

# Senate Bill 297

Sponsored by Senator THATCHER (Presession filed.)

## SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure **as introduced**.

Establishes Oregon Empowerment Scholarship Program for purpose of providing options in education to students of this state. Restricts number of students from each school district who may enroll in program for first 10 years.

Establishes Department of Education Empowerment Account. Continuously appropriates moneys to Department of Education for payment of department's expenses under program.

Establishes Treasurer Empowerment Account. Continuously appropriates moneys to State Treasurer for payment of treasurer's expenses under program.

Establishes Oregon Empowerment Scholarship Account within State School Fund. Continuously appropriates moneys to Department of Education for purpose of making transfers under program.

Declares emergency, effective on passage.

## A BILL FOR AN ACT

1  
2 Relating to the Oregon Empowerment Scholarship Program; creating new provisions; amending ORS  
3 327.008, 339.030 and 339.505; and declaring an emergency.

4 **Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:**

5 **SECTION 1. Sections 2 to 7 of this 2023 Act may be cited as the Education Equity**  
6 **Emergency Act.**

7 **SECTION 2. As used in sections 2 to 7 of this 2023 Act:**

8 (1) **"Enrolled student" means a student who is a resident of this state and who is enrolled**  
9 **in the Oregon Empowerment Scholarship Program.**

10 (2) **"Parent" means a resident of this state who is a parent or legal guardian of a student**  
11 **who is seeking to enroll, or is already enrolled, in the Oregon Empowerment Scholarship**  
12 **Program.**

13 (3) **"Post-secondary institution of education" means:**

14 (a) **A community college operated under ORS chapter 341;**

15 (b) **A public university listed in ORS 352.002 or the Oregon Health and Science University;**

16 **or**

17 (c) **A generally accredited, private post-secondary institution of education located in**  
18 **Oregon.**

19 (4) **"Qualified expenses" means the following expenses of an enrolled student:**

20 (a) **Tuition, fees, textbooks and other required course materials at a private school that**  
21 **provides a course of study usually taught in kindergarten through grade 12 in the public**  
22 **schools;**

23 (b) **Tuition for instruction provided by a private teacher, as described in ORS 339.030**  
24 **(1)(d), including the costs for any course materials;**

25 (c) **The costs for any course materials incurred by a parent for providing instruction as**  
26 **described in ORS 339.030 (1)(e);**

27 (d) **Tuition for instruction provided at a public school or fees for extracurricular activ-**

**NOTE:** Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter *[italic and bracketed]* is existing law to be omitted. New sections are in **boldfaced** type.

ities at a public school that are provided to students at the public school free of charge;

(e) Related services, as defined in ORS 343.035;

(f) Educational therapies or educational services provided by a licensed or accredited practitioner or provider;

(g) Tutoring services provided by a person licensed by the Teacher Standards and Practices Commission or a person licensed or accredited by any state, regional or national accreditation organization;

(h) Tuition, fees, textbooks or required course materials for a private online learning program;

(i) Tuition, fees, textbooks or required course materials at a post-secondary institution of education;

(j) Fees for a nationally normed assessment, an advanced placement examination or any other assessment or examination related to admission at, or receipt of credit through, a post-secondary institution of education;

(k) Contributions to an account in the Oregon 529 Savings Network; and

(L) Fees for management of an individual account established under the Oregon Empowerment Scholarship Program.

(5) "Statewide average distribution" means an amount determined by the Department of Education each school year that equals the average per student distribution of the State School Fund as general purpose grants for all school districts in this state, as adjusted by any weights described in ORS 327.013 (1)(c)(A).

**SECTION 3.** (1) The Oregon Empowerment Scholarship Program is established for the purpose of providing options in education to the students of this state.

(2)(a) A parent may enroll or reenroll a student in the program by submitting an application to the Department of Education on the form required by the department by April 1 of each year. The student must be a resident of this state who has not completed high school and who meets the qualifications of paragraph (b) or (c) of this subsection.

