

SENATE BILL No. 438

By Committee on Education

2-1

1 AN ACT concerning postsecondary education; relating to the AO-K
2 program; eliminating the requirement to subtract other aid from the
3 state payment; amending K.S.A. 2023 Supp. 74-32,267 and repealing
4 the existing section.

5
6 *Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Kansas:*

7 Section 1. K.S.A. 2023 Supp. 74-32,267 is hereby amended to read as
8 follows: 74-32,267. (a) There is hereby established the AO-K to work
9 program. The provisions of this program shall apply to all adult education
10 programs in the state.

11 (b) As used in this section:

12 (1) "AO-K" or "accelerating opportunity: Kansas" means a career
13 pathways program model that assists students in obtaining a high school
14 equivalency, becoming ready for transferable college-level courses and
15 earning an industry credential.

16 (2) "Career readiness assessment" means an assessment approved by
17 the state board of regents to measure foundational skills required for
18 success in the workplace and workplace skills that affect job performance.

19 (3) "Career readiness certificate" means a certificate that uses a career
20 readiness assessment approved by the state board of regents to document
21 an individual's skills in applied math, graphic literacy and workplace
22 documents.

23 (4) "Community college" means a community college as defined in
24 K.S.A. 71-701, and amendments thereto.

25 (5) "Industry recognized credential" means a credential recognized by
26 multiple employers across an industry as determined by the state board of
27 regents.

28 (6) "Kansas adult education program" means any educational
29 institution or approved agency that receives adult education funding
30 through the state board of regents; provides adult education or English
31 language acquisition programs; serves Kansas adults aged 16 and over
32 who are in need of basic skills for the workforce, community participation
33 and family life; and prepares adults for achieving industry recognized
34 credentials and college certificates and degrees.

1 (7) "Qualified student" means an individual who has:

2 (A) Attained ~~the age of~~ 21 years *of age*;

3 (B) not been awarded a high school diploma;

4 (C) been accepted into a Kansas adult education program;

5 (D) demonstrated high school equivalency by meeting the criteria
6 established by the state board of regents pursuant to this section; and

7 (E) declared an AO-K career pathway interest.

8 (8) "Technical college" means a technical college ~~as such term is~~
9 defined in K.S.A. 71-1802, and amendments thereto.

10 (c) The state board of regents shall award a Kansas high school
11 equivalency credential to any qualified student who:

12 (1) Is recommended and approved to participate in a AO-K career
13 pathway approved by the state board of regents for college credit;

14 (2) successfully completes an approved AO-K career pathway and
15 receives the industry-recognized credential appropriate to the completed
16 pathway;

17 (3) takes a career readiness assessment and earns a career readiness
18 certificate at a level approved by the state board of regents; and

19 (4) satisfies any other requirements deemed necessary by the state
20 board of regents.

21 (d) (1) ~~While participating in the enrolled in an AO-K to work~~
22 program, ~~qualified~~ *all* students shall be provided reasonable access to all
23 available student resources of the adult education program, the
24 participating technical or community college and the appropriate
25 community partners, including, but not limited to, appropriate academic
26 support, barrier mitigation, employment or career assistance, books, tools
27 and personal materials required to participate in an AO-K career pathway
28 program and industry examinations.

29 (2) Subject to appropriations, ~~financial assistance~~ *the amount of a*
30 *state payment* for books, tools, personal materials and industry
31 examinations shall be the aggregate amount of the cost of books, tools,
32 personal materials and industry examinations for the career pathway
33 program at the technical college or community college where such student
34 is enrolled and receiving assistance ~~minus the aggregate amount of all~~
35 ~~other aid awarded to such student~~. The amount of ~~financial assistance~~ *such*
36 *payment* provided for each student shall not exceed \$500 *over the lifetime*
37 *of the student*.

38 (e) Each application to the state board of regents for issuance or
39 duplication of a Kansas high school equivalency credential shall be
40 accompanied by a fee established by the state board of regents in an
41 amount of not more than \$25. On or before June 1 of each year, the state
42 board of regents shall determine the amount of revenue required to
43 properly administer the provisions of this section during the next ensuing

1 fiscal year and shall establish the Kansas high school equivalency
2 credentials processing fee for such year in the amount deemed necessary
3 for such purposes. Such fee shall become effective on the succeeding July
4 1 of each year. The state board of regents shall remit all moneys received
5 by or for it from Kansas high school equivalency credentials processing
6 fees to the state treasurer in accordance with the provisions of K.S.A. 75-
7 4215, and amendments thereto. Upon receipt of each such remittance, the
8 state treasurer shall deposit the entire amount in the state treasury to the
9 credit of the Kansas high school equivalency credential processing fees
10 fund, which fund is hereby established in the state treasury; and shall be
11 used only for the payment of expenses connected with the processing,
12 issuance, or duplication of Kansas high school equivalency credentials,
13 and ~~for the~~ keeping of records by the state board of regents. All
14 expenditures from the Kansas high school equivalency credential
15 processing fees fund shall be made in accordance with appropriation acts
16 upon warrants of the director of accounts and reports issued pursuant to
17 vouchers approved by the state board of regents or by a person or persons
18 designated by the state board.

19 (f) The state board of regents may adopt rules and regulations to
20 implement and administer the provisions of this act.

21 Sec. 2. K.S.A. 2023 Supp. 74-32,267 is hereby repealed.

22 Sec. 3. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after its
23 publication in the ~~statute book~~ {**Kansas register**}.