



# OKLAHOMA RISING SCHOLARS /OTHER PROGRAMS

2025 Scholarships & Grants workshop

July 17, 2025



# SCHOLARSHIPS

- ▶ Oklahoma Rising Scholars (formerly Academic Scholars Program)
- ▶ Regional University Baccalaureate Scholarship
- ▶ Oklahoma Access and Achievement Program
- ▶ William P. Willis Scholarship
- ▶ Heroes Promise
- ▶ Independent Living Tuition Waiver





# OKLAHOMA RISING SCHOLARS

(FORMERLY ACADEMIC SCHOLARS PROGRAM)





# OKLAHOMA RISING SCHOLARS (ORS)

- Established in 1988
- Oklahoma Merit Based Scholarship Program
- Open to high school seniors planning to attend any Oklahoma college.





# OKLAHOMA RISING SCHOLARS (ORS) PROGRAM UPDATES

## ▶ HB1282 (Effective July 1, 2025)

- ▶ The program is renamed from the "Oklahoma State Regents' Academic Scholars Act" to the "Oklahoma Rising Scholars Award Act."

## ▶ HB1096 (Effective July 1, 2025)

- ▶ The **Classic Learning Test (CLT)** is now accepted as a college entrance exam alongside the **ACT** and **SAT** for determining eligibility for the **Oklahoma Rising Scholars Program**.
- ▶ Students must take the test at a brick-and-mortar testing site for the test to be considered for entry.





# ORS QUALIFICATIONS AND AWARDS

➤ How does a student qualify for ORS?

➤ National Merit Scholars\*

➤ National Merit Finalists\*

➤ Presidential Scholars\*

➤ Oklahoma Test Takers at or above the 99.5 percentile on the ACT or SAT

➤ Institutional Nominee\*

\*Funding for nonresident participation eliminated





# ORS QUALIFICATIONS AND AWARDS

► Institutional Nominees will be required to meet at least one of the three minimum standards listed in the table below:

Institution Type	ACT, SAT, or CLT Equivalent	GPA and Class Rank	GPA and ACT, SAT, or CLT Equivalent
<b>Research Universities</b>	32 ACT / SAT equivalent / CLT equivalent	3.9 GPA and top 2% of class or rank #1 or #2	3.9 GPA and 30 ACT / SAT equivalent / CLT equivalent
<b>Regional Universities</b>	30 ACT / SAT equivalent / CLT equivalent	3.8 GPA and top 4% of class or rank #1 or #2	3.8 GPA and 28 ACT / SAT equivalent / CLT equivalent
<b>Community Colleges</b>	29 ACT / SAT equivalent / CLT equivalent	3.7 GPA and top 5% of class or rank #1 or #2	3.7 GPA and 26 ACT / SAT equivalent / CLT equivalent



# ORS AND ACT SUPERSCORING

## ▶ ACT Superscore Impact

- ▶ Automatic Qualifiers –Oklahoma high school seniors can use their “superscore” to meet the ACT score requirement to automatically qualify for the program.

TEST DATE	English Score	Math Score	Reading Score	Science Score	Composite Score	Subject Sum
April	35	32	36	32	34	135
June	36	30	34	34	34	134
September	34	34	34	32	34	134
<b>Superscore</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>140</b>



# ORS QUALIFICATIONS AND AWARDS

Institution Type	Institutional Nominee (IN)	Automatic Qualifier (AQ)
Research Universities	\$4,000 per year	\$6,500 per year
Regional Universities	\$3,200 per year	\$5,000 per year
Community Colleges	\$3,000 per year	\$4,500 per year

State system institutions also provide the scholarship recipient a tuition waiver.





# ORS QUALIFICATIONS AND AWARDS

## ► Retention Requirements

- Full-time Enrollment Each Semester
- Maintain at least a 3.25 Cumulative GPA
- Complete at least 24 Credit Hours Each Year





# ORS PROGRAM RULES

## ➤ Administrative Rules

➤ <http://www.rules.ok.gov>

➤ On the site, enter “Oklahoma Rising Scholars” in the search box.





## ORS PROGRAM RULES

- ▶ A student must enter the program the fall semester immediately after his/her class graduates from high school
- ▶ Renewable for eight semesters
- ▶ Additional semesters available only for extraordinary circumstances or undergraduate academic programs that cannot be completed in eight semesters





## ORS PROGRAM RULES

- The guidelines shown below will be used to review requests for extensions to the eight-semester limit on Academic Scholars awards:

Hours Required for Undergraduate Degree	Recommended Action
124-129	No extension
130-135	½ semester extension
136-141	1 semester extension
142-147	1 ½ semester extension
148 & above	2 semester extension



# ORS PROGRAM RULES

## ➤ Summer Semester

- To receive payment for enrollment in a summer term, the student must submit the summer term application to the State Regents' office by the application deadline





# ORS PROGRAM RULES

Transfer Scenario	AQ (Automatic Qualifiers)	IN (Institutional Nominees)
<b>Two-Year College</b>	- AQ can transfer their scholarship award at any time.	- IN must complete an associate's degree or 48 credit hours to transfer to a four-year university. AND IN must attend the nominating college for the first year.
<b>Four-Year University</b>	- AQ can transfer their scholarship award at any time.	- IN must attend the nominating university for the first year.
<b>Graduate Transfer</b>	- AQ can use any remaining semesters of eligibility for graduate or professional school.	- IN can request to use remaining semesters of eligibility for professional or graduate school.