(b) In the case of a parent seeking enrollment for a student, the student must have attended a public school in this state during the previous school year for at least 100 instructional days and must be:

(A) A child with a disability, as defined in ORS 343.035;

(B) A child who needs additional educational services, as identified by a school district;

(C) A ward of a juvenile court or the Department of Human Services; or

(D) Eligible to receive free or reduced price lunches under the United States Department of Agriculture's current Income Eligibility Guidelines.

(c) In the case of a parent seeking reenrollment for a student, the student must have participated in the program during the previous school year. Any changes in the qualifications described in paragraph (b) of this subsection do not affect the student's eligibility to reenroll in subsequent school years.

(d) Enrollment in the program is valid for one school year only and a parent must reenroll the student in the program for each subsequent school year.

(3) The Department of Education shall enroll or reenroll the student in the program upon:

(a) Finding that the student meets the qualifications described in subsection (2) of this section; and

1 (b) Receiving acknowledgment from the parent that the parent accepts the terms of  
 2 participation in the program, including:

3 (A) Restrictions on the use of moneys received under the program for qualified expenses  
 4 only; and

5 (B) The requirement that the student:

6 (i) Receive at least an education in language arts, mathematics, social studies and sci-  
 7 ence; and

8 (ii) Comply with the requirements specified in ORS 339.035 (3) to (5).

9 (4) An enrolled student may not be required to attend public full-time schools, as pro-  
 10 vided by ORS 339.030, but may receive part-time instruction at a public school and must pay  
 11 tuition for that instruction.

12 (5)(a) Upon enrolling or reenrolling a student in the program, the department shall notify  
 13 the State Treasurer of the enrollment or reenrollment.

14 (b) The State Treasurer shall ensure that an account is established for each enrolled  
 15 student as described in section 4 of this 2023 Act. The State Treasurer shall notify the de-  
 16 partment after the State Treasurer:

17 (A) Verifies that an account already was established for the enrolled student if the en-  
 18 rolled student has participated in the program in a previous year; or

19 (B) Establishes an account for an enrolled student who does not already have an estab-  
 20 lished account.

21 (c) Upon receiving a notice as provided by paragraph (b) of this subsection, the depart-  
 22 ment shall, for each student enrolled:

23 (A) Transfer to an account established for the student under section 4 of this 2023 Act  
 24 an amount that equals 90 percent of the statewide average distribution.

25 (B) Transfer to the school district in which the student is a resident an amount that  
 26 equals five percent of the statewide average distribution.

27 (C) Transfer to the Department of Education Empowerment Account established by sec-  
 28 tion 5 of this 2023 Act an amount that equals four percent of the statewide average distrib-  
 29 ution.

30 (D) Transfer to the Treasurer Empowerment Account established by section 6 of this  
 31 2023 Act an amount that equals one percent of the statewide average distribution.

32 (6) A school or any other provider of services purchased pursuant to the program may  
 33 not share with or refund or rebate to the parent or enrolled student in any manner any  
 34 moneys received through the program.

35 (7) The State Board of Education may adopt any rules necessary for the implementation  
 36 of this section.

37 **SECTION 4.** (1) For each enrolled student in the Oregon Empowerment Scholarship  
 38 Program, the State Treasurer shall ensure that an individual account is established. The  
 39 parent of the enrolled student has the right to withdraw funds from the account only for the  
 40 benefit of the enrolled student and only for qualified expenses.

41 (2) Separate records and reports are required for each account established as provided  
 42 by this section. The State Treasurer shall ensure that, no less frequently than annually, a  
 43 report on the account is made available to the parent.

44 (3) The State Treasurer may contract with a financial institution to manage accounts  
 45 established as provided by this section with the supervision of the State Treasurer.

1 (4) Moneys in an account established as provided by this section:

2 (a) May not be assigned, pledged or otherwise used to secure or obtain a loan or other  
3 advancement.

