

HB 1577 -- Higher Education Scholarships

Sponsor: Schneider

This bill allows two-year public and private vocational and technical schools to participate in the A+ Schools Program if they are a member of the North Central Association and accredited by the Higher Learning Commission as of July 1, 2008, and are nonprofit organizations under federal tax law. Reimbursements to private schools must not exceed the community college tuition rate for similar course work offered within the service area of a community college or violate the constitutional provisions that prohibit the use of public funds for religious purposes.

The Community College Associate Degree Transfer Incentive Program is established for students who transfer from a public community college, or other two-year institution recognized by the Department of Higher Education to grant associate degrees, to a public or private four-year institution. Eligible students must have an associate of arts degree or a degree that contains 42 credit hours of general education core curriculum courses. Participating four-year institutions will establish additional eligibility requirements and apply to the Coordinating Board for Higher Education for funds to offer the scholarships. Scholarships may continue for a minimum of four semesters to a maximum of four years, with a minimum annual level of \$1,000, not to exceed the cost of attendance. The amount may be prorated for part-time students. The primary criterion will be need.

The provisions of the bill regarding the transfer incentive program will expire six years from the effective date.