

ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION - 2024
COMMITTEE STATEMENT
LB1329

Hearing Date: Tuesday January 30, 2024
Committee On: Education
Introducer: Murman
One Liner: Change provisions of the Nebraska Career Scholarship Act

Roll Call Vote - Final Committee Action:
Advanced to General File with amendment(s)

Vote Results:

Aye: 8 Senators Albrecht, Conrad, Linehan, Meyer, Murman, Sanders, Walz, Wayne
Nay:
Absent:
Present Not Voting:

Testimony:

Proponents:

Senator Dave Murman
Paul Turman
Greg Dart
Tom Ochsner

Representing:

Opening Presenter
Nebraska State College System
All Six Public Community Colleges
Nebraska Wesleyan University, Council of
Independent Nebraska Colleges

Opponents:

Neutral:

Mike Baumgartner

Representing:

Representing:
Coordinating Committee for Post-Secondary
Education

* ADA Accommodation Written Testimony

Summary of purpose and/or changes:

The bill amends provisions of the Nebraska Career Scholarship Act by transferring administration of the scholarship program from the Department of Economic Development to the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education.

Bill Summary:

A "First-time Freshman" is defined as a student entering an eligible program who has not been enrolled in a postsecondary institution for 3 years preceding the scholarship application, creating an exception for those who receive early- college credit while in high school.



A "Transfer Student" is an individual moving into an eligible program without previously earning postsecondary credential and has transferred into an eligible program from another postsecondary institution, or from another program of study within the same postsecondary institution. Students who previously earned a postsecondary credential, but only as a dual-credit or early-college high school student shall be considered a transfer student if such student transferred into an eligible program of study from another postsecondary institution or a program within the same postsecondary institution directly following the students early-college high school enrollment.

The Board of Trustees of the Nebraska State Colleges can grant a Nebraska Career Scholarship, not to exceed \$15,000 per year, to eligible state college students covering tuition, fees, tools, equipment, and room and board, The scholarship is renewable for up to 4 years.

The Board of Regents of the University of Nebraska can award Nebraska Career Scholarships ranging from \$10,000 to \$25,000 to eligible university students covering eligible expenses. The scholarship can be renewed for up to four years.

The Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education collaborating with community colleges and private colleges, can award up to \$15,000 and \$10,000 respectively per year covering tuition, fees, tools, equipment, and room and board. The scholarship is renewable.

The bill established reporting requirements for all institutions to the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education. Scholarship eligibility is based upon a high school grade-point-average of 3.0 or higher on a 4 point scale.

Explanation of amendments:

The Standing Committee Amendment amends LB 1329 as introduced and incorporates six other bills: LB 673 (as amended), LB 855, LB 962, LB 1012, LB 1339 (as amended), and LB 1385 (as amended).

LB 1329 is amended by adding ROTC, education and engineering into the list of eligible programs for the Career Scholarship Program. The term "institution" is clarified, and corrects a reference to the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education.

LB 673 (as amended by AM 2295) Provides grants to schools that adopt a policy to provide emergency response mapping data to law enforcement agencies and provide powers and duties for the State Department of Education and State Board of Education.

Bill Summary:

LB 673 Legislation introduces a policy for mapping data in schools to enhance emergency response efficiency.

It defines mapping data as information related to a school building, meeting specified criteria.

Public safety agencies, defined as local, county, or state agencies with members serving in official capacities like peace officers, firefighters, or emergency care providers, can receive this data for effective emergency responses.

School boards or governing authorities of approved schools may adopt a policy to provide mapping data, meeting specific requirements, to public safety agencies.

The data must be compatible, printable, verified for accuracy, and include floor plans and site-specific labels.



Schools adopting this policy must annually certify data accuracy and may apply for grants from the State Department of Education, funded by the School Safety and Security Fund, to cover implementation costs.
The State Board of Education can establish rules to implement the policy.

Motion to amend LB 673 (as amended by AM 2295) into AM 2831

Vote Results: 8-0

Voting Aye: Senators Albrecht, Conrad, Linehan, Meyer, Murman, Sanders, Walz, Wayne

Voting Nay: None

Testifiers on LB 673

Proponents:

Introducer Senator Ben Hansen, Legislative District 16

Joe Hanson, Critical Response Group

Ryan McIntosh, Nebraska State Volunteer Firefighters Association

Micheal Dwyer, Arlington Fire and Rescue

Kathy Wilmot, self

Michelle Weber, Nebraska Emergency Medical Services Association

Colby Coash, Nebraska Association of School Boards, Nebraska Rural Community Schools Association, Nebraska Council of School Administrators

Elizabeth Davids, self

Opponents:

None

Neutral:

Amber Parker, self

LB 855 Prohibits school districts from taking certain actions relating to outstanding debts on a school lunch or breakfast account

Bill Summary:

A debt collection agency is defined as any entity attempting to collect debts, excluding government departments or school entities.

No school board or education board shall employ a debt collection agency or impose interest, fees, or penalties for outstanding debts on a student's school lunch or breakfast account.

Motion to amend LB 855 into AM 2831

Vote Results: 8-0

Voting Aye: Senators Albrecht, Conrad, Linehan, Meyer, Murman, Sanders, Walz, Wayne

Voting Nay: None

Testifiers on LB 855

Proponents:

Introducer Senator Danielle Conrad, District 46

Katie Nungesser, Voices for Children in Nebraska

Chase Boyd, self

Ken Smith, Nebraska Appleseed

Spike Eikholt, Education Rights Counsel

Opponent:

Stephen Grizzle, South Central Nebraska Unified #5



Neutral:

None

LB 962 Prohibits the use of certain projection maps in public schools and requires each school board to adopt a policy relating to projection maps

Bill Summary:

Starting from the 2024-25 school year, public schools are prohibited from using Mercator projection maps, and instead, they are required to use Gall-Peters projection maps or AuthaGraph projection maps for display or classroom use. However, there's an exception: Mercator projection maps may be used in conjunction with other projection maps in teaching exercises to illustrate that all maps have flaws and that different projections serve different functions, impacting individuals' perspectives on the world. Each public school district's school board is responsible for adopting a policy to implement these requirements.