4 (b) Are exempt from garnishment and may not be subject to execution, attachment or  
5 any other process or to the operation of any bankruptcy or insolvency law.

6 (c) Are not considered income for tax purposes.

7 (5) For the purpose of ensuring that moneys in an individual account are used only for  
8 qualified expenses, the Department of Education shall:

9 (a) Ensure that an annual audit is made of each account; and

10 (b) Establish a toll-free telephone line that is available to members of the public to  
11 anonymously report any fraudulent use of moneys from an account.

12 (6) A parent, an enrolled student or a provider of services purchased pursuant to the  
13 program may be disqualified from program participation if the person is found to have com-  
14 mitted an intentional program violation consisting of any misrepresentation or other act that  
15 materially violates a law or rule governing the program. The department may remove any  
16 parent or enrolled student from eligibility for participating in the program and shall notify  
17 the State Treasurer. A parent may appeal the department's decision pursuant to the con-  
18 tested case process described in ORS chapter 183.

19 (7) Individual account information, including names, addresses, telephone numbers and  
20 other personal identification information, is confidential and must be maintained as confi-  
21 dential unless the person who provides the information, or is the subject of the information,  
22 expressly agrees in writing that the information may be disclosed.

23 (8) An enrolled student's account shall be closed and any remaining funds shall be de-  
24 posited in the State School Fund upon the later of:

25 (a) The enrolled student's graduation from a post-secondary institution of education;

26 (b) A period of six consecutive years after the student has enrolled in a post-secondary  
27 institution of education;

28 (c) A period of four consecutive years after high school completion in which the student  
29 has not enrolled in a post-secondary institution of education; or

30 (d) A period of four consecutive years after the student no longer meets the qualifica-  
31 tions described in section 3 (2) of this 2023 Act and has not enrolled in a post-secondary in-  
32 stitution of education.

33 **SECTION 5.** (1) The Department of Education Empowerment Account is established in  
34 the State Treasury, separate and distinct from the General Fund. Interest earned by the  
35 account shall be credited to the account. All moneys credited to the account are contin-  
36 uously appropriated to the Department of Education for the payment of expenses of the de-  
37 partment under sections 2 to 7 of this 2023 Act.

38 (2) The Department of Education Empowerment Account consists of:

39 (a) Moneys transferred as provided by section 3 (5)(c)(C) of this 2023 Act;

40 (b) Moneys appropriated to the account by the Legislative Assembly; and

41 (c) Any other moneys from state or federal sources.

42 **SECTION 6.** (1) The Treasurer Empowerment Account is established in the State Treas-  
43 ury, separate and distinct from the General Fund. Interest earned by the account shall be  
44 credited to the account. All moneys credited to the account are continuously appropriated  
45 to the State Treasurer for the payment of expenses of the State Treasurer under sections 2

1 to 7 of this 2023 Act.

2 (2) The Treasurer Empowerment Account consists of:

3 (a) Moneys transferred as provided by section 3 (5)(c)(D) of this 2023 Act;

4 (b) Moneys appropriated to the account by the Legislative Assembly; and

5 (c) Any other moneys from state or federal sources.

6 **SECTION 7.** (1) As used in this section, “participating school” means a private school  
7 that provides instruction to an enrolled student in a course of study usually taught in  
8 kindergarten through grade 12 in the public schools.

9 (2) Nothing in sections 2 to 7 of this 2023 Act:

10 (a) Permits a state or federal government agency to exercise control or supervision over  
11 any participating school, private teacher, parent or legal guardian.

12 (b) Makes a participating school, private teacher, parent or legal guardian an agent of  
13 the state or federal government.

14 (c)(A) Requires a participating school to change the creed with which the school is affil-  
15 iated, or to change its practices, admission policy or curriculum, in order to accept enrolled  
16 students who pay tuition or fees as provided by sections 2 to 7 of this 2023 Act.

