

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.