Motion to amend LB 962 into AM 2831

Vote Results: 8-0

Voting Aye: Senators Albrecht, Conrad, Linehan, Meyer, Murman, Sanders, Walz, Wayne

Voting Nay: None

Testifiers on LB 962

Proponents:

Introducer Senator Justin Wayne, Legislative District 13

Linda Vermooten, self

Opponents:

Charles Riedesel, self

Neutral:

None

LB 1012 Changes provisions relating to certain tax levy and bonding authority of school districts

Bill Summary:

At present, school boards in any school district can decide to impose an additional property tax levy for specific abatement projects addressing environmental hazards, accessibility barriers, life safety code violations, life safety hazards, or mold within existing school buildings or their grounds. This bill would add school safety infrastructure concerns to the list of approved expenditures.

Motion to amend LB 1012 into AM 2831

Voting Results: 8-0

Voting Aye: Senators Albrecht, Conrad, Linehan, Meyer, Murman, Sanders, Walz, Wayne

Voting Nay: None

Testifiers on LB 1012

Proponents:

Introducer Senator Lynne Walz, Legislative District 15

Jami Jo Thompson, Norfolk Public Schools

Jack Moles, Nebraska Rural Community Schools Association, Nebraska Council of School Administrators, Schools Taking Action for Nebraska Children's Education, Greater Nebraska Schools Association

Sarah Wagerie, Ralston Public Schools

Opponents:



None
Neutral:
None

LB 1339 (as amended by 2793) Changes provisions relating to possession of firearms in schools.

Bill Summary:

LB 1339 changes provisions related to the carrying of concealed handguns and the possession of firearms on school grounds, or at school events.

Qualified law enforcement officers or retired law enforcement officers may carry concealed handguns in school, on school grounds, in a school-owned vehicle, or at a school sponsored activity, or athletic event.

A school board may adopt a written policy authorizing the carrying of firearms by security personnel in a school, on school grounds, in a school-owned vehicle or at a school sponsored event. At a minimum, the policy shall include personal qualifications, training, appropriate firearms, ammunition and appropriate use of force requirements.

Motion to amend LB 1339 (as amended by AM 2793) into AM 2831

Vote Results: 5-0-3

Voting Aye: Senators Albrecht, Linehan, Meyer, Murman, Sanders

Voting Nay: None

Present Not Voting: Senators Conrad, Walz, Wayne

Testifiers on LB 1339

Proponents:

Introducer Senator Tom Brewer, Legislative District 43

Patrick Dempsey, Omaha Police Officers Association

Jerry Stilmock, Nebraska State Volunteer Firefighters Association

Zach Kassebaum, Lincoln Christian School

Micheal Dwyer, self

Blair MacDonald, The Council of Independent Nebraska Colleges

Alex Carney, Critical Response Group

Patricia Harrold, Nebraska Firearms Owners Association

Randy Bendorf, self

Nathan Griffith, Nebraska Firearms Owners Association

John Ross, self

Amber Parker, self

Chantell Fender, self

Opponents:

Jennifer Hodge, Moms Demand Action

Kyle McGowan, Nebraska Council of School Administrators

Sharon O'Neal, self

Tim Royers, Nebraska State Education Association

Patricia Ritchie, self

Rachel Gibson, League of Women Voters of Nebraska

Benjamin Buras, self

Doreen Jankovich, OEAR (teachers)

Shannon Heng, self

Judy King, self

Maghie Miller-Jenkins, self



Neutral:

Neil A. Miller, Nebraska Sheriff's Association, Police Chiefs of Nebraska, Nebraska County Officials
Stacen Gross, GeoComm

LB 1385 (as amended by 2687) Changes provisions relating to the issuance of the eligibility for certificates and permits issued by the State Department of Education

Bill Summary:

LB 1385 changes provisions relating to the issuance of, and eligibility for, certificates and permits issued by the Department of Education.

The Department shall make available on its website a portal for individuals with a teaching certificate or permit the option or ability to apply for endorsements. The portal shall include a list of courses for the adding of endorsements to teach, provide special services, or administer. . Alternatively, individuals can obtain an endorsement by passing a subject-specific content examination, updating their certificate or permit based solely on passage of the examination. An individual may also complete an approved program of equivalent professional education as an alternative to taking a subject-matter specific content examination to receive an endorsement.

Additionally, the bill also provides that the Board of Education can issue a teaching certificate or permit to applicants meeting certain criteria including individuals holding a valid out-of-state certificate, in good standing in all states of certification, having no pending investigations or complaints, meet residency and background check requirements, and paying all applicable fees.

Upon verification of qualifications by the Commissioner, a conditional certificate or permit may be issued until a review is completed and the Commissioner issues or refuses the certificate or permit. The Department shall make available on the portal the option for individuals to apply for a certificate or permit in this instance.

Motion to amend LB 1385 (as amended by 2687) into AM 2831

Vote Results: 8-0

Voting Aye: Senators Albrecht, Conrad, Linehan, Meyer, Murman, Sanders, Walz, Wayne

Voting Nay: None

Testifiers for LB 1385

Proponents:

Introducer Senator Kathleen Kauth, Legislative District 31

Governor Jim Pillen

Amber Parker, self

Charles Wakefield, Omaha Public Schools

Opponents:

Suzanne Scott, self

Tim Royers, Nebraska State Education Association

Dave Murman, Chairperson

