbursement for tuition, books, or fees under section 160.545;

(5) "Eligible training provider", a training organization listed in the state of Missouri eligible training provider system maintained by the office of workforce development in the department of higher education and workforce development that is not a four-year institution of higher education;

(6) "Training program", a program of study that leads to a certificate or degree and is offered by an approved institution but that does not meet the length-of-program requirements for an eligible program under 34 CFR 668.8, as amended. The term includes, but is not limited to, certified nurse assistant (CNA) programs, certified medication technician (CMT) programs, level 1 medication aide (L1MA) programs, insulin administration programs, or commercial driver's license (CDL) programs.

3. (1) Beginning in the 2025-26 academic year and all subsequent academic years, the department shall, by rule, establish a procedure for the reimbursement of the costs of tuition, books, and fees from the career-tech certificate (CTC) program fund to the approved institution at which an eligible student is enrolled in an eligible program of study or a training program.

(2) No tuition reimbursements in excess of the tuition rate charged by a public community college for coursework

offered by a two-year private vocational or technical school, approved virtual institution as defined under section 173.1102, or eligible training provider within the service area of such college shall be reimbursed under this section.

(3) (a) If a public community college or vocational or technical school offers the same or a substantially similar eligible program of study or training program as a private vocational or technical school, virtual institution, or eligible training provider at which an eligible student intends to enroll and the school or provider is located in the service region of the public community college or vocational or technical school that offers the same or similar program of study or training program, no tuition reimbursement shall be provided under this section for such eligible student unless, before the eligible student enrolls:

a. The private vocational or technical school, virtual institution, or eligible training provider requests authorization from the department for such tuition reimbursement; and

b. The department authorizes such request.

(b) The department shall:

a. Develop and adopt a tuition reimbursement authorization request form and a procedure for submitting such request;

b. Review and either authorize or deny such request within twenty business days of receiving an accurate, complete, and properly submitted request; and

c. If the department denies such request, provide the educational entity and the eligible student with the reasons for such denial.

(c) The department shall not deny a tuition reimbursement authorization request without good cause, as determined by the department on a case-by-case basis.

(4) The reimbursements provided under this section to a two-year private vocational or technical school, approved virtual institution as defined under section 173.1102, or eligible training provider shall not violate the provisions of Article IX, Section 8, or Article I, Section 7, of the Constitution of Missouri or the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

4. (1) There is hereby created in the state treasury the "Career-Tech Certificate (CTC) Program Fund", which shall consist of any moneys appropriated annually by the general assembly, gifts, bequests, grants, public or private donations, or transfers. The state treasurer shall be custodian of the fund. In accordance with sections 30.170 and 30.180, the state treasurer may approve disbursements. The fund shall be a dedicated fund and, upon appropriation, moneys in this fund shall be used solely for reimbursements as provided in this section.

(2) Notwithstanding the provisions of section 33.080 to the contrary, any moneys remaining in the fund at the end of the biennium shall not revert to the credit of the general revenue fund.

(3) The state treasurer shall invest moneys in the fund in the same manner as other funds are invested. Any interest and moneys earned on such investments shall be credited to the fund.

5. No rule promulgated by the department under this section shall prohibit students enrolled in an eligible program of study or a training program from qualifying for tuition reimbursement under this section solely because the eligible program of study or training program does not meet

the length-of-program requirements for an eligible program under 34 CFR 668.8, as amended, or because the eligible training provider at which a student enrolls does not participate in federal student aid programs.

6. Eligibility for tuition, books, and fees reimbursement to an approved institution as provided under this section shall expire upon the earliest of:

(1) Receipt of the reimbursement for the required length for completion of such program as determined by the department;

(2) A student's successful completion of an eligible program of study or training program; or

(3) A student's completion of one hundred fifty percent of the time usually required to complete an eligible program of study or training program.

7. The department may promulgate all necessary rules and regulations for the implementation and administration of this section. Any rule or portion of a rule, as that term is defined in section 536.010, that is created under the authority delegated in this section shall become effective only if it complies with and is subject to all of the provisions of chapter 536 and, if applicable, section 536.028. This section and chapter 536 are nonseverable and if any of the powers vested with the general assembly pursuant to chapter 536 to review, to delay the effective date, or to disapprove and annul a rule are subsequently held unconstitutional, then the grant of rulemaking authority and any rule proposed or adopted after August 28, 2024, shall be invalid and void.

