

HB 2123 -- HIGHER EDUCATION WORKFORCE POLICY PRIORITIZATION

SPONSOR: Black

This bill modifies the "Higher Education Academic Scholarship Program" to increase the scholarship award beginning in the 2027-28 academic year from \$3000 to full in-state tuition for the student's first four semesters.

A student currently enrolled in an eligible program may renew for an additional six semesters if they are enrolled in an "eligible program of study" as defined under Section 173.2553 RSMo.

The bill creates the "Missouri Higher Education Workforce Policy Prioritization Act" and requires the Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development (DHEWD) in consultation with public institutions of higher education to develop a funding model for higher education public institutions.

The funding model will provide a level of stable, sustainable resources, align funding to develop educated persons to meet the professional and workforce needs, be based on the 2023 study commissioned by the Department, include a process for allocation of core appropriations, use a cost-based approach to funding, and include a performance component designed to enhance student success and efficient operations.

The Department will establish a plan for the testing and implementation of the funding model to be approved by the Coordinating Board for Higher Education, as specified in the bill, and submit the plan to the Governor and General Assembly before August 31, 2026.

A report on the effectiveness of the model test must be submitted to the Speaker of the House, President Pro Tem of the Senate and the Governor before October 15th, 2026. The funding model must be approved by the Board before November 1, 2026 and must be approved by the General Assembly by concurrent resolution.

Beginning in the 2028-29 fiscal year, if approved, the funding model will be used for appropriating funding for public institutions of higher education.

This bill is similar to HB 1569 (2025).