

Meeting of the
OKLAHOMA STATE REGENTS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION
October 19, 2017

AGENDA ITEM #14-b:

Policy

SUBJECT: Oklahoma's Promise – Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Program Proposed Rule Revisions

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the State Regents post proposed permanent rule revisions for the Oklahoma's Promise – Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Program (Oklahoma's Promise) and initiate the process for adoption of permanent rule revisions as described below.

BACKGROUND:

Oklahoma's Promise was created in 1992. Students must enroll in the program in the 8th, 9th, or 10th grade. The program requires students to complete a 17-unit core curriculum, achieve at least a 2.50 GPA in the core curriculum and a 2.50 GPA overall, attend school regularly, and refrain from drug abuse or delinquent acts. Students completing the requirements qualify for a scholarship equal to public college tuition. Participation is limited to students from families with an income of \$55,000 or less at the time of application to the program. The student's family income must also not exceed \$100,000 when the student begins college. SB 529 of the 2017 legislative session made several significant changes to the program which are described in the Analysis section below.

POLICY ISSUES:

Oklahoma's Promise plays an important role in the efforts of Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education to increase the number of college graduates in Oklahoma. The program is designed as an incentive to encourage more students to aspire for college, prepare themselves for academic success in college, and to provide them with financial assistance for college expenses.

ANALYSIS:

The proposed rule revisions are primarily related to statutory changes made in SB 529 that was passed during the 2017 legislative session. The changes related to SB 529 include:

Increasing the Application Income Limit: The income limit at the time of application in the 8th-10th grades is increased from \$50,000 to \$55,000 effective for 2017-2018. In addition, the definition of "income" is changed from "taxable and nontaxable" to "federal adjusted gross income" (AGI). The bill further increases the income limit to \$60,000 AGI beginning in 2021-2022. The change to \$55,000 is estimated to increase the percentage of Oklahoma families eligible to participate in the program from forty percent to forty-five percent and could potentially add 800-1000 participants to each high school

graduating class of students. The first high school students enrolling under the new higher income limit will graduate in 2020. Consequently, the first year of fiscal impact for this change will be FY 2020-2021.

Applying the Second Income Limit Each Year in College: Beginning in 2018-19, the \$100,000 second income limit will be checked each year the student is in college. Previously, the second income limit was checked only one time when the student started college. In 2018-2019, there will be no “grandfathering” of students who were already enrolled in college. Recent data indicates that 350-400 Oklahoma’s Promise college students in their sophomore through senior years have incomes over \$100,000 and will be disqualified. In addition, about five percent of Oklahoma’s Promise college students in their sophomore through senior years currently do not complete the federal financial aid application (FAFSA – Free Application for Federal Student Aid) which is used to verify income. These students will be required to complete the FAFSA and if their income is over \$100,000 will be disqualified. This change is expected to save approximately \$1.5 million per year.

Eliminating Award Payment for Remedial Courses: Beginning with the 2018-2019 academic year, the program will no longer pay for noncredit remedial courses. Two recent initiatives should help address student remedial needs.

- Many colleges and universities are moving toward addressing student remediation needs through credit-earning co-requisite courses that allow the student to earn college credit while simultaneously receiving the supplemental academic services they need.
- The Oklahoma State Department of Education, in partnership with the State Regents, the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education, and the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), is implementing a College Career Math Ready course for high school seniors who intend to go to college and who have already completed Algebra 1, Geometry, and Algebra II, but have scored below a 19 on the math section of the ACT test.

Capping the Number of Credit Hours for which the Scholarship Will Pay in College: SB 529 requires the State Regents to establish a maximum limit on the number of courses (credit hours or other postsecondary units) to which the scholarship will apply. Beginning with students graduating high school in 2017-18, the proposed revisions would set a general limit of 129 credit hours with exceptions granted for students enrolled in degree programs that require more than 129 credit hours (including first-time professional degrees that do not require an undergraduate degree, such as pharmacy). Following is additional information related to this recommendation.