173.1105. 1. An applicant who is an undergraduate postsecondary student at an approved private, public, or virtual institution and who meets the other eligibility

criteria shall be eligible for financial assistance, with a minimum and maximum award amount as follows:

(1) For academic years 2010-11, 2011-12, 2012-13, and 2013-14:

(a) One thousand dollars maximum and three hundred dollars minimum for students attending institutions classified as part of the public two-year sector;

(b) Two thousand one hundred fifty dollars maximum and one thousand dollars minimum for students attending institutions classified as part of the public four-year sector, including State Technical College of Missouri; and

(c) Four thousand six hundred dollars maximum and two thousand dollars minimum for students attending approved private institutions;

(2) For the 2014-15 academic year and subsequent years through the 2023-24 academic year:

(a) One thousand three hundred dollars maximum and three hundred dollars minimum for students attending institutions classified as part of the public two-year sector; and

(b) Two thousand eight hundred fifty dollars maximum and one thousand five hundred dollars minimum for students attending institutions classified as part of the public four-year sector, including State Technical College of Missouri, approved private institutions, or approved virtual institutions; and

(3) For the 2024-25 academic year and all subsequent academic years:

(a) One thousand seven hundred dollars maximum and five hundred dollars minimum for students attending institutions classified as part of the public two-year sector; and

(b) Three thousand five hundred dollars maximum and one thousand seven hundred fifty dollars minimum for students attending institutions classified as part of the public four-year sector, including State Technical College of Missouri, approved private institutions, or approved virtual institutions.

2. All students with an expected family contribution of twelve thousand dollars or less shall receive at least the minimum award amount for his or her institution. Maximum award amounts for an eligible student with an expected family contribution above seven thousand dollars shall be reduced by ten percent of the maximum expected family contribution for his or her increment group. Any award amount shall be reduced by the amount of a student's payment from the A+ schools program or any successor program to it. For purposes of this subsection, the term "increment group" shall mean a group organized by expected family contribution in five hundred dollar increments into which all eligible students shall be placed.

3. If appropriated funds are insufficient to fund the program as described, the maximum award shall be reduced across all sectors by the percentage of the shortfall. If appropriated funds exceed the amount necessary to fund the program, the additional funds shall be used to increase the number of recipients by either extending the deadline for filing an application or raising the cutoff for the expected family contribution rather than by increasing the size of the award, as determined by the department.

4. Every three years, beginning with the 2024-25 academic year **[2009-10]**, the award amount may be adjusted to increase no more than the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U), 1982-1984 = 100, not seasonally adjusted, as defined and officially recorded by the United States



Department of Labor, or its successor agency, for the previous academic year. The coordinating board shall prepare a report prior to the legislative session for use of the general assembly and the governor in determining budget requests which shall include the amount of funds necessary to maintain full funding of the program based on the baseline established for the program upon the effective date of sections 173.1101 to 173.1107. Any increase in the award amount shall not become effective unless an increase in the amount of money appropriated to the program necessary to cover the increase in award amount is passed by the general assembly.

173.1352. 1. As used in this section, the following terms mean:

(1) "Advanced placement examination", any examination administered through the College Board's Advanced Placement Program (AP);

(2) "Institution", any in-state public community college, college, or university that offers postsecondary freshman-level courses;

(3) "International baccalaureate examination", any examination for assessment purposes administered through the International Baccalaureate Organization at the end of the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme.

2. (1) Each institution shall adopt and implement a policy to grant undergraduate course credit to entering freshman students for each advanced placement examination upon which such student achieves a score of three or higher, or each international baccalaureate examination for an international baccalaureate diploma programme course upon which such student achieves a score of 4 or higher, for any similarly correlated course offered by the institution at the time of such student's acceptance into the institution.

(2) In the policy, the institution shall:

(a) Establish the institution's conditions for granting course credit; and

(b) Identify the specific course credit or other academic requirements of the institution, including the number of semester credit hours or other course credit, that the institution will grant to a student who achieves required scores on advanced placement examinations or international baccalaureate examinations.

3. On request of an applicant for admission as an entering freshman, and based on information provided by the applicant, an institution shall determine and notify the applicant regarding:

(1) The amount and type of any course credit that would be granted to the applicant under the policy; and

(2) Any other academic requirement that the applicant would satisfy under the policy.

173.2553. 1. There is hereby established a "Fast Track Workforce Incentive Grant", and any moneys appropriated by the general assembly for this program shall be deposited in the fund created in subsection 13 of this section and shall be used to provide grants for Missouri citizens to attend an approved Missouri postsecondary institution of their choice in accordance with the provisions of this section.