17 (B) Requires a private teacher to change the teacher’s creed, practices or curriculum in  
18 order to accept enrolled students who pay tuition or fees as provided by sections 2 to 7 of  
19 this 2023 Act.

20 (C) Requires a parent or legal guardian to change the parent’s or guardian’s creed,  
21 practices or curriculum.

22 (3) In any legal proceeding challenging the application of sections 2 to 7 of this 2023 Act  
23 to a participating school, private teacher, parent or legal guardian, the state bears the bur-  
24 den of establishing that the law or rule is necessary and does not impose any undue burden  
25 on a participating school, private teacher, parent or legal guardian.

26 **SECTION 8.** (1) Sections 2 to 7 of this 2023 Act become operative January 1, 2024.

27 (2) The State Board of Education, Department of Education and State Treasurer may  
28 take any action before the operative date specified in subsection (1) of this section to ensure  
29 that students first be allowed to participate in the Oregon Empowerment Scholarship Pro-  
30 gram during the 2024-2025 school year.

31 **SECTION 9.** Section 10 of this 2023 Act is added to and made a part of ORS chapter 327.

32 **SECTION 10.** (1) The Oregon Empowerment Scholarship Account is established within  
33 the State School Fund.

34 (2) The account shall consist of any moneys transferred as provided by ORS 327.008 and  
35 any other state or federal moneys available for the purposes of the Oregon Empowerment  
36 Scholarship Program.

37 (3) Moneys in the account are continuously appropriated to the Department of Education  
38 for the purpose of making transfers under section 3 (5)(c) of this 2023 Act.

39 (4) If the amount available in the account is not adequate to meet costs, the Department  
40 of Education shall submit a revised budget to the Legislative Assembly or, if the Legislative  
41 Assembly is not in session, to the Emergency Board.

42 **SECTION 11.** ORS 327.008 is amended to read:

43 327.008. (1)(a) There is established a State School Fund in the General Fund.

44 (b) The Department of Education, on behalf of the State of Oregon, may solicit and accept gifts,  
45 grants, donations and other moneys from public and private sources for the State School

1 Fund. Moneys received as provided in this paragraph shall be deposited into the State School Fund.

2 (c) The State School Fund shall consist of moneys appropriated by the Legislative Assembly,  
3 moneys transferred from the Fund for Student Success, moneys transferred from the Education Sta-  
4 bility Fund and the Oregon Marijuana Account and moneys received as provided in paragraph (b)  
5 of this subsection.

6 (d) The State School Fund is continuously appropriated to the Department of Education for the  
7 purposes of ORS 327.006 to 327.077, 327.095, 327.099, 327.101, 327.125, 327.137, 327.348, 327.356 to  
8 327.359, 336.575, 336.580, 336.635, 343.243, 343.533, 343.941 and 343.961 **and sections 2 to 7 of this**  
9 **2023 Act.**

10 (2) There shall be apportioned from the State School Fund to each school district a State School  
11 Fund grant, consisting of the positive amount equal to a general purpose grant and a facility grant  
12 and a transportation grant and a high cost disabilities grant minus local revenue, computed as pro-  
13 vided in ORS 327.011 and 327.013.

14 (3) For the first school year after a public charter school ceases to operate because of dissol-  
15 ution or closure or because of termination or nonrenewal of a charter, there shall be apportioned  
16 from the State School Fund to each school district that had sponsored a public charter school that  
17 ceased to operate an amount equal to the school district's general purpose grant per extended  
18 ADMw multiplied by five percent of the ADM of the public charter school for the previous school  
19 year.

20 (4) There shall be apportioned from the State School Fund to each education service district a  
21 State School Fund grant as calculated under ORS 327.019.

22 (5) All figures used in the determination of the distribution of the State School Fund shall be  
23 estimates for the same year as the distribution occurs, unless otherwise specified.

