

LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA
ONE HUNDRED NINTH LEGISLATURE
SECOND SESSION

LEGISLATIVE BILL 1247

Introduced by Dover, 19.

Read first time January 21, 2026

Committee:

1 A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to the Nebraska Career Scholarship Act; to
2 amend section 85-3005, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, and
3 sections 85-3003 and 85-3004, Revised Statutes Supplement, 2025; to
4 require participation in the Nebraska Statewide Workforce and
5 Education Reporting System by postsecondary institutions as
6 prescribed; and to repeal the original sections.

7 Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

1 **Section 1.** Section 85-3003, Revised Statutes Supplement, 2025, is
2 amended to read:

3 85-3003 (1)(a) The Board of Trustees of the Nebraska State Colleges
4 shall award a Nebraska Career Scholarship that does not exceed a maximum
5 of fifteen thousand dollars per year to any eligible state college
6 student (i) who achieved a composite score on a standard college
7 admission test equivalent to a score of at least eighteen out of a
8 maximum score of thirty-six or an equivalent score on the SAT® or who had
9 a high school grade-point average of 3.0 or greater on a four-point scale
10 and (ii) who is enrolled in an eligible program of study.

11 (b) The Board of Trustees of the Nebraska State Colleges shall
12 allocate funds appropriated to the board under the Nebraska Career
13 Scholarship Act between the state college campuses, determine the
14 eligibility of students enrolled in a state college, receive and process
15 applications for awards to individual students, and disburse funds
16 directly to scholarship recipients during the fiscal year. Eligibility
17 criteria shall include being a first-time freshman or a transfer student
18 and enrollment in an eligible program of study.

19 (c) For purposes of this section, an eligible program of study
20 includes the following:

21 (i) A program of study at a state college in rangeland management,
22 industrial technology, criminal justice, business administration,
23 education, communication, the Reserve Officers' Training Corps, or
24 computer information systems; and

25 (ii) Beginning with academic year 2024-25, a program of study
26 designated by the Department of Economic Development, in collaboration
27 with the Board of Trustees of the Nebraska State Colleges, based on
28 periodic reviews of workforce needs in the state.

29 (2) Each scholarship recipient shall register with the appropriate
30 campus office to obtain a Nebraska-based internship, apprenticeship,
31 clinical position, or employment in a major-related field prior to

1 completion of the student's eligible program of study.

2 (3) A Nebraska Career Scholarship may be used by a scholarship
3 recipient for tuition, fees, required tools and equipment, and room and
4 board.

5 (4) Each scholarship awarded under this section shall be
6 automatically renewed on an annual basis if the student remains enrolled
7 in good standing in the eligible program of study for which such
8 scholarship was awarded, except that no student shall receive a
9 scholarship renewal after four years of participation in such eligible
10 program of study.

11 (5) The Board of Trustees of the Nebraska State Colleges shall
12 collect information on each state college scholarship recipient and shall
13 report electronically to the Clerk of the Legislature and the Governor on
14 or before December 1 of each year the following information for the
15 eligible programs of study at a state college in the current or prior
16 academic year:

17 (a) The total number of students enrolled in each eligible program
18 of study in the immediately prior academic year and the total number of
19 students enrolled in each eligible program of study for the current
20 academic year, based upon official fall census data;

21 (b) The total number of scholarship recipients in each eligible
22 program of study for the current academic year and the total number of
23 such scholarship recipients who are newly enrolled in each eligible
24 program of study for such academic year, based upon official fall census
25 data;

26 (c) The total number of newly awarded scholarship recipients
27 retained across all eligible programs of study from the immediately prior
28 academic year to the current academic year and a comparison of the
29 retention rates between those of the newly awarded scholarship recipients
30 and the state college's overall first to second year retention rate
31 reported to the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System for the

1 same year;

2 (d) The total number of scholarship recipients who graduated during
3 the immediately prior academic year and a comparison of the four-year
4 graduation rates between the scholarship recipients who graduated and the
5 state college's overall four-year graduate rate reported to the
6 Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System for the same year; and

7 (e) The number and percent of scholarship recipients who graduated
8 during the immediately prior calendar year who obtained employment in a
9 major-related field in the state.