- Most undergraduate degrees require either 120 credit hours (about thirty percent) or 124 credit hours (about fifty percent). The 129 credit hour limit will provide a limited amount of flexibility for students who change majors during their college career.
- About ten percent of college degrees require in excess of 129 credit hours. These include many engineering degrees and education degrees specializing in science and music. Some undergraduate architectural engineering programs require up to 157 credit hours.
- Data from Complete College America shows that, on average, students completing bachelor degrees take about five years and complete about 135 credit hours.

- Oklahoma’s Promise program data shows that about one percent of award expenditures is for courses taken after a student has accumulated 150 credit hours.
- Following are some comparisons of the recommendation for Oklahoma’s Promise to other scholarship and grant programs.

Program	Years of Award Eligibility	Credit Hour Limit
OKPromise (recommended)	5 years	129 credit hours or actual degree hours
Indiana 21 st Century Scholars (similar to OKPromise)	8 years	Award limited to equivalent of 4 yrs. of enrollment
Washington College Bound (similar to OKPromise)	5 years	Equivalent of 4 years
Federal Pell Grant (need-based)	6 years (150% of 4-yr degree)	180 credit hours (150% of 120 hr. degree)
Georgia HOPE Scholarship (merit scholarship)	7 years	127 credit hours
Louisiana TOPS Scholarship (merit scholarship)	4 years (8 semesters)	Continuous enrollment required
Tennessee HOPE Scholarship (merit scholarship)	5 years	120 credit hours or actual degree hours up to 136 hours
Complete College America Average for Bachelor’s Degree	5 years	135 credit hours

- The proposed limit would not include college credit hours earned by the student, but not paid for by Oklahoma’s Promise, including high school concurrent enrollment, Advanced Placement, College-Level Examination Program (CLEP), etc.

Authorizing More Postsecondary Career Technology Programs: SB 529 expands the number of programs at career technology centers for which the Oklahoma’s Promise award may be used. Previously, the statute limited participation to only career technology programs offered within a cooperative agreement between a technology center and a state system college. The new statute authorizes the award to be used for any career technology program that is eligible to participate in federal student financial aid programs. This change makes the Oklahoma’s Promise award consistent with other state and federal financial aid such as the Oklahoma Tuition Aid Grant (OTAG) and the federal Pell Grant. It is estimated that the change will increase the number of Oklahoma’s Promise award recipients at career technology centers by about 100.

Aligning Scholarship Retention Requirements with Institution Degree-Completion Standards: SB 529 replaces a unique and confusing statutory college GPA requirement with the requirement that the student meet the institution’s academic retention and degree-completion standards. The previous statute required students to achieve at least a 2.5 GPA calculated only on courses taken after the student had accumulated 60 credit hours. Since this GPA was different from the student’s cumulative GPA as shown on their transcript, it was difficult and cumbersome for students to monitor.

Title 610 - State Regents for Higher Education

Chapter 25 - Student Financial Aid and Scholarships

Subchapter 23 – Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Program

610:25-23-1. Purpose

The Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Program, created by the Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Act passed in 1992 (70 O.S. § 2601 et seq.), is designed to help provide access to postsecondary education opportunities for students with financial need who have demonstrated a commitment to academic success in high school. The program shall also be known as "Oklahoma's Promise". The Act identifies two primary purposes:

- (1) The first is to ensure that students who satisfy the requirements of the program, and who pursue an associate or baccalaureate degree in Oklahoma at an accredited public or private institution, or pursue studies in a postsecondary career technology program or course offered through a cooperative agreement between a public technology center and an institution of The Oklahoma State System for Higher Education that meets the requirements to be eligible for federal student aid and is offered by a technology center school supervised by the State Board of Career and Technology Education, are relieved of the burden of paying:
 - (A) undergraduate resident nonguaranteed tuition at institutions of The Oklahoma State System for Higher Education;
 - (B) tuition for enrollment in postsecondary programs or courses of a public technology center, not to exceed the amount the student would have received for comparable enrollment at a two-year institution within The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education; or
 - (C) some portion of fees or tuition at a private institution of higher education in Oklahoma accredited pursuant to 70 O.S. § 4103.
- (2) The further purpose of the program is to establish and maintain a variety of support services whereby a broader range of the general student population of this state will be prepared for success in postsecondary endeavors. [70 O.S. § 2602]