24 (6) Numbers of students in average daily membership used in the distribution formula shall be  
25 the numbers as of June of the year of distribution.

26 (7) A school district may not use the portion of the State School Fund grant that is attributable  
27 to the facility grant for capital construction costs.

28 (8) The total amount of the State School Fund that is distributed as facility grants may not ex-  
29 ceed \$3 million in any biennium. If the total amount to be distributed as facility grants exceeds this  
30 limitation, the Department of Education shall prorate the amount of funds available for facility  
31 grants among those school districts that qualified for a facility grant. If the total amount to be dis-  
32 tributed as facility grants does not exceed this limitation, any remaining amounts shall be expended  
33 for expenses incurred by the Office of School Facilities as provided in ORS 326.125 (1).

34 (9) Each biennium, the Department of Education may expend from the State School Fund no  
35 more than \$10 million for expenses incurred by the Office of School Facilities under ORS 326.125 (2)  
36 to (7).

37 (10) Each fiscal year, the Department of Education shall transfer to the Pediatric Nursing Fa-  
38 cility Account established in ORS 327.022 the amount necessary to pay the costs of educational  
39 services provided to students admitted to pediatric nursing facilities as provided in ORS 343.941.

40 (11) Each fiscal year, the Department of Education shall transfer the amount of \$55 million from  
41 the State School Fund to the High Cost Disabilities Account established in ORS 327.348.

42 (12)(a) Each biennium, the Department of Education shall transfer \$39.5 million from the State  
43 School Fund to the Educator Advancement Fund established under ORS 342.953.

44 (b) For the purpose of making the transfer under this subsection:

45 (A) The total amount available for all distributions from the State School Fund shall be reduced

1 by \$6 million;

2 (B) The amount distributed to school districts from the State School Fund under this section and  
 3 ORS 327.013 shall be reduced by \$16.75 million; and

4 (C) The amount distributed to education service districts from the State School Fund under this  
 5 section and ORS 327.019 shall be reduced by \$16.75 million.

6 (c) For each biennium, the amounts identified in this subsection shall be adjusted by the same  
 7 percentage by which the instructions furnished to state agencies by the Governor under ORS 291.204  
 8 direct the state agencies to adjust their agency budget requests for special payments under ORS  
 9 291.216 (6)(a)(C).

10 (13) Each biennium, the Department of Education shall transfer \$12.5 million from the State  
 11 School Fund to the Statewide English Language Learner Program Account established under ORS  
 12 327.344.

13 (14) Each fiscal year, the Department of Education may expend up to \$550,000 from the State  
 14 School Fund for the contract described in ORS 329.488. The amount distributed to education service  
 15 districts from the State School Fund under this section and ORS 327.019 shall be reduced by the  
 16 amount expended by the department under this subsection.

17 (15) Each biennium, the Department of Education may expend up to \$350,000 from the State  
 18 School Fund to provide administration of and support for the development of talented and gifted  
 19 education under ORS 343.404.

20 (16) Each biennium, the Department of Education may expend up to \$150,000 from the State  
 21 School Fund for the administration of a program to increase the number of speech-language  
 22 pathologists and speech-language pathology assistants under ORS 348.394 to 348.406.

23 (17) Each biennium, the Department of Education shall transfer \$2 million from the State School  
 24 Fund for deposit to the Healthy School Facilities Fund established under ORS  
 25 332.337. Notwithstanding ORS 332.337, the department may expend moneys received in the Healthy  
 26 School Facilities Fund under this subsection only as grants for costs associated with testing for el-  
 27 evated levels of lead in water used for drinking or food preparation.

28 (18) Each biennium, the Department of Education shall transfer an amount not to exceed  
 29 \$5,595,000 for the purpose of making tampons and sanitary pads available as provided by ORS  
 30 326.545.

31 (19) Each fiscal year, the Department of Education shall transfer the amount of \$2.5 million from  
 32 the State School Fund to the Small School District Supplement Fund established in ORS 327.359.

