

Tab 1 SB 86 by Baxley; (Compare to H 00281) Student Financial Aid						
594362	D	S		ED, Baxley	Delete everything after	03/15 12:04 PM
936858	A	S	TP	ED, Thurston	Delete L.183 - 543:	03/09 04:47 PM
592876	A	S		ED, Polsky	btw L.243 - 244:	03/15 11:00 AM

Tab 2 SB 1372 by Burgess; (Similar to CS/H 00003) Literacy Improvement						
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Tab 3 SB 1898 by Rodriguez; (Similar to H 07011) Student Literacy						
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The Florida Senate
COMMITTEE MEETING EXPANDED AGENDA

EDUCATION
Senator Gruters, Chair
Senator Jones, Vice Chair

MEETING DATE: Tuesday, March 16, 2021
TIME: 12:30—3:00 p.m.
PLACE: *Pat Thomas Committee Room, 412 Knott Building*

MEMBERS: Senator Gruters, Chair; Senator Jones, Vice Chair; Senators Berman, Bradley, Broxson, Diaz, Hutson, Passidomo, Polsky, and Thurston

TAB	BILL NO. and INTRODUCER	BILL DESCRIPTION and SENATE COMMITTEE ACTIONS	COMMITTEE ACTION
PUBLIC TESTIMONY WILL BE RECEIVED FROM ROOM A3 AT THE DONALD L. TUCKER CIVIC CENTER, 505 W PENSACOLA STREET, TALLAHASSEE, FL 32301			
1	SB 86 Baxley (Compare H 281, CS/S 52)	Student Financial Aid; Requiring that eligibility for state financial aid awards and tuition assistance grants be reevaluated each term and identify students' program of study; revising the formula for calculating how Florida Public Student Assistance Grant Program funds are distributed; authorizing a Bright Futures Scholarship recipient to apply the unused portion of a Florida Academic Scholars award or Florida Medallion Scholars award toward graduate study for a specified academic year; establishing the Florida Bright Opportunities Grant Program; establishing the Florida Endeavor Scholarship Program, etc.	ED 03/09/2021 Temporarily Postponed ED 03/16/2021 AED AP
2	SB 1372 Burgess (Similar CS/H 3)	Literacy Improvement; Establishing the New Worlds Reading Initiative under the Department of Education; requiring the administrator, in consultation with a specified entity, to develop a selection of books; requiring the administrator to coordinate monthly book distribution to certain students; requiring the administrator to assist with local implementation of the initiative; requiring that a certain notification include information about the initiative, etc.	ED 03/16/2021 AED AP

COMMITTEE MEETING EXPANDED AGENDA

Education

Tuesday, March 16, 2021, 12:30—3:00 p.m.

TAB	BILL NO. and INTRODUCER	BILL DESCRIPTION and SENATE COMMITTEE ACTIONS	COMMITTEE ACTION
3	SB 1898 Rodriguez (Similar H 7011, Compare H 419, H 1159, CS/S 934, S 1282)	Student Literacy; Revising and providing duties for the Just Read, Florida! Office within the Department of Education; requiring the Department of Education, in consultation with the Office of Early Learning, to implement a coordinated screening and progress monitoring system for students in the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program through grade 8; requiring certain students to participate in a certain coordinated screening and progress monitoring system; creating the "Reading Achievement Initiative for Scholastic Excellence Act", etc.	ED 03/16/2021 AED AP

Other Related Meeting Documents

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.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Education

BILL: SB 86
 INTRODUCER: Senator Baxley
 SUBJECT: Student Financial Aid
 DATE: March 15, 2021 REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	Jahnke	Bouck	ED	Pre-meeting
2.			AED	
3.			AP	

I. Summary:

SB 86 modifies provisions relating to postsecondary financial aid programs, and establishes new financial aid programs for Pell Grant eligible students and students without a high school diploma. Specifically, the bill:

