

**The Florida Senate**  
**BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

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Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Rules

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BILL: SB 46

INTRODUCER: Senator Stewart

SUBJECT: Reading Achievement Initiative for Scholastic Excellence Program

DATE: January 23, 2024

REVISED: \_\_\_\_\_

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	<u>Brick</u>	<u>Bouck</u>	<u>ED</u>	<b>Favorable</b>
2.	<u>Rao</u>	<u>Tuszynski</u>	<u>CF</u>	<b>Favorable</b>
3.	<u>Brick</u>	<u>Twogood</u>	<u>RC</u>	<b>Pre-meeting</b>

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**I. Summary:**

SB 46 authorizes school districts participating in the Reading Achievement Initiative for Scholastic Excellence (RAISE) tutoring program to offer the tutoring program after the school day and to provide a stipend to instructional personnel and high school students serving as tutors during after-school hours.

The bill limits to unpaid hours the tutoring hours that count towards meeting community service requirements for high school graduation and the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2024.

**II. Present Situation:**

**Reading Achievement Initiative for Scholastic Excellence Act**

In 2021, the Florida Legislature established the Reading Achievement Initiative for Scholastic Excellence (RAISE) program within the Florida Department of Education (DOE).<sup>1</sup> The program provides instructional supports to school districts, school administrators, and instructional personnel in implementing evidence-based reading instruction and interventions in order to improve student reading achievement.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Chapter 2021-9, s. 17, Laws of Fla., *codified at* s.1008.365, F.S.

<sup>2</sup> Section 1008.365(2), F.S.

Under the RAISE program, the DOE operates 20 literacy support regions and regional support teams in Florida to assist schools in improving low reading scores.<sup>3</sup> The DOE may establish eligibility criteria for participating schools, but schools that must be included are:<sup>4</sup>

- Schools serving students in kindergarten through grade 5 where 50 percent or more of the students score below a Level 3 on the statewide, standardized English Language Arts (ELA) assessment; and
- Schools where 50 percent or more of students in kindergarten through grade 3 are not on track to pass the grade 3 ELA assessment based on data from the coordinated screening and progress monitoring system.

Identified schools are required to implement a school improvement plan with strategies to improve reading performance.<sup>5</sup> The DOE has identified 1,184 schools for support as RAISE schools in the 2023-2024 academic year.<sup>6</sup>

### ***Tutoring Program***

As part of the RAISE program, the DOE established a tutoring program and developed training to prepare eligible high school students to tutor students in kindergarten through grade 3.<sup>7</sup>

To be eligible to participate in the tutoring program, a student must be a rising high school junior or senior and meet the following requirements:<sup>8</sup>

- Have a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or higher;
- Have no history of out-of-school suspensions or expulsions;
- Be on track to complete all core course requirements to graduate; and
- Have written recommendations from at least two present or former high school teachers of record or extracurricular activity sponsors.

High school students that participate as tutors must be recruited, trained, and deployed by the school district. Tutoring must occur during the school day, on school district property, and under the supervision of instructional personnel.<sup>9</sup>

A high school student may earn up to three elective credits for high school graduation based on the verified number of hours the student spends tutoring. The hours may be counted towards community service requirements for high school graduation and the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Section 1008.365(3), F.S.; Florida Department of Education, *Raise Regions*, available at <https://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7539/urlt/JRFSRLDFINALMAP.pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> Section 1008.365(4), F.S.

<sup>5</sup> Section 1008.365(4), F.S.

<sup>6</sup> Florida Department of Education, *RAISE Schools Identified for 2023-2024*, available at <https://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7539/urlt/2223RAISE-SchID.pdf>.

<sup>7</sup> Section 1008.365(8), F.S.; Florida Department of Education, *RAISE High School Tutoring Program*, available at <https://www.fldoe.org/academics/standards/just-read-fl/tutoring.stml> (last visited Jan. 12, 2024).

<sup>8</sup> Section 1008.365(8)(a), F.S.

<sup>9</sup> Section 1008.365(8)(b), F.S.

<sup>10</sup> Section 1008.365(8)(c), F.S.

