

Home-schoolers

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by: World's Editorial Writers
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Giving equal access to OHLAP

It seems only fair that home-schooled students who meet all the eligibility requirements should be able to participate in the popular state-financed Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Program.

That program grants scholarships to students from families earning less than \$50,000 annually.

A measure allowing home-schooler participation in OHLAP passed the Oklahoma House this week and is headed for the Senate. As with student in public schools, home-schooled students would be required to take a rigorous college curriculum, maintain a 2.5 grade-point average and stay out of trouble. All those eligibility requirements would need to be verified. Students also would have to score a 22 or higher on the ACT.

Under current law, a student must graduate from an Oklahoma high school to receive an OHLAP scholarship, "no matter how poor their families are or how high they score on the ACT," said Randy Terrill, R-Moore, who sponsored the bill.

"Many home-school families experience financial need just like many public school families do. To penalize a student just because they were home-schooled is unfair," he said.

The OHLAP program will cost the state \$37 million this year and an estimated \$48 million for next fiscal year. Adding eligible home-schoolers to the system would amount to only about \$69,000 next year and \$348,000 by fiscal 2010.

The purpose of OHLAP is two-fold: To help deserving students who otherwise might not have the opportunity to attend college and to help the state acquire more college graduates. As long as home-schooled students meet the same requirements as their peers in public school, there should be no impediment to participation in OHLAP.

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