

IN THE SENATE

SENATE BILL NO. 1358, As Amended

BY EDUCATION COMMITTEE

AN ACT

RELATING TO STUDENT FUNDING; AMENDING SECTION 33-1030, IDAHO CODE, TO REVISE DEFINITIONS; AMENDING SECTION 33-1031, IDAHO CODE, TO REVISE PROVISIONS REGARDING THE EMPOWERING PARENTS GRANT PROGRAM; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Idaho:

SECTION 1. That Section 33-1030, Idaho Code, be, and the same is hereby amended to read as follows:

33-1030. DEFINITIONS. As used in this section through section 33-1034, Idaho Code:

(1) "Assessment" means an examination or another objective evaluation of a student's academic performance, academic engagement, or college or career readiness.

(2) "Board" means the state board of education.

(3) "Eligible education expenses" means:

(a) Computer hardware, internet access, or other technological devices or services that are primarily used to meet a participant's educational needs; however, expenses related to internet access shall be subject to reimbursement pursuant to the provisions of section 33-1031(2)(c), Idaho Code, and shall not be eligible for direct payment through the grant distribution platform;

(b) Textbooks, curriculum, or other instructional materials, including educational software and applications;

(c) Fees for national standardized assessments, advanced placement examinations, examinations related to college or university admissions, or industry-recognized certification examinations;

(d) Therapies, including but not limited to occupational, behavioral, physical, speech-language, and audiology therapies, or other services or therapies specifically approved by the board;

(e) Educational programs offered for a fee or pursuant to contract by a school district, public charter school, or career technical education program to nonpublic students, provided that such students may not be counted for purposes of calculating public school enrollment any eligible student; however, the payment of such fees on behalf of a student through the grant distribution platform shall not cause such student to be counted for purposes of calculating public school enrollment; or

(f) Other education expenses and services as approved by the board, upon recommendation of the parent advisory panel established pursuant to section 33-1032, Idaho Code.

(4) "Eligible student" means a person in kindergarten through grade 12, whether a public school or nonpublic school student full-time resident of Idaho who is five (5) to eighteen (18) years of age.

1 (5) "Grant" means an award of one thousand dollars (\$1,000), which must
2 be used for eligible education expenses.

3 (6) "Grant distribution platform" means a digital platform through
4 which grant funds are transferred from the board to participant accounts.

5 (7) "Parent" means the parent or legal guardian of an eligible student
6 or a participant.

7 (8) "Participant" means an eligible student for whom a grant is awarded
8 under section 33-1031, Idaho Code.

9 (9) "Program" means the empowering parents grant program established
10 by section 33-1031, Idaho Code.

11 SECTION 2. That Section 33-1031, Idaho Code, be, and the same is hereby
12 amended to read as follows:

13 33-1031. EMPOWERING PARENTS GRANT PROGRAM. (1) There is hereby estab-
14 lished the empowering parents grant program, to be administered by the board
15 according to the provisions of this section. The purpose of the program is to
16 provide education grants for eligible students.

17 (2) In order to administer the program, the board:

18 (a) Shall create and administer, or designate a third party to create
19 and administer, a grant distribution platform;

20 (b) Shall establish a grant application process for parents;

21 (c) Shall establish provisions for the reimbursement of any eligi-
22 ble education expense for which reimbursement is required and di-
23 rect payment from the platform is not permitted pursuant to section
24 33-1030 (3) (a), Idaho Code;

25 ~~(e)~~ (d) Shall, subject to appropriation, award grants. Grant awards
26 shall be made in the following order of preference:

27 (i) First to eligible students whose household has an adjusted
28 gross income under sixty thousand dollars (\$60,000), as verified
29 by the Idaho state tax commission using the prior year's tax re-
30 turns. Notification of grant awards for students in this category
31 shall be made within thirty (30) days of application, and grant
32 funds shall be made available for participants' use as soon as
33 practicable, but no later than thirty (30) days after the notifi-
34 cation of a grant award;

35 (ii) Starting sixty (60) days after grant awards in a fiscal year
36 are made under subparagraph (i) of this paragraph, to eligible
37 students whose household has an adjusted gross income under sev-
38 enty-five thousand dollars (\$75,000), as verified by the Idaho
39 state tax commission using the prior year's tax returns; and

40 (iii) Starting sixty (60) days after grant awards in a fiscal year
41 are made under subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph, to all other
42 eligible students on a first-come, first-served basis until all
43 available funds are distributed; and

44 ~~(d)~~ (e) May take such other actions as are necessary to implement and
45 enforce the provisions of this section.

46 (3) Prior to the award of a grant, the parent of a participant shall
47 agree to verify program compliance. The parent of a participant shall use
48 grant funds only for eligible education expenses. If a parent is found to
49 misuse grant funds, then neither the parent nor another parent of the student

1 living in the same household may apply for a grant in the future for any stu-
2 dent, provided that the parent may appeal the finding to the board.

3 (4) Grant funds shall be expended within ~~two (2)~~ three (3) years after
4 they are awarded. Any unused funds at the end of the ~~two (2)~~ three (3) year
5 period shall revert to the empowering parents grant program fund established
6 in section 33-1034, Idaho Code. At any time before the three (3) year period
7 ends, unused funds may be forfeited and transferred from the participant ac-
8 count to the program fund.

9 (5) Grant awards per family shall be capped at three thousand dollars
10 (\$3,000), regardless of the number of eligible students in the family.

11 SECTION 3. An emergency existing therefor, which emergency is hereby
12 declared to exist, this act shall be in full force and effect on and after
13 July 1, 2024.