610:25-23-2. Eligibility of participants

Eligibility to participate in the program must be established by both the student and his/her parent(s), custodial parent(s), or guardian(s). Students enrolled in the eighth, ninth or tenth grade at a public or private school and whose parents' income meets the financial need criteria are eligible to apply to become a program participant. Students educated by other means who are between the ages of thirteen (13) and fifteen (15) are eligible to apply to become a program participant. Eligibility requirements to participate in the program include the following:

- (1) The student must be a resident of the state of Oklahoma or be enrolled in a school district located in this state that serves students who reside in both this state and an adjacent state pursuant to a contract as authorized in Section 5-117.1 of Title 70 of the Oklahoma Statutes; and
- (2) The student's parent(s), custodial parent(s), or guardian(s) must establish financial need.
 - (A) To meet the program's financial need criteria, the income of the student's parent(s) from taxable and nontaxable sources shall not exceed \$50,000 per year at the time the student applies for participation in the program. Beginning in 2017-2018, the federal adjusted gross income of the student's parent(s) shall not exceed \$55,000 per year at the time the student applies for participation in the program. Beginning in 2021-2022, the federal adjusted gross income of the student's parent(s) shall not exceed \$60,000 per year at the time the student applies for participation in the program. A student who was adopted while in the permanent custody of the Department of Human Services, in the court-ordered custody of a licensed private nonprofit

child-placing agency, or federally recognized Indian tribe, as defined by the federal Indian Child Welfare Act, shall not be subject to the determination of financial qualification at the time the student applies for participation in the program.

(B) Parents of students making application to the program must use one of the following options to establish financial need eligibility:

(i) Documentation of their most recent calendar (tax) year income. Parents of tenth-grade applicants may use the calendar (tax) year income that coincides with the spring semester of the tenth-grade if the application is submitted by the required deadline; or

(ii) Documentation of current yearly income from an officially approved application for free or reduced price school meals or other state or federal means-tested programs as determined by the State Regents. The State Regents may limit use of this option to pilot projects as determined by the State Regents. If requested by the State Regents, parents may be required to provide additional documentation of income.

(iii) The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education shall review the determination of financial need eligibility of the student as set forth in section (2)(A) above if the income from taxable and nontaxable sources of the student's parent(s) includes income received from nontaxable military benefits or income received from the federal Social Security Administration due to the death or disability of the student's parent(s). If the income ~~from taxable and nontaxable sources~~ of the student's parent(s), excluding income received from nontaxable military benefits or income received from the federal Social Security Administration due to the death or disability of the student's parent(s), does not exceed the limitations set forth in section (2)(A) above, Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000.00) per year, the student shall be determined to have met the financial need eligibility [70 O.S. § 2605(D)~~(3)~~(6)]

(C) For students that are subject to court-ordered joint custody arrangements, the OSRHE shall use guidelines consistent with regulations for federal Title IV student financial aid programs to determine which parent(s) shall meet the financial need criteria.

610:25-23-3. Applications [no changes]

610:25-23-4. Program requirements [no changes]

610:25-23-5. Securing Program benefits

(a) To qualify for the program benefits for the first semester or other academic unit of postsecondary enrollment, the participant must:

(1) Be a resident of this state both at the time of application to the program and at the time the student graduates from high school, or have been enrolled in a school district located in this state that serves students who reside in both this state and an adjacent state pursuant to a contract as authorized in Section 5-117.1 of Title 70 of the Oklahoma Statutes.