33 **(20) Each fiscal year, the Department of Education shall transfer to the Oregon**  
 34 **Empowerment Scholarship Account established in section 10 of this 2023 Act the amount**  
 35 **necessary to make the transfers required by section 3 (5)(c) of this 2023 Act.**

36 **SECTION 12. (1) The amendments to ORS 327.008 by section 11 of this 2023 Act become**  
 37 **operative July 1, 2024.**

38 **(2) The amendments to ORS 327.008 by section 11 of this 2023 Act apply to State School**  
 39 **Fund distributions commencing with the 2024-2025 school year distributions.**

40 **SECTION 13.** ORS 339.030 is amended to read:

41 339.030. (1) In the following cases, children may not be required to attend public full-time  
 42 schools:

43 (a) Children being taught in a private or parochial school in the courses of study usually taught  
 44 in kindergarten through grade 12 in the public schools and in attendance for a period equivalent to  
 45 that required of children attending public schools in the 1994-1995 school year.

1 (b) Children proving to the satisfaction of the district school board that they have acquired  
2 equivalent knowledge to that acquired in the courses of study taught in kindergarten through grade  
3 12 in the public schools.

4 (c) Children who have received a high school diploma or a modified diploma.

5 (d) Children being taught for a period equivalent to that required of children attending public  
6 schools by a private teacher the courses of study usually taught in kindergarten through grade 12  
7 in the public school.

8 (e) Children being educated in the children's home by a parent or legal guardian.

9 **(f) Children who are considered to be taught by a parent or legal guardian because of**  
10 **participation in the Oregon Empowerment Scholarship Program.**

11 [(f)] (g) Children whose sixth birthday occurred on or before September 1 immediately preceding  
12 the beginning of the current school year if the parent or legal guardian of the child notified in  
13 writing the school district of which the child is a resident that the parent or legal guardian will  
14 delay enrolling the child in a public full-time school for only one school year for the purpose of  
15 better meeting the child's needs for cognitive, social or physical development, as determined by the  
16 parent or legal guardian.

17 [(g)] (h) Children who are present in the United States on a nonimmigrant visa and who are  
18 attending a private, accredited English language learner program in preparation for attending a  
19 private high school or college.

20 [(h)] (i) Children excluded from attendance as provided by law.

21 (2) The State Board of Education and the Higher Education Coordinating Commission by rule  
22 shall establish procedures whereby, on a semiannual basis, an exemption from compulsory attend-  
23 ance may be granted to the parent or legal guardian of any child 16 or 17 years of age who is  
24 lawfully employed full-time or who is lawfully employed part-time and enrolled in school, a commu-  
25 nity college or an alternative education program as defined in ORS 336.615. An exemption also may  
26 be granted to any child who is an emancipated minor or who has initiated the procedure for  
27 emancipation under ORS 419B.550 to 419B.558.

28 **SECTION 14.** ORS 339.505 is amended to read:

29 339.505. (1) For purposes of the student accounting system required by ORS 339.515, the follow-  
30 ing definitions shall be used:

31 (a) "Graduate" means an individual who has:

32 (A) Not reached 21 years of age or whose 21st birthday occurs during the current school year;

33 (B) Met all state requirements and local requirements for attendance, competence and units of  
34 credit for high school; and

35 (C) Received one of the following:

36 (i) A high school diploma issued by a school district or a public charter school.

37 (ii) A high school diploma issued by an authorized community college.

38 (iii) A modified diploma issued by a school district or a public charter school.

39 (iv) An extended diploma issued by a school district or a public charter school.

40 (v) An alternative certificate issued by a school district or a public charter school.

41 (b) "School dropout" means an individual who:

42 (A) Has enrolled for the current school year, or was enrolled in the previous school year and  
43 did not attend during the current school year;

44 (B) Is not a high school graduate;

45 (C) Has not received a certificate for passing an approved high school equivalency test such as



1 the General Educational Development (GED) test; and

2 (D) Has withdrawn from school.

