

Committee on Education

CS/HB 847 — Florida Postsecondary Academic Library Network

by Education and Employment Committee and Reps. Byrd and Silvers

This bill establishes the Florida Postsecondary Academic Library Network (Network) under the joint oversight of the Board of Governors (BOG) and the Department of Education (DOE), in place of the Florida Academic Library Services Cooperative (FALSC).

The bill generally assigns to the Network the functions of the FALSC, with modifications, which include recommending the use of low cost, no cost, or open-access textbooks and innovative pricing techniques; negotiating statewide licensing of electronic library resources; and managing a single library automation system.

The bill repeals the Complete Florida Plus Program (Complete Florida Plus) but retains in the Network purposes from Complete Florida Plus regarding access to distance learning courses and degree programs, and the provision of online academic support services. The bill also assigns to the Network functions formerly under Complete Florida Plus, with modifications, including:

- A statewide Internet-based catalog of distance learning courses, which includes courses, degree programs, and resources offered by public postsecondary institutions.
- Statewide online student advising services and support with specified functions, limited to public postsecondary institutions.

The bill assigns responsibility for determining the host entity for these specified services to the Office of the BOG and the DOE, and requires the Chancellors of the FCS and the BOG to provide oversight for successful delivery of these services. The host entity is required to:

- Develop and disseminate guidelines for the statewide Internet-based catalog of distance learning courses.
- Submit a report to the Chancellors of the FCS and the BOG, by December 31, 2021, and annually thereafter, regarding the implementation and operation of the Network. The Chancellors must provide this report to the Governor, the Legislature, the BOG, and the State Board of Education.

The bill further requires the Commissioner of Education and Chancellor of the BOG to provide, by June 1, 2022, a joint recommendation for a process by which school district career centers and charter technical career centers would access appropriate Network services.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect July 1, 2021.

Vote: Senate 40-0; House 119-0