- Modifies general eligibility for state financial aid by:
 - Requiring the Board of Governors (BOG) and State Board of Education (SBE) to each approve a list of career certificate, undergraduate, and graduate degree programs that lead directly to employment.
 - Specifying that, beginning in the 2022-2023 academic year and thereafter, student eligibility for financial aid or tuition assistance is determined by enrollment in a program of study on a certificate and degree list approved by the BOG or SBE.
- Establishes the Florida Bright Opportunities Grant Program for Pell Grant-eligible students with a tuition and registration fee balance at a Florida College System (FCS) institution or career center after application of all federal gift aid and state financial assistance.
- Modifies the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program by:
 - Changing the Florida Academic Scholars (FAS) and Florida Medallion Scholars (FMS) awards to an amount specified in the General Appropriations Act (GAA).
 - Specifying that beginning in the 2022-2023 academic year, the number of credit hours funded under a Bright Futures award is reduced by the number of credit hours earned through articulated acceleration mechanisms.
 - Creating additional alternative eligibility options for FAS and FMS awards for students who earn an associate degree through dual enrollment or who earn an Advanced Placement Capstone Diploma.
 - Specifying that, beginning in the 2022-2023 academic year, the authorization to use the unused portion of a FAS or FMS for graduate study must be for a program on an approved list by the BOG or SBE.

- Specifies that the 2021-2022 academic year is the final year of initial eligibility for nonresident students to qualify for the Benacquisto Scholarship Program, and modifies the award to as specified in the GAA.
- Establishes the Florida Endeavor Scholarship Program for students without a high school diploma or equivalent who are enrolled at a career center or FCS institution.
- Clarifies that postsecondary tuition and fee exemptions apply to a student who is currently in the custody of the Department of Children and Families or a specified relative or nonrelative, or who was at the time he or she reached 18 years of age.

For fiscal year 2021-2022, the funding required for the Florida Bright Opportunities Grant Program and the Florida Endeavor Scholarship Program is subject to an appropriation in the General Appropriations Act. The impact on state funding starting in 2022-2023 is expected to be a net positive to the state budget, but is indeterminate at this time. See Section V.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2021.

II. Present Situation:

The present situation for each relevant portions of the bill is discussed under the Effect of Proposed Changes of this bill analysis.

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

Identification of Certificate and Degree Programs Aligned to Labor Market Demand

Present Situation

Board of Governors - Programs of Strategic Emphasis

The Programs of Strategic Emphasis (PSE) exists as one of several tools for aligning the degree production goals of the State University System with the economic and workforce needs of Florida.¹ Periodically, the Board of Governors (BOG) revises the PSE list through an analysis of the current reports and data of key economic and workforce councils in Florida. These “key councils” include Enterprise Florida, Inc., the Council of 100, the Florida Chamber of Commerce, and the Department of Economic Opportunity.² This process identifies occupational areas with high demand for postsecondary graduates and provides an opportunity to identify emerging and evolving business sectors and occupations.³ The current list of PSE includes 868⁴ programs in the following areas:⁵

¹ Board of Governors, *Methodology for Updating Programs of Strategic Emphasis in the State University System of Florida, September 2020* available at https://www.flbog.edu/wp-content/uploads/CIP_2020_PSE_Methodology_CE_FINAL.pdf.

² Board of Governors, *Methodology for Updating Programs of Strategic Emphasis in the State University System of Florida, Board of Governors 2019 Mid-Course Correction - 2025 Strategic Plan (September 2019)* available at https://www.flbog.edu/wp-content/uploads/SPC_06c_2019_PSE_Methodology_and_list_CE.pdf.

³ State University System of Florida, *Programs of Strategic Emphasis* <https://www.flbog.edu/resources/academic/programs-of-strategic-emphasis/> (last visited March 2, 2021).

⁴ Board of Governors, *Current PSE list approved by the BOG at its September 2020 meeting (September 2020)* available at <https://www.flbog.edu/wp-content/uploads/Current-PSE-list-approved-by-the-BOG-at-its-September-2020-meeting-PDF.pdf>.

⁵ Board of Governors, *Methodology for Updating Programs of Strategic Emphasis*

- Education;⁶
- Healthcare;⁷
- Global Competitiveness;⁸
- STEM;⁹ and
- Gap Analysis¹⁰

The BOG tracked their baccalaureate graduates into the workforce and found 92 percent of the graduates were employed one year after graduation, with 71 percent employed full-time.¹¹ The PSE degree fields accounted for the top five fields of study where baccalaureate graduates were found employed full-time one year after graduation.¹²

Department of Education – Career and Technical Education Audit

Governor Ron DeSantis issued Executive Order Number 19-31¹³ to chart a course for Florida to become number one in the nation in workforce education, with the goal of ensuring students are prepared to succeed in jobs of the future and satisfy Florida’s growing workforce demands.¹⁴ Governor DeSantis directed the Commissioner of Education (commissioner) to audit course offerings in career and technical education (CTE).