10 (6) The Board of Trustees of the Nebraska State Colleges shall not
11 allocate any funds under the Nebraska Career Scholarship Act to any state
12 college campus that does not fully comply with the requirements of any
13 memorandum of understanding under section 85-309 or subsequent agreement
14 entered into by the Board of Trustees to submit data to the Nebraska
15 Statewide Workforce and Education Reporting System.

16 **Sec. 2.** Section 85-3004, Revised Statutes Supplement, 2025, is
17 amended to read:

18 85-3004 (1)(a) The Board of Regents of the University of Nebraska
19 shall award a Nebraska Career Scholarship to any eligible university
20 student who is enrolled in an eligible program of study in an amount not
21 to exceed:

22 (i) Ten thousand dollars per year for any scholarship recipient who
23 is a transfer student; or

24 (ii) Except as provided in subdivision (1)(a)(i) of this section:

25 (A) Twenty-five thousand dollars per year for any scholarship
26 recipient who achieved a composite score on a standard college admission
27 test equivalent to a score of at least twenty-eight out of a maximum
28 score of thirty-six or an equivalent score on the SAT®; or

29 (B) Ten thousand dollars per year for any scholarship recipient who
30 achieved a composite score on a standard college admission test
31 equivalent to a score of at least twenty and less than twenty-eight out

1 of a maximum score of thirty-six or an equivalent score on the SAT®.

2 (b) The Board of Regents shall allocate funds appropriated to the
3 board under the Nebraska Career Scholarship Act between the university
4 campuses, determine the eligibility of students enrolled in the
5 university, receive and process applications for awards to individual
6 students, and disburse funds directly to scholarship recipients during
7 the fiscal year. Eligibility criteria shall include (i) being a first-
8 time freshman who achieved a composite score on a standard college
9 admission test equivalent to a score of at least twenty out of a maximum
10 score of thirty-six or an equivalent score on the SAT® or a transfer
11 student and (ii) enrollment in an eligible program of study.

12 (c) For purposes of this section, an eligible program of study
13 means:

14 (i) Through academic year 2023-24, a program of study offered by the
15 University of Nebraska in mathematics, engineering, health care, and
16 computer information systems;

17 (ii) Beginning with academic year 2024-25, a program of study
18 designated by the Department of Economic Development, in collaboration
19 with the Board of Regents, based on periodic reviews of workforce needs
20 in the state; and

21 (iii) Beginning with academic year 2024-25, a program of study in
22 special education.

23 (2) Each scholarship recipient shall register with the appropriate
24 campus office to obtain a Nebraska-based internship, apprenticeship,
25 clinical position, or employment in a major-related field prior to
26 completion of the student's eligible program of study.

27 (3) A Nebraska Career Scholarship may be used by a scholarship
28 recipient for tuition, fees, required tools and equipment, and room and
29 board.

30 (4) Each scholarship awarded under this section shall be
31 automatically renewed on an annual basis if the student remains enrolled

1 in good standing in the eligible program of study for which such
2 scholarship was awarded, except that no student shall receive a
3 scholarship renewal after four years of participation in such eligible
4 program of study.

5 (5) The Board of Regents shall collect information on each
6 university scholarship recipient and shall report electronically to the
7 Clerk of the Legislature and the Governor on or before December 1 of each
8 year the following information for the eligible programs of study at the
9 university in the current or prior academic year:

10 (a) The total number of students enrolled in each eligible program
11 of study in the immediately prior academic year and the total number of
12 students enrolled in each eligible program of study for the current
13 academic year, based upon official fall census data;

14 (b) The total number of scholarship recipients in each eligible
15 program of study for the current academic year and the total number of
16 such scholarship recipients who are newly enrolled in each eligible
17 program of study for such academic year, based upon official fall census
18 data;

19 (c) The total number of newly awarded scholarship recipients
20 retained across all eligible programs of study from the immediately prior
21 academic year to the current academic year and a comparison of the
22 retention rates between those of the newly awarded scholarship recipients
23 and the university's overall first to second year retention rate reported
24 to the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System for the same year;

25 (d) The total number of scholarship recipients who graduated during
26 the immediately prior academic year and a comparison of the four-year
27 graduation rates between the scholarship recipients who graduated and the
28 university's overall four-year graduate rate reported to the Integrated
29 Postsecondary Education Data System for the same year; and

30 (e) The number and percent of scholarship recipients who graduated
31 during the immediately prior calendar year who obtained employment in a

1 major-related field in the state.

