



NORTH DAKOTA SENATE

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COMMITTEES:

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SB 2289 – Creation of a North Dakota Scholarship
Hearing scheduled: February 3, 2021 | 9:00 am
Senate Education Committee, Sen. Schaible, Chair

Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee, for the record, I'm Erin Oban, senator for Bismarck's District 35. I'm here to introduce, discuss, and answer questions on SB 2289, a bill that would essentially rewrite our current North Dakota high school academic and CTE scholarship programs and align it with our state's Choice Ready Framework, a state plan to assist educators to ensure all students successfully depart high school possessing the essential skills necessary to be ready for post-secondary, the workforce, and/or the military. This tool was developed by educators in partnership with ND DPI following the passage of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and is used to measure school growth in high schools. If you are interested in learning more about the Choice Ready Framework, you can visit ND DPI's [website](#). For purposes of the discussion on this bill, I am including this Choice Ready Framework [ATTACHMENT A] so you can see its direct connection to both the language of and purpose for this bill.

To date, our state's academic and CTE scholarship programs have been effective incentives for students and their families to work hard, choose specific pathways or enroll in upper-level courses, and focus on high achievement in the areas of academics or CTE. For that reason, it makes great sense to align the financial incentives offered by our state to what we expect from our students in order to graduate.

But, Mr. Chairman, with the passage of ESSA at the federal level and the development of the Choice Ready Framework here at the state level, those expectations for high school graduates has changed. It makes great sense to align our state's high school scholarship program with our state's high school choice ready framework.

I will try to go over the changes this bill proposes in a way that's easier to understand than the sections and dates appear.

For starters, if this bill passes and is signed into law, it would not go into effect until Aug 1, 2021. That means this option – the North Dakota scholarship, aligned to the Choice Ready Framework – would not be available to any qualifying student until they graduate in May 2022 (2021-22 school year graduates). At that point, a student could qualify for the existing academic or CTE scholarship OR the new North Dakota scholarship should they meet those requirements.

On July 31, 2024 (graduating class of 2023-24), the academic and CTE scholarships would then sunset. The goal is, by the time the class of 2024-25 graduates, for the only remaining scholarship program to be this newly created North Dakota scholarship aligned to the Choice Ready Framework.

That is what Sections 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 of the bill address – the effective dates of this new scholarship program and the repeals of the academic and CTE scholarship programs. The reason for the various dates is to make sure we don't pull the rug out from any current students who have already begun to dedicate their efforts to receiving the academic or CTE scholarships in current law.

So, if you're like me and like to follow along and mark in your bill what is being proposed:

- Section 1 – Makes this newly proposed “North Dakota scholarship” effective for the graduating class of 2022.
- Section 2, 5, 7, 9, 10, and 11 – Sets and sunsets all the requirements and eligibility for the academic and CTE scholarships on July 31, 2024, effective starting with the class of 2025.
- Section 3 – We'll review in a minute.
- Section 4, 6, 8 – Adds in language for the newly proposed “North Dakota scholarship” to make it effective and students to be eligible.

The actual substance of the scholarship program, the creation of this North Dakota scholarship, is Section 3. If you go through the program, line by line, and compare it to that Choice Ready Framework, the language will look very familiar. That's exactly the point.

Let's do this, Mr. Chairman, to assure the committee of that overlap. If you'll go back to your bill:

- Lines 4-6 and 10-22: align to the “Essential Skills” in Choice Ready Framework
- Lines 7-9 and Lines 23-24: align to all 3 – Post-Secondary Ready, Workforce Ready, and Military Ready in the Choice Ready Framework – with the addition of the higher GPA to qualify for a scholarship
- Lines 25 through Line 6 on Page 3 (*or (a) of subsection 6*): align to a student who is considered “Post-Secondary Ready” in the Choice Ready Framework. That could be compared to what exists with our current academic scholarship requirements.
- Continuing on Page 3, Line 7 through Line 3 on Page 4 (*or (b) of subsection 6*): align to a student who is considered “Workforce Ready” in the Choice Ready Framework, similar to our existing CTE scholarship.
- And lastly, Page 4, Lines 4-12 (*or (c) of subsection 6*): creates a brand new opportunity for a student to qualify for a scholarship if that student excels at a higher level in the area of graduating “Military Ready.”
- Add extra bullet to emphasize that students must meet 2 of the 3 to get the scholarship (postsecondary, workforce, military)