# ORS PROGRAM RULES

## ▶ Leave of Absence

- ▶ Students may take a leave of absence if not enrolled

- ▶ Student studying abroad

- ▶ Student can take a leave of absence or request scholarship assistance

- ▶ If the student requests scholarship assistance while studying abroad, he/she is required to meet all enrollment and GPA requirements





# ORS INSTITUTIONAL NOMINEE SLOTS

## ▶ Institutional Nominee Slots

- ▶ Institutional Nominee slots and award amounts are authorized annually (subject to change)
- ▶ Presidents of Institutions are notified of authorization by letter from Chancellor.





## ORS INSTITUTIONAL NOMINEES

- ▶ Institutional nominee slots are determined at the September/October State Regents meeting
- ▶ A letter from the Chancellor is sent to the university/college Presidents
  - ▶ This letter is forwarded to the institutional scholarship coordinators
- ▶ The Institutional Nominee spreadsheet is sent to institutions at end of spring semester.
- ▶ Completed spreadsheets and authorization forms must be uploaded to O-Safe by deadline.
- ▶ Institutional nominees are entered into our database and award letters are sent to scholars.





## ORS PROCESS – AQ QUALIFIERS

- Required ACT/SAT score determined for Oklahoma test takers at or above 99.5 percentile on ACT or SAT in October for upcoming year
- In October, applications for HS seniors made available at [www.okhighered.org/academic-scholars](http://www.okhighered.org/academic-scholars).
- Completed applications sent to the OSRHE office
- Award notifications letters are sent to scholars
- A report with incoming Automatic Qualifiers are uploaded to O-SAFE during the summer



## ORS - DISBURSEMENT

- ▶ State Regents Office uploads certifications to O-SAFE and email notifications are sent to institutions
  - ▶ Includes all new and continuing automatic qualifiers and institutional nominees
- ▶ Certifications are completed and uploaded back to O-SAFE after add/drop (lock-in) date for semester.
- ▶ Certification records are entered in our database and a disbursement roster is uploaded to O-SAFE
- ▶ After confirmation by the institution, funding is requested from the business office
- ▶ Checks are mailed or wire notifications are sent





# **REGIONAL UNIVERSITY BACCALAUREATE SCHOLARSHIP**

(RUBS)





# REGIONAL UNIVERSITY BACCALAUREATE SCHOLARSHIP (RUBS)

- Established in 1994
- To enable public regional universities to provide four years of scholarship support to academically promising Oklahoma students enrolled in a baccalaureate program
- To enhance academic quality in public regional universities





# REGIONAL UNIVERSITY BACCALAUREATE SCHOLARSHIP (RUBS)

## ▶ Program Rules (Eligibility):

▶ Composite score of 30 on the ACT and a GPA and class rank which are exceptional as determined by the institution

OR

▶ National Merit Semifinalist or National Merit Commended Student

▶ Student must be an Oklahoma resident





## REGIONAL UNIVERSITY BACCALAUREATE SCHOLARSHIP (RUBS)

- ▶ Each regional university was authorized 15 freshman nominee slots for fall 2025
- ▶ \$3,500 annual cash award
- ▶ Regional universities are required to offer a tuition waiver while the student is receiving the cash award





# REGIONAL UNIVERSITY BACCALAUREATE SCHOLARSHIP (RUBS)

## ➤ Retention Requirements

- Full-time Enrollment Each Semester
- Maintain at least a 3.25 Cumulative GPA
- Complete at least 24 Credit Hours Each Year





# REGIONAL UNIVERSITY BACCALAUREATE SCHOLARSHIP (RUBS)

## ➤ Program Rules

- Renewable for up to eight semesters or until a baccalaureate degree is received, whichever comes first
- Scholarship is not transferable





# REGIONAL UNIVERSITY BACCALAUREATE SCHOLARSHIP (RUBS)

## ➤ Summer Semester

- To receive payment for enrollment in a summer term, the student must submit the summer term application to the State Regents' office by the application deadline





# REGIONAL UNIVERSITY BACCALAUREATE SCHOLARSHIP (RUBS)

## ➤ RUBS freshmen slots

- Freshmen slots and award amounts are approved annually. (subject to change)
- Presidents are notified of annual authorization by letter from Chancellor.