The DOE must designate a high school student who provides at least 75 verified hours of tutoring in the RAISE program as a New Worlds Scholar and award him or her a commemorative pin for this designation.<sup>11</sup>

### **Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program**

The Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program (Bright Futures Program) is a lottery-funded scholarship program to reward any Florida high school graduate who merits recognition of high academic achievement and who enrolls in a degree program, certificate program, or applied technology program at an eligible Florida public or private postsecondary education institution.<sup>12</sup>

The Bright Futures Program consists of the:<sup>13</sup>

- Florida Academic Scholarship (FAS), which provides for an award equal to the amount necessary to pay 100 percent of tuition and applicable fees and an additional stipend for textbooks as specified in the General Appropriations Act.<sup>14</sup>;
- Florida Medallion Scholarship (FMS), which provides for an award equal to the amount necessary to pay 75 percent of tuition and fees; however, an eligible FMS recipient enrolled at a Florida College System institution is eligible for an award amount equal to the amount necessary to pay 100 percent of tuition and fees.<sup>15</sup>;
- Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholarship (FGSV) and the Florida Gold Seal Career and Professional Education Scholarship (CAPE), which provide for an award for a maximum of 100 percent of the number of credit hours or equivalent clock hours required to complete an applied technology diploma, associate in applied science or associate in science degree, or a postsecondary career certificate program.<sup>16</sup>

### ***Bright Futures Program Eligibility Requirements – Volunteer and Paid Work Hours***

A Florida high school student who wishes to qualify for a Bright Futures Program award must graduate from a Florida public high school with a standard high school diploma, graduate from a private high school registered with the DOE, earn a general education diploma, complete a home education program, or graduate from a non-Florida high school.<sup>17</sup> The various awards also have separate requirements for completed credits, grade-point average, and scores on college entrance exams.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Section 1008.365(8)(c), F.S.

<sup>12</sup> Section 1009.53(1), F.S.

<sup>13</sup> Section 1009.53(2), F.S.

<sup>14</sup> Section 1009.534(2), F.S.

<sup>15</sup> Section 1009.535(2), F.S.

<sup>16</sup> Section 1009.532(5)(a)1., F.S.; *see also* 2023-24 *Bright Futures Student Handbook, Chapter 2: What You Need to Know Now That You Are Eligible* (July 1, 2023), at 3, available at <https://www.floridastudentfinancialaidsg.org/PDF/BFHandbookChapter2.pdf>.

<sup>17</sup> Florida Department of Education, 2023-24 *Bright Futures Student Handbook, Chapter 1: Initial Eligibility Requirements* (Aug. 2023), at 2-3, available at <https://www.floridastudentfinancialaidsg.org/PDF/BFHandbookChapter1.pdf>. A student living with a parent who is on military or public service assignment may graduate from a non-Florida high school.

<sup>18</sup> Florida Department of Education, 2023-24 *Bright Futures Student Handbook, Chapter 1: Initial Eligibility Requirements* (Aug. 2023), at 3-8, available at <https://www.floridastudentfinancialaidsg.org/PDF/BFHandbookChapter1.pdf>.

In addition to initial eligibility requirements, the awards require the following volunteer and paid work hours:

- FAS – 100 hours of volunteer service hours or paid work hours, or a combination of both.
- FMS – 75 hours of volunteer service hours, or 100 hours of paid work hours, or a combination of volunteer and paid work hours totaling 100 hours.
- FGSV and CAPE – 30 volunteer service hours, 100 paid work hours, or a combination of 100 total hours.<sup>19</sup>

For the 2022-2023 academic year, a total of \$598,468,957 was disbursed to 33,062 students receiving a Bright Futures Program award.<sup>20</sup>

### III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

SB 46 authorizes school districts participating in the Reading Achievement Initiative for Scholastic Excellence (RAISE) tutoring program to offer the tutoring program after the school day and to provide a stipend to instructional personnel and high school students serving as tutors during after-school hours.

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### IV. Constitutional Issues:

#### A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

#### B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

#### C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

#### D. State Tax or Fee Increases:

None.

#### E. Other Constitutional Issues:

None identified .

<sup>19</sup> Section 1009.536(1)(e), F.S.

<sup>20</sup> Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program, *Florida Bright Futures Student Counts and Total Costs* (Sep. 2023), available at <https://www.floridastudentfinancialaidsg.org/PDF/PSI/BFReportsA.pdf>.

**V. Fiscal Impact Statement:**

## A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

## B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

## C. Government Sector Impact:

None.

**VI. Technical Deficiencies:**

None.

**VII. Related Issues:**

None.

**VIII. Statutes Affected:**

This bill substantially amends section 1008.365 of the Florida Statutes.

**IX. Additional Information:**

## A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

## B. Amendments:

None.