2. The definitions of terms set forth in section 173.1102 shall be applicable to such terms as used in this section [and section 173.2554]. In addition, the following terms shall mean:

(1) "Active apprentice status", formal participation in an apprenticeship that meets any related requirements as defined by the organization providing the apprenticeship or the United States Department of Labor;

(2) "Board", the coordinating board for higher education;

(3) "Eligible apprentice", an individual who:

(a) Is a citizen or permanent resident of the United States;

(b) Is a Missouri resident as determined by reference to standards promulgated by the coordinating board;

(c) Has active apprentice status in an eligible apprenticeship;

(d) Has an adjusted gross income as reported on their Missouri individual income tax return that does not exceed [eighty] one hundred thousand dollars for married filing joint taxpayers or [forty] fifty thousand dollars for all other taxpayers, with such caps adjusted annually beginning on January 1, 2025, based on the rate of inflation according to the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers for the United States, or its successor index, as such index is defined and officially reported by the United States Department of Labor, or its successor agency; and

(e) Is twenty-five years of age or older at the time of entering the apprenticeship or has not been enrolled in a postsecondary education program, other than one related to the current apprenticeship, for the prior two calendar years;

(4) "Eligible apprenticeship", a United States Department of Labor approved apprenticeship, as defined under 29 CFR Part 29, conducted within the state of Missouri that prepares a participant to enter employment in an area of occupational shortage as determined by the coordinating board;

(5) "Eligible program of study", a program of instruction:

(a) Resulting in the award of a certificate, undergraduate degree, or other industry-recognized credential; and

(b) That has been designated by the coordinating board as preparing students to enter an area of occupational shortage as determined by the board;

(6) "Eligible student", an individual who:

(a) Has completed and submitted a FAFSA for the academic year for which the grant is requested or if the student is enrolled, or is enrolling, with an eligible training provider that does not participate in federal student aid programs, has provided documentation of their adjusted gross income as determined by the board;

(b) Is a citizen or permanent resident of the United States;

(c) Is a Missouri resident for at least two years prior to receiving a grant pursuant to the fast track workforce incentive grant program as determined by reference to standards promulgated by the coordinating board, provided that this paragraph shall not apply to an individual who is an active duty member of the Armed Forces of the United States who has been transferred to the state of Missouri, or his or her spouse;

(d) Is enrolled, or plans to enroll, at least half-time as a student in an eligible undergraduate program of study offered by an approved public, private, or virtual institution, as defined in section 173.1102 or by an eligible training provider;

(e) Has an adjusted gross income, as reported on the FAFSA or other documentation as determined by the board, that does not exceed [eighty] one hundred thousand dollars for married filing joint taxpayers or [forty] fifty thousand dollars for all other taxpayers, with such caps adjusted

annually beginning on January 1, 2025, based on the rate of inflation according to the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers for the United States, or its successor index, as such index is defined and officially reported by the United States Department of Labor, or its successor agency; and

(f) Is twenty-five years of age or older at the time of enrollment or has not been enrolled in an educational program for the prior two academic years;

(7) "Eligible training provider", a training organization listed in the state of Missouri eligible training provider system maintained by the office of workforce development in the department of higher education and workforce development;

(8) "FAFSA", the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, as maintained by the United States Department of Education;

(9) "Fast track grant", an amount of moneys paid by the state of Missouri to a student under the provisions of this section;

(10) "Graduation", completion of a program of study as indicated by the award of a certificate, undergraduate degree, or other industry-recognized credential;

(11) "Qualifying employment", full-time employment of a Missouri resident at a workplace located within the state of Missouri, or self-employment while a Missouri resident, with at least fifty percent of an individual's annual income coming from self-employment, either of which result in required returns of income in accordance with section 143.481;

(12) "Recipient", an eligible student, an eligible apprentice, a renewal apprentice, or a renewal student who

receives a fast track grant under the provisions of this section;

(13) "Related educational costs", direct costs incurred by an individual as part of an eligible apprenticeship program, such as, but not limited to, tools, books, and uniforms;

(14) "Renewal apprentice", an eligible apprentice who remains in compliance with the provisions of this section, has received the grant as an initial apprentice, maintains active apprentice status, and who has not received a bachelor's degree;

(15) "Renewal student", an eligible student who remains in compliance with the provisions of this section, has received a grant as an initial recipient, maintains a cumulative grade point average of at least two and one-half on a four-point scale or the equivalent, makes satisfactory academic degree progress as defined by the institution, with the exception of grade point average, and has not received a bachelor's degree.