# **WILLIAM P. WILLIS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM**





# **WILLIAM P. WILLIS SCHOLARSHIP**

- Scholarship was established by the 1986 Oklahoma Legislature
- The goal is to provide scholarships to low income, full-time undergraduates attending institutions in the Oklahoma state System of Higher Education





# WILLIAM P. WILLIS SCHOLARSHIP

## ▶ Program Rules (Eligibility):

- ▶ Nominee must be a full-time undergraduate
- ▶ Must have an effective income of \$32,000 or less per year (AGI minus standard or itemized deductions)
- ▶ Must be an Oklahoma resident
- ▶ Each institution nominates one student except NSU which nominates two students





# WILLIAM P. WILLIS SCHOLARSHIP

## ➤ Award Levels:

➤ \$3,000 at Research Universities

➤ \$2,400 at Regional Universities

➤ \$2,000 at Community Colleges





# WILLIAM P. WILLIS SCHOLARSHIP

## ▶ Program Rules

- ▶ Scholarship award is not-transferable
- ▶ It is recommended that institutions give priority to their previous year recipient. Recipients may receive the award for no more than four years
- ▶ Must be meeting Satisfactory Academic Progress requirements.





# **OKLAHOMA ACCESS AND ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM**





# **OKLAHOMA ACCESS AND ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM**

The Oklahoma Access and Achievement Scholarship Program was created to support students with intellectual disabilities who are enrolled in comprehensive transition and postsecondary education programs (CTP) to prepare for gainful employment.





# OKLAHOMA ACCESS AND ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

➤ Oklahoma currently has three CTP programs:

➤ RiverHawks Scholar Program at Northeastern State University

➤ Sooner Works at the University of Oklahoma

➤ Opportunity Orange Scholars at Oklahoma State University





# OKLAHOMA ACCESS AND ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

- ▶ Student must be an Oklahoma resident or enrolled in a school district located in Oklahoma that serves students who reside in Oklahoma and an adjacent state.
- ▶ U.S. citizen or lawfully present in the United States
- ▶ Graduated Oklahoma high school in past 6 years
- ▶ Enrolled in CTP program at an Oklahoma educational institution





# OKLAHOMA ACCESS AND ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY CONT.

- ▶ Required to file the FAFSA
- ▶ The federal adjusted gross income of the student's parent(s)/legal guardian(s) must not exceed \$100,000.
  - ▶ If adopted through DHS/qualifying agency between 0-12 years old: AGI ≤ \$150K
  - ▶ If adopted through DHS/qualifying agency between 13-17 years old: AGI ≤ \$200K





# OKLAHOMA ACCESS AND ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY CONT.

➤ To maintain eligibility, students must:

- The student must meet the requirements for retention and completion as established by the institution where the student is enrolled.
- The student must maintain satisfactory academic progress as required by their CTP program.
- The student must refrain from conduct that leads to expulsion or suspension of more than one semester from an Oklahoma educational institution.
- The scholarship ends after five years from the first date of postsecondary enrollment.





# OKLAHOMA ACCESS AND ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

## ➤ Award

- an amount equivalent to the nonguaranteed resident tuition

## ➤ How to Apply

- Students can apply for the scholarship through the university where they are admitted to a CTP program. Contact the specific program for details.







## HEROES PROMISE

The program is available to certain students that are 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 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.





## ➤ Program Rules (Eligibility):

- Students must be Oklahoma residents and can sign up for the program up to the age of 21.
- The student must also begin postsecondary education by age 21.
- Heroes Promise students are not subject to the Oklahoma's Promise high school academic requirements or the family income requirements.
- Students must be approved for admission to an Oklahoma college or university.





# HEROES PROMISE

- ▶ Once eligibility is established and the student begins postsecondary education, the award is the same as Oklahoma's Promise and the continuing eligibility requirements and limits are also the same
- ▶ Heroes Promise students will appear on the Oklahoma's Promise eligibility list. A separate claim will not be required.
- ▶ Heroes Promise students are not subject to the high school requirements, they will not appear on the "potential" eligibility list.





# **INDEPENDENT LIVING TUITION WAIVER**

Foster Care Tuition Waiver





## **INDEPENDENT LIVING TUITION WAIVER**

The Independent Living Act was established by the 2000 Oklahoma Legislature to ensure that eligible individuals who have been or are in the foster care program of the Department of Human Services receive services that include housing, medical coverage and education.





# INDEPENDENT LIVING TUITION WAIVER

- ▶ Student must be a resident of Oklahoma
- ▶ Student must have graduated within the previous three years from a State Board of Education-accredited high school, the Oklahoma School of Science and Mathematics or a high school bordering Oklahoma as approved by the State Board of Education OR the student must have completed the General Educational Development (GED) requirements.





## INDEPENDENT LIVING TUITION WAIVER

- ▶ The student must have been in DHS custody for at least nine months between the ages of 16 and 18.
- ▶ Students must be enrolled in a public college or university or certain programs at technology centers.
- ▶ Tuition waivers will be made available to eligible students up to 26 years of age or upon completion of a baccalaureate degree, whichever comes first.





# INDEPENDENT LIVING TUITION WAIVER

➤ OK Dept of Human Services Contact

➤ Jeff Walls

Program Manager

[Jeffrey.Walls@okdhs.org](mailto:Jeffrey.Walls@okdhs.org)





# Questions?





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# OKLAHOMA STATE REGENTS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

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*Improving our future by degrees*

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