Additionally, the order directed the commissioner to develop a methodology for annual audits to include a review of student outcomes and alignment between:¹⁵

- Programs offered at K-12 and postsecondary levels;
- Professional-level industry certifications; and
- High-growth, high-demand and high-wage employment opportunities.

in the State University System of Florida, September 2020 available at https://www.flbog.edu/wp-content/uploads/CIP_2020_PSE_Methodology_CE_FINAL.pdf.

⁶ Largely based upon the annual State Board of Education list of critical teacher shortage areas.

⁷ Based primarily on the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity workforce projections.

⁸ Includes degree programs that assist in making the SUS globally competitive can be found throughout the system across many disciplines, especially within the sciences, engineering, and information technology programs.

⁹ Includes science, technology, engineering, and mathematics disciplines. The primary references used were the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, the Department of Homeland Security, the National Science Foundation, and the Washington State Education Research and Data Center.

¹⁰ Includes degree programs leading to the occupational categories projected to be critically under-supplied in the Board of Governors’ analysis of labor market projections and related degree production. Consequently, the academic programs included in this category correspond to Florida’s high-need, high-wage occupational areas identified through the gap analysis. Board of Governors, *The 2019 Gap Analysis: Explanation of Method*, July 2019, https://www.flbog.edu/wp-content/uploads/SPC_06d_2019_Gap_Analysis_Methodology_CE.pdf.

¹¹ Florida Board of Governors, *Baccalaureate Follow-up Study: Employment and Education Outcomes 1, 5, and 10 Years After Graduation (August 2020)* available at https://www.flbog.edu/wp-content/uploads/TAWA_03b_Baccalaureate_Follow-up_CE.pdf. The current study was based on individual-level data for 349,543 graduates from the State University Data System (SUDS). These records were matched to records from the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) and the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO). *Id.*

¹² *Id.* Engineering Technician; Engineering; Computer & Information Sciences; Business & Marketing; and Education.

¹³ Office of the Governor, *Executive Order Number 19-31, January 30, 2019* available at https://www.flgov.com/wp-content/uploads/orders/2019/EO_19-31.pdf.

¹⁴ Florida Department of Education, *Executive Order 19-31 Interim Report on Florida’s Career and Technical Education Audit, July 11, 2019* available at <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/18788/urlt/EO19-31InterimReport.pdf>.

¹⁵ *Id.*

The commissioner is required to annually recommend CTE programs that should be eliminated and programs that should be added based on audit results.

The CTE audit is comprised of a statewide review of programs, local program review, and sharing information and best practices. The CTE methodology includes the following:¹⁶

- A statewide assessment of programs based on the extent to which there are data that support the demand for the program at statewide and regional levels.¹⁷
- A statewide assessment of programs based on their performance on key institutional measures of program quality.¹⁸
- A local review of programs that did not meet statewide benchmarks based on local or industry labor market needs and institutional performance.¹⁹

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill creates s. 1009.46, F.S., to establish the duties of postsecondary educational institutions for state financial aid and tuition assistance programs. Specifically, the bill:

- Requires that each participating institution verify student eligibility for funding by reporting the program of study to the Department of Education using the most recent classification of instructional programs (CIP) taxonomy.²⁰
- Requires, by December 31, 2021, the BOG and State Board of Education (SBE) each approve a list of career certificate, undergraduate and graduate degree programs offered by a district career center, charter technical career center, FCS institution, or state university, which lead directly to employment, to be updated annually by December 31. In determining which programs will be included on the list, the BOG and SBE must:
 - Consider national, state, and regional industry demand;
 - Identify occupations, current job openings, estimates of job growth, and employment wages; and
 - Include appropriate certificate and degree programs offered by eligible independent colleges and universities.
- Codifies certain existing requirements from SBE rule²¹ related to applications for and disbursement of funds, student eligibility and notifications, reporting, and fund remittance, with sanctions for noncompliance.

¹⁶ Florida Department of Education, *Florida's CTE Audit: Statewide Review of Programs (Jan. 24, 2020)* available at <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/18788/urlt/2020CTEAuditPreliminaryFindings.pdf>.

¹⁷ The CTE Audit utilizes the Regional Demand Occupation List to determine statewide and regional demand, as well as, middle to high wage occupations. Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Regional Demand Occupations List, <https://floridajobs.org/workforce-statistics/publications-and-reports/labor-market-information-reports/regional-demand-occupations-list> (last visited March 5, 2021).