(2) Have graduated within the previous three (3) calendar years from a high school or other educational program if homeschooled. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education (OSRHE) may award benefits for a student's first semester or other academic unit of postsecondary enrollment taken more than three (3) calendar years after the student graduates from high school, or other educational program if homeschooled, if the student is a member of the Armed Forces of the United States, the Reserve Corps of the Armed Forces of the United States, or the Oklahoma National Guard, and is ordered to active duty or active duty for special work or training and due to the duty commitment the student is unable to enroll prior to the end of the three-year period. Such three-year period shall be extended by the length of the term of duty.

- (3) Have a record of satisfactory compliance with the agreements and program requirements described in 610:25-23-4. Students failing to comply with the agreement and program requirements shall not be eligible for awards. Compliance shall be verified by the local contact person upon a form provided by the OSRHE. Final verification of compliance shall be determined by the OSRHE. A copy of the student's final high school transcript shall be submitted by the local contact person with the student's verification form.
- (4) Have satisfied admission standards as established by the OSRHE for first-time-entering students for the appropriate type of institution (OSRHE policy on Institutional Admission and Retention) or, if attending a private institution, satisfy the admission standards determined by the private institution; provided, that no student participating in the program shall be admitted into an institution of higher education by special admission standards.
- (5) Have secured admission to, and enrolled in, an institution which is a member of The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education, a postsecondary career technology program that meets the requirements to be eligible for federal student financial aid and is offered by a technology center school supervised by the State Board of Career and Technology Education pursuant to a duly approved cooperative agreement between a public technology center and an institution of The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education, or a private institution of higher learning located within this state and accredited pursuant to Section 4103 of Title 70 of the Oklahoma Statutes.
- (6) Be a United States citizen or lawfully present in the United States. This provision shall not apply to any student that was enrolled in the program prior to the end of ~~2006-07~~ 2006-2007 school year.
- (b) For students receiving the program benefit award for the first time in 2012-2013 2012-13 and thereafter through 2017-2018, at the time the student begins postsecondary education and prior to receiving any program benefit award, the federal adjusted gross income of the student's parent(s) shall not exceed \$100,000 per year. Beginning with the 2018-2019 academic year, prior to receiving any Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Program benefit award for any year during which the student is enrolled in an eligible institution, the federal adjusted gross income of the student's parent(s) shall not exceed \$100,000 per year. The determination of financial qualification as set forth in this paragraph shall be based on the income of the student, not the income of the parent(s), if the student:
- (1) is determined to be independent of the student's parents for federal financial aid purposes,
 - (2) was in the permanent custody of the Department of Human Services at the time the student enrolled in the program, or
 - (3) was in the court-ordered custody of a federally-recognized Indian tribe, as defined by the federal Indian Child Welfare Act, at the time the student enrolled in the program.
- (c) A student who was adopted while in the permanent custody of the Department of Human Services, in the court-ordered custody of a licensed private nonprofit child-placing agency, or federally recognized Indian tribe, as defined by the federal Indian Child Welfare Act, shall be subject to the following financial qualification at the time the student begins postsecondary education and prior to receiving any program benefit award:
- (1) For a student adopted between birth and twelve (12) years of age, the federal adjusted gross income of the student's parent(s) may not exceed \$150,000 per year.
 - (2) For a student adopted between thirteen (13) and seventeen (17) years of age, the federal adjusted gross income of the student's parent(s) may not exceed \$200,000 per year.
 - (3) If the student is determined to be independent of the student's parents for federal financial aid purposes, the determination of financial qualification shall be based on the income of the student, not the income of the parent(s).
- (d) Award recipients shall apply for financial aid at the institution in which they enroll.
- (e) Beginning in 2018-2019 and thereafter, all ~~All~~ students eligible to receive the program benefit award ~~for the first time in 2012-13 and thereafter~~ must complete an application for federal student financial aid (Free Application for Federal Student Aid or FAFSA) ~~or its equivalent~~ each year the student is enrolled in postsecondary education. Students not eligible to complete the FAFSA ~~will~~ may be provided an alternate method by the OSRHE. Income information submitted through the FAFSA, ~~or an alternate method if~~

~~necessary~~, shall be used to determine compliance with the income limits described in sections (b) and (c) above. Any falsified or incomplete information submitted by the student or parent(s) may result in the student's disqualification from the program.