2 (6) The Board of Regents shall not allocate any funds under the
3 Nebraska Career Scholarship Act to any university campus that does not
4 fully comply with the requirements of any memorandum of understanding
5 under section 85-110 or subsequent agreement entered into by the Board of
6 Regents to submit data to the Nebraska Statewide Workforce and Education
7 Reporting System.

8 **Sec. 3.** Section 85-3005, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is
9 amended to read:

10 85-3005 (1)(a) The Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary
11 Education, in collaboration with the community colleges, shall award a
12 Nebraska Career Scholarship that does not exceed a maximum of fifteen
13 thousand dollars per year to any eligible community college student who
14 is enrolled in an eligible program of study in an identified shortage
15 area or skilled trade that meets the workforce needs of the state.

16 (b) The Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education, in
17 consultation with the State Department of Education, the Department of
18 Labor, the Department of Economic Development, and any advisory committee
19 established by the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education
20 for such purpose, shall identify shortage areas and skilled trades that
21 meet workforce needs for purposes of this section and shall periodically
22 review and revise the identification of such shortage areas and skilled
23 trades.

24 (c) For purposes of this section, an eligible program of study means
25 a program of study offered by a community college in a shortage area or
26 skilled trade identified pursuant to subdivision (b) of this subsection.

27 (d) Each community college area, acting as an agent of the state,
28 shall determine the eligibility of students enrolled in the community
29 college, receive and process applications for awards to individual
30 students, and disburse funds directly to scholarship recipients during
31 the fiscal year. Eligibility criteria shall include being a first-time

1 freshman or a transfer student and enrollment in an eligible program of
2 study.

3 (2) Each scholarship recipient enrolled in more than a one-semester
4 or sixteen-credit-hour program of study shall register with the
5 appropriate campus office to obtain a Nebraska-based internship,
6 apprenticeship, clinical position, experiential learning activity, or
7 employment in a major-related field prior to completion of the student's
8 eligible program of study.

9 (3) A Nebraska Career Scholarship may be used by the scholarship
10 recipient for tuition, fees, required tools and equipment, and room and
11 board.

12 (4) Each scholarship awarded under this section shall be
13 automatically renewed on an annual basis if the student remains enrolled
14 in good standing in the eligible program of study for which such
15 scholarship was awarded, except that no student shall receive a
16 scholarship renewal after three years of participation in such eligible
17 program of study.

18 (5) Each community college area shall collect information on each
19 scholarship recipient who has been awarded a Nebraska Career Scholarship
20 by such community college area and shall share such information with the
21 Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education.

22 (6) The Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education shall
23 report electronically to the Clerk of the Legislature and the Governor on
24 or before December 1 of each year the following information:

25 (a) For each eligible program of study at a community college in the
26 current or prior academic year:

27 (i) The total number of students enrolled in the program in the
28 immediately prior academic year and the total number of students enrolled
29 in the program as of the most recent census date for the community
30 college area; and

31 (ii) The total number of scholarship recipients in the program as of

1 the most recent census date for the community college area;

2 (b) The first to second year retention rate of new scholarship
3 recipients for all eligible programs of study from the immediately prior
4 academic year as compared to the community college's overall first to
5 second year retention rate as reported to the Integrated Postsecondary
6 Education Data System for the same year;

7 (c) The total number of first-time freshman scholarship recipients
8 who complete the program of study by earning the certificate, diploma, or
9 degree that signifies completion and a comparison of the on-time
10 completion rate for scholarship recipients to the overall on-time
11 completion rate for all first-time freshman students; and

12 (d) The number of scholarship recipients obtaining employment in the
13 state within five fiscal quarters of completion of an eligible program of
14 study using Department of Labor data.

15 (7) The Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education shall
16 allocate to community colleges the amount appropriated to the commission
17 to carry out this section. The commission shall establish a separate
18 budget subprogram for such allocation.

19 (8) The Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education shall
20 not allocate any funds under the Nebraska Career Scholarship Act to any
21 community college area that does not fully comply with the requirements
22 of any memorandum of understanding under section 85-1511 or subsequent
23 agreement entered into by the board of governors of such community
24 college area to submit data to the Nebraska Statewide Workforce and
25 Education Reporting System.

26 Sec. 4. Original section 85-3005, Reissue Revised Statutes of
27 Nebraska, and sections 85-3003 and 85-3004, Revised Statutes Supplement,
28 2025, are repealed.