¹⁸ Florida Department of Education, *Florida's CTE Audit: Statewide Review of Programs (Jan. 24, 2020)* available at <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/18788/urlt/2020CTEAuditPreliminaryFindings.pdf>.

¹⁹ Florida Department of Education, *Career & Technical Education Audit, Phase 2: Local Program Review*, <http://www.fldoe.org/careerpathways/> (last visited March 5, 2021).

²⁰ The CIP is a taxonomy of instructional programs that provides a classification system for the thousands of different programs offered by postsecondary institutions. Its purpose is to facilitate the organization, collection, and reporting of fields of study and program completions. National Center for Education Statistics, *Introducing the 2020 Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) and Its Website*, <https://nces.ed.gov/blogs/nces/post/introducing-the-2020-classification-of-instructional-programs-cip-and-its-website> (last visited March 5, 2021).

²¹ Rule 6A-20.002, F.A.C.

General Eligibility for State Financial Aid and Tuition Assistance

Present Situation

The general student eligibility requirements for state financial aid awards and tuition assistance grants consist of the following:²²

- Achievement of the academic requirements of and acceptance at a state university or FCS institution; a nursing diploma school approved by the Florida Board of Nursing; a Florida college or university which is accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the SBE; a Florida institution the credits of which are acceptable for transfer to state universities; a career center; or a private career institution accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the SBE.
- Residency in Florida for no less than one year preceding the award of aid or a tuition assistance grant.²³
- Submission of certification attesting to the accuracy, completeness, and correctness of information provided to demonstrate a student's eligibility to receive state financial aid awards or tuition assistance grants.

Eligibility for renewal of undergraduate or career certificate financial aid awards must be evaluated at the end of the second semester or third quarter of each academic year. To be eligible for renewal a student must:²⁴

- Earn a minimum 2.0 grade point average (GPA); and
- Earn, for undergraduate full-time study, 12 credits per term or the equivalent for the number of terms for which aid was received or have earned, for career certificate study, at least the equivalent in clock hours of 6 semester credit hours per term or the equivalent for the number of terms for which aid was received.

A student who fails to meet the required GPA for renewal may be granted a probationary award for one academic year to earn the required GPA for subsequent renewal. A student who fails to meet the minimum number of credits required for renewal must lose his or her eligibility for one academic year, after which the student may reapply.²⁵

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill amends s. 1009.40, F.S., to add a funding eligibility requirement. The bill specifies that financial aid awards and tuition assistance grants must be reevaluated each term based on the program of study to which the student has been admitted and is enrolled.²⁶ Beginning in the 2022-2023 academic year and thereafter, student eligibility for funding is determined by

²² Section 1009.40(1)(a), F.S.

²³ Resident status for purposes of receiving state financial aid awards is determined in the same manner as resident status for tuition purposes pursuant to s. 1009.21. Section 1009.40(1)(a)2., F.S.

²⁴ Section 1009.40(1)(b), F.S.

²⁵ Section 1009.40(1)(b)3. and 4., F.S.

²⁶ District and charter technical career centers offer career certificate and non-college-credit advanced technology diploma (ATD). FCS institutions offer bachelor's degree programs; associate in arts, associate in science, and associate in applied science programs; technical certificate and ATD programs; and advanced technical certificates programs. Rule 6A-14.030, F.A.C. State universities offer baccalaureate programs, as well as graduate degree programs, such as, master's; specialist; advanced master's; non-doctoral; and doctoral. Board of Governors Regulation 8.011.

enrollment in a program of study on a certificate and degree list approved by the BOG or SBE, as follows:

- For a student who has been admitted to and enrolled in a certificate or degree program, the student is eligible only if the program in which the student is enrolled is on an approved list.
- For a student who has not yet been admitted to a program (e.g., an associate in arts student or a bachelor's degree student prior to admittance to a chosen degree program), eligibility is limited to 60 credit hours or until the student is enrolled in a program that is not on an approved list, whichever comes first.
- The program on an approved list applies to a student's initial enrollment at the postsecondary institution, or when the student is admitted to and enrolled in a program. Any changes to the certificate and degree list after the student has enrolled would not negatively impact the student.