3. Standards of eligibility for renewed assistance shall be the same as for an initial award of financial assistance; except that, for a renewal student, an applicant shall demonstrate a grade point average of two and one-half on a four-point scale, or the equivalent on another scale.

4. Eligibility for a grant expires upon the earliest of:

(1) Receipt of the grant for four semesters or the equivalent;

(2) Receipt of a bachelor's degree; or

(3) For an eligible student, reaching two hundred percent of the time typically required to complete the program of study.

5. The coordinating board shall initially designate eligible programs of study by January 1, 2020, in connection with local education institutions, regional business organizations, and other stakeholders. The coordinating board shall annually review the list of eligible programs of study and occupations relating to eligible apprenticeships and make changes to the program list as it determines appropriate.

6. The coordinating board shall be the administrative agency for the implementation of the program established by this section [and section 173.2554]. The coordinating board shall promulgate reasonable rules and regulations for the exercise of its functions and the effectuation of the purposes of this section [and section 173.2554]. The coordinating board shall prescribe the form and the time and method of filing applications and supervise the processing thereof. The coordinating board shall determine the criteria for eligibility of applicants and shall evaluate each applicant's eligibility. The coordinating board shall select qualified recipients to receive grants, make such awards of financial assistance to qualified recipients, and determine the manner and method of payment to the recipients.

7. The coordinating board shall determine eligibility for renewed assistance on the basis of annual applications. As a condition to consideration for initial or renewed assistance, the coordinating board may require the applicant and the applicant's spouse to execute forms of consent authorizing the director of revenue to compare financial information submitted by the applicant with the Missouri individual income tax returns of the applicant, and the applicant's spouse, for the taxable year immediately preceding the year for which application is made, and to report any discrepancies to the coordinating board.

8. Grants shall be awarded in an amount equal to the actual tuition and general fees charged of an eligible student, after all federal nonloan aid, state student aid, and any other governmental student financial aid are applied. If a grant amount is reduced to zero due to the receipt of other aid, the eligible student shall receive an award of up to five hundred dollars or the remaining cost of attendance as calculated by the institution after all nonloan student aid has been applied, whichever is less, per academic term. Grants shall also be awarded in an amount equal to the related educational costs for an eligible apprentice after all other governmental assistance provided for the apprenticeship has been applied.

9. If appropriated funds are insufficient to fund the program as described, students and apprentices applying for renewed assistance shall be given priority until all funds are expended.

10. An eligible student that is the recipient of financial assistance may transfer from one approved public, private, or virtual institution, or eligible training provider to another without losing eligibility for assistance under this section, but the coordinating board shall make any necessary adjustments in the amount of the award. If a recipient of financial assistance at any time is entitled to a refund of any tuition or fees under the rules and regulations of the institution in which he or she is enrolled, the institution shall pay the portion of the refund that may be attributed to the grant to the coordinating board. The coordinating board shall use these refunds to make additional awards under the provisions of this section.

11. Persons who receive fast track grants under this section shall be required to submit proof of residency and



qualifying employment to the coordinating board for higher education within thirty days of completing each twelve months of qualifying employment until the three-year employment obligation is fulfilled.

12. Under section 23.253 of the Missouri sunset act:

(1) The provisions of the new program authorized under this section shall sunset automatically on August 28, 2029, unless reauthorized by an act of the general assembly; and

(2) If such program is reauthorized, the program authorized under this section shall sunset automatically six years after the effective date of the reauthorization; and

(3) This section shall terminate on December thirty-first of the calendar year immediately following the calendar year in which the program authorized under this section is sunset.

13. (1) There is hereby created in the state treasury the "Fast Track Workforce Incentive Grant Fund". The state treasurer shall be custodian of the fund. In accordance with sections 30.170 and 30.180, the state treasurer may approve disbursements. The fund shall be a dedicated fund and, upon appropriation, moneys in the fund shall be used solely by the coordinating board for the purposes of this section.

(2) Notwithstanding the provisions of section 33.080 to the contrary, any moneys remaining in the fund at the end of the biennium shall not revert to the credit of the general revenue fund.

(3) The state treasurer shall invest moneys in the fund in the same manner as other funds are invested. Any interest and moneys earned on such investments shall be credited to the fund.