(f) Any person incarcerated in a state, federal, or private correctional facility shall not be eligible to receive program benefits.

610:25-23-6. Retaining eligibility in postsecondary education

(a) To retain eligibility for program benefits while pursuing a program of higher learning in an institution of The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education, the student shall maintain good academic standing and satisfactory academic progress according to standards of the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education (OSRHE). Students attending an eligible private institution shall maintain good academic standing and satisfactory academic progress according to the standards of the institution in which they are enrolled. [70 O.S. § 2603; OSRHE policy on Institutional Admission and Retention]

(b) Effective January 1, 2008, any student receiving the program benefit award that is expelled or suspended for more than one semester from an institution of higher education for conduct reasons shall permanently lose eligibility for program benefits.

(c) Students shall meet the requirements for retention and degree completion as established by the institution in which the student is enrolled. [70 O.S. § 2603] ~~For students receiving the program benefit award for the first time in 2012-13 and thereafter, the student must achieve a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.00 on a 4.00 scale or its equivalent for courses taken through the student's sophomore year and achieve a minimum grade point average of 2.50 on a 4.00 scale or its equivalent for courses taken during the student's junior year and thereafter.~~

~~(1) Any Oklahoma's Promise student with a cumulative grade point average of less than 2.00 upon the completion of sixty (60) earned semester credit hours, or its equivalent, shall permanently lose eligibility for program benefits. The cumulative grade point average at the end of the enrollment period during which the student completes their sixtieth (60th) earned semester credit hour, or its equivalent, shall be calculated by the institution in which the student is enrolled to determine compliance with this provision. The institution shall notify the OSRHE if the student fails to meet this requirement.~~

~~(2) To remain eligible for the award, an Oklahoma's Promise student must also achieve a 2.50 cumulative grade point average for courses taken after the completion of sixty (60) earned semester credit hours, or its equivalent. The first check of this grade point average requirement will be conducted by the institution in which the student is enrolled at the end of the enrollment period during which the student completes their ninetieth (90th) earned semester credit hour, or its equivalent. The grade point average calculation shall include all earned semester credit hours, or their equivalent, starting with the enrollment period immediately following the enrollment period during which the student completed their sixtieth (60th) earned semester credit hour, or its equivalent. Thereafter, the institution in which the student is enrolled shall check the cumulative grade point average for courses taken after the completion of sixty (60) earned semester credit hours, or its equivalent, at the end of each enrollment period. Any student whose cumulative grade point average at the required check points is below 2.50, shall be ineligible for program benefits until the cumulative grade point average for courses taken after the completion of sixty (60) earned semester credit hours or its equivalent is raised to 2.50 or above. Any period of ineligibility for failure to meet the requirements of this provision shall count against the student's maximum time period of award eligibility.~~

~~(3) For institutions within the Oklahoma State System of Higher Education, the student's grade point average shall be calculated using the methodology defined as "Cumulative Grade Point Average" in the OSRHE policy on grading.~~

(d) Beginning in 2012-2013 ~~2012-13~~, all Oklahoma's Promise students receiving the award in college will be required to meet federal satisfactory academic progress (SAP) standards as defined by the institution in which they are enrolled. This requirement is ~~in addition to the statutory GPA requirement~~

~~described in section (e) above and~~ will apply to all Oklahoma's Promise award recipients whether or not they are receiving federal student financial aid. Any Oklahoma's Promise student that is ineligible to receive federal financial aid due to failure to meet SAP standards will also be ineligible to receive the Oklahoma's Promise award.