The bill also amends s. 1009.40, F.S., to include in the general eligibility requirements relating to Florida residency the Bright Opportunity Scholarship Program, Florida Endeavor Scholarship, Last Mile College Completion Program, and Florida Farmworker Student Scholarship Program.²⁷

Need-based Financial Aid

Present Situation

Federal Financial Aid

The Pell Grant is the largest federal grant program offered to undergraduate students and is designed to assist students from low-income households. To qualify for a Pell Grant, a student must demonstrate financial need through completing a Free Application for Federal Student Financial Aid (FAFSA).²⁸

The award amount a student receives is dependent on the student's expected family contribution (EFC),²⁹ the institution cost of attendance (COA),³⁰ full-time or part-time status, and plans to attend school for a full academic year or less.³¹

²⁷ Sections 1009.71, F.S.; 1009.711, F.S.; 1009.75, F.S.; and 1009.894, F.S.

²⁸ Federal Student Financial Aid, *Help Center, Federal Pell Grant program*, <https://studentaid.gov/help-center/answers/article/federal-pell-grant-program> (last visited March 4, 2021).

²⁹ The EFC is calculated according to a formula established by law. The student's family's taxed and untaxed income, assets, and benefits (such as unemployment or Social Security) all could be considered in the formula. Also considered are the student's family size and the number of family members who will attend college or career school during the year. Federal Student Aid, *How Aid Is Calculated, What's the Expected Family Contribution (EFC)?*, <https://studentaid.gov/complete-aid-process/how-calculated#efc> (last visited March 4, 2021).

³⁰ COA is the amount it will cost a student to go to school. Most two-year and four-year colleges calculate their COA to show the total cost for the school year. The COA is the estimate of tuition and fees, cost of room and board (or living expenses), cost of books, supplies, transportation, loan fees, and miscellaneous expenses, allowance for child care or other dependent care, costs related to a disability, and reasonable costs for eligible study-abroad programs. Federal Student Aid, *What does cost of attendance (COA) mean?*, <https://studentaid.gov/help-center/answers/article/what-does-cost-of-attendance-mean> (last visited March 4, 2021).

³¹ Federal Student Aid, *How Aid Is Calculated*, <https://studentaid.gov/complete-aid-process/how-calculated> (last visited March 8, 2021).

The Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG) provides an award to undergraduate students with exceptional financial need.³² The FSEOG award is between \$100 and \$4,000 a year, depending on the student's financial need, the amount of other aid awarded to the student, and the availability of limited federal funds allocated to the student's school for the program.³³ This is unlike the Pell Grant program, which provides awards to every eligible student.

Florida Student Assistance Grant Program

The Florida Student Assistance Grant (FSAG) Program, created in 1972, is Florida's largest need-based grant program, consisting of FSAG Public, FSAG Career Education (FSAG-CE), FSAG Private, and FSAG Postsecondary.³⁴ The FSAG Program provides state need-based assistance grants to students who meet general eligibility requirements,³⁵ demonstrate financial need, and meet enrollment requirements as specified by each program. The FSAG Program is administered by participating institutions in accordance with SBE rule.³⁶

The funds appropriated for the FSAG Program must be distributed to eligible institutions in accordance with a formula approved by the SBE. The formula must consider at least the prior year's distribution of funds, the number of eligible applicants who did not receive awards, the standardization of the EFC, and provisions for unused funds. The formula must account for changes in the number of eligible students across all student assistance grant programs.³⁷

In 2019-2020, the FSAG programs disbursed approximately \$270 million to nearly 175,000 students.³⁸

In addition, the FSAG Public, FSAG Private, and FSAG Postsecondary programs provide for deposit of funds appropriated by the Legislature for grants through the FSAG program into the State Student Financial Assistance Trust Fund.³⁹ The FSAG-CE program does not have this provision.

For the 2021-22 award year, the Federal Pell Grant award is between \$650 to \$6,495.⁴⁰ The 2018-2019 average cost for taking 30 credit hours at an FCS institution was \$3,209.⁴¹ Because

³² Federal Student Aid, *FSEOG (Grants)*, <https://studentaid.gov/understand-aid/types/grants/fseog> (last visited March 4, 2021).

³³ *Id.*

³⁴ Florida Department of Education Office of Student Financial Assistance, *Annual Report to the Commissioner 2018-19* (2019), at 11, available at <https://www.floridastudentfinancialaidsg.org/pdf/annualreportcurrent.pdf>.