If graduates hit the marks outlined in 2 of 3 of the paths of the Choice Ready Framework at the level of the *existing* requirements to earn an academic or CTE scholarship (GPA, test scores, etc.), they will qualify for the North Dakota scholarship. So, this isn't about increasing the threshold from earning the scholarship but rather aligning the incentive for a scholarship with our state's efforts to graduate our students with the essential skills and choice ready for the college, career, or the military.

The fiscal note on the bill provides an estimate of 85 new students potentially qualifying with the addition of this North Dakota scholarship should the bill pass.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes the contents of the bill and the reasons for bringing it forward. I would be happy to answer questions, but it may be helpful to hear from Jim Upgren from the ND Department of Public Instruction beforehand.

Thank you for the time, and I would ask for your consideration of a “Do Pass” recommendation on SB 2289.



NORTH DAKOTA CHOICE READY

The North Dakota **CHOICE READY** framework is a tool to assist educators to ensure all students successfully depart high school possessing the **ESSENTIAL SKILLS** necessary to be ready for life. The journey begins by ensuring students leave having the **ESSENTIAL SKILLS** to be successful for whichever path they choose. Students shall then strive to be **POST-SECONDARY READY**, **WORKFORCE READY**, and/or **MILITARY READY**.



ESSENTIAL SKILLS

Earn a **North Dakota high school diploma**

Complete a **9-week Career Education Course/Individual Counseling** (15.1-21-18), **Financial Literacy** (15.1-21-21), and pass **ND Civics Test** (15.1-21-27) and **four or more** additional indicators:

- 25 hours of Community Service
- 95% Attendance (not counting school related absences)
- Career Exploration Experience
- Two or more years in organized Co-Curricular Activities
- Two or more years in organized Extra-Curricular Activities
- Successfully complete a Capstone Project
- Successfully complete an on-line learning course
- Demonstrate competency in 21st Century Skills

Students shall then complete **two or more** of the **CHOICE READY** components below.



POST-SECONDARY READY

Complete a **Four-Year Rolling Career Plan**, and earn a **2.8 GPA or greater**, and complete one academic indicator set below:

ACT / SAT minimum or subsection scores:
ACT English—18 SAT Reading/Writing—480
ACT Reading—22 SAT Math—530
ACT Math—21
ACT Science—23

or

Two or more additional indicators:

- Advanced Placement Course (A, B or C) (1, 2, or 3)
- Dual Credit Course (English or Math) (A, B or C) or (1, 2, or 3)
- Algebra II (A, B or C) or (1, 2, or 3)
- Advanced Placement Exam (3+)
- International Baccalaureate Exam (4+)
- 3.0 GPA in core course requirement for NDUS admission
- CLEM/CREAM (Eng./Math) Course (70% or greater)



WORKFORCE READY

Complete a **Four-Year Rolling Career Plan**, and complete two or more additional indicators:

- Complete three CTE courses or more (A, B, or C) or (1, 2, or 3)
- Complete Career Ready Practices (3.0)
- Dual Credit Course (A, B or C) or (1, 2, or 3)
- WorkKeys (Gold or Silver)
- Technical Assessment / Industry Credential
- Workplace Learning Experience (40 hrs.)
- Work-based Learning Experience (Perkins V) (40 hrs.)
- CLEM/CREAM (Eng./Math) Course (70% or greater)
- NDSA (Reading/Math) Level 3 or greater or (ACT for Accountability: English 19/Mathematics 22)



MILITARY READY

Complete a **Four-Year Rolling Career Plan**, **ASVAB score of 31 or greater** (as determined by branch), or acceptance into the military.
Quality Citizenship (No Expulsions/Suspensions), **Physically Fit** (Students who have successfully completed required PE courses (A, B, or C) or (1, 2, or 3))

Complete **two or more** additional indicators from the **Post-Secondary** or **Workforce** options.