14. The coordinating board shall have the authority to promulgate rules to implement the provisions of this section. Any rule or portion of a rule, as that term is

defined in section 536.010, that is created under the authority delegated in this section shall become effective only if it complies with and is subject to all of the provisions of chapter 536 and, if applicable, section 536.028. This section and chapter 536 are nonseverable and if any of the powers vested with the general assembly pursuant to chapter 536 to review, to delay the effective date, or to disapprove and annul a rule are subsequently held unconstitutional, then the grant of rulemaking authority and any rule proposed or adopted after August 28, 2019, shall be invalid and void.

178.786. 1. The coordinating board for higher education, with the assistance of an advisory committee composed of representatives from each public community college in this state and each public four-year institution of higher education, shall develop a recommended lower division core curriculum of forty-two semester credit hours, including a statement of the content, component areas, and objectives of the core curriculum. A majority of the members of the advisory committee shall be faculty members from Missouri public institutions of higher education.

2. The coordinating board shall approve a common course numbering equivalency matrix for the forty-two credit hour block at all institutions of higher education in the state to facilitate the transfer of those courses among institutions of higher education by promoting consistency in course designation and course identification. Each community college and four-year institution of higher education shall include in its course listings the applicable course numbers from the common course numbering equivalency matrix approved by the coordinating board under this subsection.

3. The coordinating board shall complete the requirements of subsections 1 and 2 of this section prior to January 1, 2018, for implementation of the core curriculum transfer recommendations for the 2018-19 academic year for all public institutions of higher education.

4. The coordinating board, with the assistance of an advisory committee composed of representatives from each public community college in this state and each public four-year institution of higher education, shall approve a sixty-credit-hour transferable lower-division courses and common course numbering equivalency matrix for at least five degree programs with substantial enrollment. The coordinating board shall be responsible for determining applicable programs of study under this section. Such lower division program guides shall facilitate the transfer of such courses among public institutions of higher education by promoting consistency in course designation and course identification. Each public community college and public four-year institution of higher education, offering the approved degree programs, shall include in its programs of study the sixty-hour program equivalency matrix approved by the coordinating board under this subsection.

5. The coordinating board shall complete the requirements of subsection 4 of this section prior to June 30, 2026, for implementation of the transferable lower-division courses of at least five programs of study for the 2027-28 academic year for all public institutions of higher education.

178.787. 1. Each community college, as defined in section 163.191, and public four-year institution of higher education shall adopt the forty-two credit hour block, including specific courses comprising the curriculum, based on the core curriculum recommendations made by the

coordinating board for higher education under subsections 1 and 2 of section 178.786, for implementation beginning in the 2018-19 academic year.

2. If a student successfully completes the forty-two credit core curriculum at a community college or other public institution of higher education, that block of courses may be transferred to any other public institution of higher education in this state and shall be substituted for the receiving institution's core curriculum. A student shall receive academic credit for each of the courses transferred and shall not be required to take additional core curriculum courses at the receiving institution.

3. A student who transfers from one public institution of higher education to another public institution of higher education in the state without completing the core curriculum of the sending institution shall receive academic credit from the receiving institution for each of the courses that the student has successfully completed in the core curriculum of the sending institution. Following receipt of credit for these courses, the student may be required to satisfy further course requirements in the core curriculum of the receiving institution.

4. Each community college, as defined in section 163.191, and public four-year institution of higher education shall adopt the transferable lower-division courses and common course numbering equivalency matrix for the five or more degree programs selected under subsection 4 of section 178.786, including specific courses constituting the curriculum, based on the core curriculum recommendations made by the coordinating board for higher education under subsection 4 of section 178.786, for implementation beginning in the 2027-28 academic year. No institution of higher education shall be required to adopt the lower-

division courses for degree programs not offered at the institution.

5. If a student successfully completes the program-specific transferable lower-division courses at a community college or other public institution of higher education, such block of courses may be transferred to any other public institution of higher education in this state and shall be substituted for the receiving institution's core curriculum for the same degree program. A student shall receive academic credit toward the student's degree for each of the courses transferred and shall not be required to take additional core curriculum courses at the receiving institution for the same degree program.

6. A student who transfers from one public institution of higher education to another public institution of higher education in the state without completing the transferable lower division coursework curriculum of the sending institution shall receive academic credit toward the same degree program from the receiving institution for each of the courses that the student has successfully completed in the core curriculum of the sending institution. Following receipt of credit for these courses, the student may be required to satisfy further course requirements in the core curriculum of the receiving institution.

7. The coordinating board shall report to the house higher education committee and the senate education committee on progress related to the requirements of subsections 4 and 5 of section 178.786 and subsections 4, 5, and 6 of this section prior to December 31, 2025.