³⁵ Section 1009.40, F.S.

³⁶ Sections 1009.50(6), 1009.505(5), 1009.51(6), and 1009.52(7), F.S. See also Rule 6A-20.031, F.A.C. Postsecondary educational institution administrative responsibilities for state student aid and tuition assistance programs are outlined in Rule 6A-20.002, F.A.C.

³⁷ Sections 1009.50(4)(a), 1009.51(4)(a), and 1009.52(4)(a), F.S.

³⁸ Florida Department of Education, Office of Student Financial Assistance, *2019-20 End of Year Reports*, <https://www.floridastudentfinancialaidsg.org/SAPSPEOYR/SAPSPEOYR> (last visited Mar. 6, 2020).

³⁹ Sections 1009.50(5), 1009.51(5), and 1009.52(6), F.S.

⁴⁰ Federal Student Aid, *IFAP: GEN2101, 2021-2022 Federal Pell Grant Payment and Disbursements Schedules*, <https://ifap.ed.gov/dear-colleague-letters/GEN2101> (last visited March 8, 2021).

⁴¹ Florida Department of Education, *College and Textbook Affordability in the Florida College System 2020* (November 2020) available at <https://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7749/urlt/2020AffordabilityReport.pdf>.

the Pell Grant award amounts vary based on the circumstances of each student, some students who meet the family income threshold for a Pell award may still have a balance of tuition and fees not covered by the federal and state gift aid they are eligible to receive.

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill creates s. 1009.71, F.S., to establish the Florida Bright Opportunities Grant Program. The program is for Pell Grant-eligible students at FCS institutions and career centers who have a tuition and registration fee balance after all federal and state gift aid has been applied to their account. Specifically, the program:

- Award applies to certificate, applied technology diploma (ATD), or associate degree programs only at FCS institutions or career centers.
- Award covers the balance of tuition and registration fees, plus a book stipend, and is awarded on a first-come first-served basis.
- Requires the student to meet the following general eligibility requirements for state financial aid awards and tuition assistance grants:
 - Residency in Florida for at least one year prior to award of aid or tuition assistance grant;
 - Certification attesting to the accuracy, completeness, and correctness of information provided; and
 - Beginning in the 2022-2023 academic year and thereafter, student enrollment in a program of study in a certificate and degree list approved by the BOG or SBE. Eligibility for state financial aid awards and tuition assistance grants must be reevaluated each term based on the program of study to which the student has been admitted and is enrolled.
- Does not allow an institution to impose additional criteria to determine a student's eligibility.
- Student must be enrolled for at least six credit hours per term, or the equivalent clock hours.
- Limits the award to 8-10 semesters as specified in current law regarding financial aid eligibility.⁴²
- Specifies requirements for the distribution and remittance of program funds, similar to FSAG programs.

Florida Student Assistance Grant Program

The bill removes obsolete provisions regarding standardization of the EFC and unused funds in the distribution formula and removes unnecessary requirements related to the State Student Financial Assistance Trust Fund for FSAG programs.

Merit-based Financial Aid

Present Situation

Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program

The Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program (Bright Futures program) was established in 1997⁴³ as a lottery-funded scholarship program to reward a Florida high school graduate who merits recognition for high academic achievement and who enrolls in a degree program,

⁴² Section 1009.40(3), F.S.

⁴³ Section 2, ch. 1997-77, L.O.F.

certificate program, or applied technology program at an eligible Florida public or private⁴⁴ postsecondary education institution. The DOE is responsible for issuing awards for the Bright Futures program annually.⁴⁵

The Bright Futures program consists of the following awards:⁴⁶

- Florida Academic Scholarship (FAS);⁴⁷
- Florida Medallion Scholarship (FMS);⁴⁸ and
- Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholarship (FGSV) and Florida Gold Seal CAPE Scholarship.⁴⁹

Similarities and differences in specified provisions to qualify for FAS and FMS awards are depicted in the table below.⁵⁰

Type	16 High School Course Credits	High School Weighted Bright Futures GPA	College Entrance Exams by High School Graduation Year (ACT/SAT)	Service Hours
FAS	4 - English (three must include substantial writing) 4 - Mathematics (at or above the Algebra I level)	3.50	29/1330	100 hours
FMS	3 - Natural Science (two must have substantial laboratory) 3 - Social Science 2 - World Language (sequential, in same language)	3.00	25/1210	75 hours

Students who have demonstrated academic merit through a recognition program may be eligible for Bright Futures without having to meet one or more of the requirements.⁵¹

The recognition programs that do not require college entrance exam scores include:⁵²

- National Merit Finalists and Scholars;
- National Hispanic Scholars;
- Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE) Diploma; and
- International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma.