610:25-23-7. Payment of awards; policies and limitations

(a) Eligible students enrolled at an institution in The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education shall have an award equivalent to their undergraduate resident nonguaranteed tuition paid to the institution on the student's behalf by an allocation from the Oklahoma Higher Learning Trust Fund [70 O.S. § 3953.1];

(b) Eligible students enrolled in a duly accredited private Oklahoma institution of higher education [70 O.S. § 4103] shall have awards paid to the institution on the student's behalf by an allocation from the Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Trust Fund in an amount equivalent to the average undergraduate resident nonguaranteed tuition if the student were enrolled in a comparable institution of The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education. Comparability of institutions shall be determined by the OSRHE;

(c) Eligible students enrolled in a postsecondary career technology program that meets the requirements to be eligible for federal student financial aid and is offered by a technology center school supervised by the State Board of Career and Technology Education ~~through a cooperative agreement between a public technology center and an institution of The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education~~ shall have an award equivalent to tuition paid, not exceeding the average amount the student would have received for comparable enrollment at a two-year institution within The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education, to the school or institution on the student's behalf by an allocation from the Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Trust Fund;

(d) Funds shall be transferred by the OSRHE from the Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Trust Fund to the institution in which the student is enrolled. No funds shall be paid directly to the student;

(e) Payment will not be allowed for courses taken in excess of those required for a baccalaureate degree;

(f) Beginning with students graduating high school in 2017-2018 and thereafter, payment will be limited to 129 semester credit hours, or the equivalent, except as provided in the following. Students enrolled in a baccalaureate degree program that requires in excess of 129 semester credit hours or the equivalent, may receive payment for the number of semester credit hours required by the degree program. Students without a baccalaureate degree who are enrolled in a first professional degree program that does not require completion of a baccalaureate degree and that requires in excess of 129 semester credit hours or the equivalent, may receive payment for the number of semester credit hours required by the degree program up to a maximum of 150 semester credit hours or the equivalent. The Chancellor may approve exceptions to the limit for extraordinary or hardship circumstances including, but not limited to, sickness and injury.

(g) Students will be eligible for the benefits outlined in this policy for five (5) years from the first date of postsecondary enrollment. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education may award the Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Program benefits for courses of postsecondary units taken more than five (5) years after the student's first semester of postsecondary enrollment only in hardship circumstances; provided, however, no Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Program participant may receive benefits beyond a cumulative time period of five (5) years [70 O.S. § 2604]. Hardship circumstances may include, but are not limited to, sickness, injury, required military service, or service required by the student's religious or cultural traditions;

~~(g)~~(h) There will be no limit to the number of awards other than the amount of funds available or the number of eligible students. If sufficient funds are not available to provide awards for all eligible applicants, the OSRHE shall make awards on the basis of need;

~~(h)~~(i) Students who have previously received awards shall have priority over students applying for initial awards;

~~(i)~~(j) The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education shall take into consideration other grants and scholarships received by an eligible applicant when making awards [70 O.S. § 2604]. Award recipients

may not receive financial aid in excess of his/her cost of attendance as determined by the institution in which the student is enrolled. The cost of attendance determined by the institution shall be consistent with regulations for federal Title IV student financial aid programs. If necessary, an award shall be reduced by an amount which makes the student's total financial aid equivalent to the student's identified cost of attendance.

(k) Beginning with the 2018-2019 academic year, an award shall not include payment for noncredit remedial courses.

610:25-23-8. Administrative responsibilities [no changes]

610:25-23-9. "Heroes Promise"

HB 1343 of the 2011 Oklahoma legislative session amended the Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Act to authorize certain persons to participate in the Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Program and to qualify for the program benefits. This category of program participation shall be referred to as the "Heroes Promise" program. Except as otherwise provided in this section, the administrative rules of the Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Program shall apply to participants in the Heroes Promise program.

(1) Eligibility: A student shall be eligible to participate in the Heroes Promise program if the student meets the following criteria:

(A) The student is a child of any person killed after January 1, 2000, in the line of duty in any branch of the United States Armed Forces or who died after January 1, 2000, as a result of an injury sustained while in the line of duty in any branch of the United States Armed Forces and the person who was killed or died filed an individual or joint Oklahoma income tax return for the tax year prior to the year during which the person was killed or died.