3 (c) "School dropout" does not include a student described by at least one of the following:

4 (A) A student who has transferred to another educational system or institution that leads to  
5 graduation and the school district has received a written request for the transfer of the student's  
6 records or transcripts.

7 (B) A student who is deceased.

8 (C) A student who is participating in home instruction paid for by the district.

9 (D) A student who is being taught by a private teacher, parent or legal guardian pursuant to  
10 ORS 339.030 (1)(d), [or] (e) or (f).

11 (E) A student who is participating in a Department of Education approved public or private  
12 education program, an alternative education program as defined in ORS 336.615 or a hospital edu-  
13 cation program, or is residing in a Department of Human Services or an Oregon Health Authority  
14 facility.

15 (F) A student who is temporarily residing in a shelter care program certified by the Oregon  
16 Youth Authority or in a juvenile detention facility.

17 (G) A student who is enrolled in a foreign exchange program.

18 (H) A student who is temporarily absent from school because of suspension, a family emergency,  
19 or severe health or medical problems that prohibit the student from attending school.

20 (I) A student who has received a certificate for passing an approved high school equivalency test  
21 such as the General Educational Development (GED) test.

22 (2) The State Board of Education shall prescribe by rule when an unexplained absence becomes  
23 withdrawal, when a student is considered enrolled in school, acceptable alternative education pro-  
24 grams under ORS 336.615 to 336.665 and the standards for excused absences for purposes of ORS  
25 339.065 for family emergencies and health and medical problems.

26 **SECTION 15. (1) Notwithstanding section 3 of this 2023 Act, the Department of Education**  
27 **may not enroll in the Oregon Empowerment Scholarship Program more than 0.5 percent of**  
28 **the students who reside in a school district unless the school district provides written con-**  
29 **sent for the department to enroll a greater percentage.**

30 **(2) Notwithstanding section 3 of this 2023 Act, if the number of applications from stu-**  
31 **dents who reside in the school district exceeds the limit designated under subsection (1) of**  
32 **this section, and the school district has not provided written consent as described in sub-**  
33 **section (1) of this section, the department shall select students for enrollment through an**  
34 **equitable lottery selection process. The department shall give priority to students who en-**  
35 **rolled in the Oregon Empowerment Scholarship Program the previous school year and to**  
36 **siblings of students who enrolled in the program the previous school year.**

37 **(3) The department shall provide timely notice to students who are not allowed to enroll**  
38 **in the program because of the limit designated under subsection (1) of this section. The no-**  
39 **tice must provide an explanation from the school district about why the school district chose**  
40 **not to give consent for the department to enroll a greater percentage of students as allowed**  
41 **under subsection (1) of this section.**

42 **SECTION 16. (1) Section 15 of this 2023 Act is repealed on July 1, 2034.**

43 **(2) Section 15 of this 2023 Act applies only to applications submitted for any school year**  
44 **from the 2024-2025 school year through the 2034-2035 school year.**

45 **SECTION 17. (1) A person commits scholarship savings account fraud if the person**

1 knowingly obtains, by means of a false statement or representation, by impersonation or by  
2 other fraudulent device, any of the following:

3 (a) Assistance or service in violation of sections 2 to 7 of this 2023 Act;

4 (b) Assistance or service that is greater than that allowed under sections 2 to 7 of this  
5 2023 Act; or

6 (c) Assistance or service that is not a qualified expense as defined in section 2 of this 2023  
7 Act.

8 (2) Any action that is considered an act of scholarship savings account fraud under this  
9 section is an act of theft by deception under ORS 164.085 and is punishable as an act of theft  
10 by deception.

11 SECTION 18. This 2023 Act being necessary for the immediate preservation of the public  
12 peace, health and safety, an emergency is declared to exist, and this 2023 Act takes effect  
13 on its passage.

14 \_\_\_\_\_