⁴⁴ A student who receives any award under the Bright Futures program and is enrolled in a nonpublic postsecondary education institution receives a fixed award calculated by using the average tuition and fee calculation as prescribed by the Department of Education for full-time attendance at a public postsecondary education institution at the comparable level. Section 1009.538, F.S.

⁴⁵ Section 1009.53(5), F.S.

⁴⁶ Section 1009.53(2), F.S.

⁴⁷ Section 1009.534, F.S.

⁴⁸ Section 1009.535, F.S.

⁴⁹ Section 1009.536, F.S.

⁵⁰ Section 1009.531, F.S.

⁵¹ Section 1009.534(1), F.S. and 1009.535(1), F.S.

⁵² Office of Student Financial Assistance, *2020-21 Bright Futures Student Handbook Chapter 1: Initial Eligibility Requirements (July 31, 2020)* available at <https://www.floridastudentfinancialaidsg.org/PDF/BFHandbookChapter1.pdf>.

FAS award recipients receive an award equal to the amount necessary to pay of 100 percent of tuition and applicable fees and an additional stipend for textbooks as specified in the General Appropriations Act (GAA).⁵³ FMS award recipients receive an award equal to the amount necessary to pay of 75 percent of tuition and applicable fees.⁵⁴

A student may receive an FAS or FMS award for a maximum of 100 percent of the number of credit hours required to complete an associate degree program, a baccalaureate degree program, or a postsecondary career certificate program.⁵⁵

Florida Bright Futures Scholarship recipients who graduate with a baccalaureate degree in seven semesters, or the equivalent or fewer hours, and wish to pursue graduate study may apply the unused portion of their FAS or FMS award toward one semester of graduate study, not to exceed 15 semester hours paid at the undergraduate rate.⁵⁶

For the 2019-2020 fiscal year, a total of \$618,607,165 was disbursed through the Bright Futures to 111,973 students.⁵⁷

Benacquisto Scholarship Program

The Benacquisto Scholarship Program (scholarship)⁵⁸ was created in 2014 to reward a Florida high school graduate who achieves recognition as a National Merit Scholar (NMS)⁵⁹ and enrolls in a baccalaureate degree program at an eligible Florida public or independent postsecondary educational institution.⁶⁰

In addition to achieving recognition as an NMS, in order to be eligible for an award under the scholarship, a student must:⁶¹

- Be a state resident as determined by statute and SBE rules;

⁵³ Section 1009.534(2), F.S.

⁵⁴ Section 1009.535(2), F.S. Beginning in the fall 2021 semester, a Florida Medallion Scholar who is enrolled in an associate degree program at an FCS institution is eligible for an award equal to the amount necessary to pay 100 percent of tuition and specified fees to assist with the payment of educational expenses. Section 1009.535(2), F.S.

⁵⁵ Section 1009.532(3)(a), F.S.

⁵⁶ Section 1009.5341, F.S.

⁵⁷ Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program, *Florida Bright Futures Student Counts and Total Costs (September 2020)* available at <https://www.floridastudentfinancialaidsg.org/PDF/PSI/BFReportsA.pdf>.

⁵⁸ The scholarship was renamed in 2016 from the Florida National Merit Scholar Incentive Program to the Benacquisto Scholarship Program. Section 26, ch. 2016-237, L.O.F.

⁵⁹ Florida Department of Education Office of Student Financial Assistance, *Annual Report to the Commissioner 2018-19 (2019)* available at <https://www.floridastudentfinancialaidsg.org/pdf/annualreportcurrent.pdf>. The National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC) is a private, not-for-profit organization that operates without government assistance to recognize and honor academically talented students. National Merit Scholarship Corporation, *Mission*, <https://www.nationalmerit.org/s/1758/interior.aspx?sid=1758&gid=2&pgid=395> (last visited March 3, 2021). NMSC organizes the National Merit Scholarship Program, which began in 1955 as an academic competition for recognition and scholarship. High school students enter the National Merit Program by taking the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT), which serves as an initial screen of approximately 1.5 million entrants each year, and meeting the program participation requirements. National Merit Scholarship Corporation, *National Merit Scholarship Program*, <https://www.nationalmerit.org/s/1758/interior.aspx?sid=1758&gid=2&pgid=424> (last visited March 3, 2021).