(B) The student is a resident of Oklahoma or is enrolled in a school district located in this state that serves students who reside in both this state and an adjacent state pursuant to a contract as authorized in Section 5-117.1 of Title 70 of the Oklahoma Statutes.

(C) The student executes an agreement to participate in the program.

(2) Application and Enrollment:

(A) Eligible students enrolled in a public or private school in the eighth-, ninth-, or tenth-grade, and eligible students educated by other means between the ages of thirteen (13) and sixteen (16) may apply to participate in the program.

(B) Eligible students who have completed the tenth grade or who have reached age sixteen (16) shall be given the opportunity to apply to participate in the program prior to reaching the age of twenty-one (21).

(C) An eligible student shall not be required to establish financial need as described in 610:25-23-2(2).

(D) To apply, the student and/or their parent, custodial parent, or guardian shall submit appropriate documentation of eligibility including, but not limited to:

(i) A copy of an individual or joint Oklahoma income tax return filed by the parent of the student for the tax year prior to the year during which the parent was killed or died.

(ii) Documentation of the parent's death after January 1, 2000 while in the line of duty or as a result of injury sustained while in the line of duty in any branch of the United States Armed Forces.

(iii) Documentation that the student is a resident of Oklahoma or is enrolled in a school district located in this state that serves students who reside in both this state and an adjacent state pursuant to a contract as authorized in Section 5-117.1 of Title 70 of the Oklahoma Statutes.

(3) Exemption from Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Program Requirements: Students eligible for the Heroes Promise program shall not be subject to the program requirements contained in 610:25-23-4 (Program requirements).

(4) Securing Program Benefits: An eligible student may qualify for a Heroes Promise award which includes payment of an amount equivalent to resident tuition or other tuition pursuant to Section 2604 of Title 70 of the Oklahoma Statutes for the first semester or other academic unit of postsecondary enrollment if the student meets the following criteria:

(A) The student has satisfied admission standards as determined by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education for first-time-entering students for the appropriate type of institution, or, if attending a private institution, has satisfied admission standards as determined by the private institution. No student participating in the Heroes Promise program shall be admitted into an institution of higher education by special admission standards.

(B) The student has secured admission to, and, prior to reaching the age of twenty-one (21), has enrolled in an institution which is a member of The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education, a postsecondary ~~vocational-technical~~ career technology program that meets the requirements to be eligible for federal student financial aid and is offered by a technology center school supervised by the State Board of Career and Technology Education pursuant to a duly approved cooperative agreement between a technology center school and an institution of The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education, or a private institution of higher learning located within this state and accredited pursuant to Section 4103 of Title 70 of the Oklahoma Statutes. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education may award the Heroes Promise benefit for a student's first semester or other academic unit of postsecondary enrollment taken after the student turns twenty-one (21) years of age if the student is a member of the Armed Forces of the United States, the Reserve Corps of the Armed Forces of the United States, or the Oklahoma National Guard, and is ordered to active duty or active duty for special work or training and due to the duty commitment the student is unable to enroll before the student reaches twenty-one (21) years of age. The period of the extension shall be the length of the term of duty.

(C) Except as otherwise provided in this section, students eligible for the Heroes Promise award benefits shall not be subject to the provisions of 610:25-23-5 (Securing Program benefits).

(D) Except as otherwise provided in this section, the payment of Heroes Promise award benefits shall be subject to the provisions of 610:25-23-7 (Payment of awards; policies and limitations).

(E) A student that qualifies for the Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Program benefit based on both their Heroes Promise eligibility and completion of the regular program requirements shall only receive a single program benefit.

(5) Retaining Eligibility in Postsecondary Education: To retain eligibility for the Heroes Promise award while pursuing a program of higher learning at an eligible Oklahoma institution, the student must maintain compliance with the provisions of 610:25-23-6 (Retaining eligibility in postsecondary education).