⁶⁰ Section 1009.893(2), F.S.

⁶¹ Section 1009.893(4)(a), F.S.

- Earn a standard Florida high school diploma or its equivalent pursuant to statute, unless:
 - The student completes a home education program pursuant to statute,⁶² or
 - The student earns a high school diploma from a non-Florida school while living with a parent who is on military or public service assignment out of this state;
- Be accepted by and enroll in a Florida public or independent postsecondary educational institution that is regionally accredited; and
- Be enrolled full-time in a baccalaureate degree program at an eligible regionally accredited Florida public or independent postsecondary educational institution during the fall academic term following high school graduation.

In 2018, eligibility was expanded to allow out-of-state students to qualify for a scholarship.⁶³

Scholarship recipients attending a public postsecondary institution, who qualify as a Florida resident, receive an award equal to the institutional cost of attendance (COA) minus the sum of the student's Florida Bright Futures Scholarship and NMS award. Scholarship recipients attending a public postsecondary institution, who qualify as non-residents of Florida, receive an award equal to the institutional COA for a Florida resident minus the student's NMS award.⁶⁴ Eligible students who attend independent postsecondary educational institutions in Florida each receive scholarship awards equal to the highest COA for a resident of this state enrolled at a Florida public university, as reported by the BOG, minus the sum of the student's Florida Bright Futures Scholarship and NMS award.⁶⁵

In the 2019-2020 fiscal year, the scholarship distributed \$21.6 million to 1,377 students, of which 202 were non-Florida residents. The average award was \$15,650.⁶⁶

Effect of Proposed Changes

Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program

The bill modifies ss. 1009.534 and 1009.535, F.S., relating FAS and FMS awards. Specifically, the bill:

- Changes the FAS and FMS award from the award necessary to pay a specified percentage of tuition and specified fees to an award as specified in the GAA.
- Changes the FMS award for a FCS student in an associate degree program from an award necessary to pay the specified percentage of tuition and specified fees to an award as specified in the GAA.
- Simplifies the reference to the required college entrance exam scores.⁶⁷
- Removes reference to a national achievement program no longer available through the National Merit Scholarship Corporation.
- Updates the reference to the National Hispanic Recognition Program to include all Recognition Programs administered by the College Board, which includes African American

⁶² Section 1002.41, F.S.

⁶³ Section 22, ch. 2018-4, L.O.F. See s. 1009.893(4)(b), F.S.

⁶⁴ Section 1009.893(5)(a), F.S.

⁶⁵ Section 1009.893(5)(b), F.S.

⁶⁶ Florida Department of Education, Office of Student Financial Assistance, *End-of-Year Report, 2019-2020*, https://www.floridastudentfinancialaidsg.org/PDF/PSI/FIS_2019_2020.pdf (last visited Mar. 6, 2021).

⁶⁷ Program eligibility requires specified scores on the SAT and ACT. Section 1009.531(6), F.S.

Recognition, Hispanic Recognition, Indigenous Recognition, and Rural and Small Town Recognition.⁶⁸

- Beginning for graduates in 2021-2022, adds additional alternative eligibility options: earned associates degree through dual enrollment or AP Capstone Diploma with scores of 4 or higher on 6 AP exams. Therefore, these students are not required to submit scores for college entrance exams.

The bill modifies s. 1009.5341, F.S., the use of Bright Futures funds for graduate study, as follows:

- For 2021-2022, recipients may use the unused portion of their FAS or FMS award for graduate study, without semester or credit hours limit. However, the bill does not change the provision in s. 1009.531, F.S., limiting usage of a Bright Futures award to five years after high school graduation.
- Beginning in 2022-2023, recipients may use the unused portion of their FAS or FMS award for graduate study only in a certificate or degree field on an approved BOG or SBE list required in the bill.

The bill modifies s. 1009.53, F.S., to update the DOE notification process and ability to certify forward funds. Specifically, the bill:

- Modifies the notification process from beginning in January calendar year to beginning in September school year, to provide families more time to plan for students' postsecondary plans
- Removes unnecessary provisions relating to DOE authorization to certify forward 10 percent of allocated funds, and to federal loan programs.

The bill modifies s. 1009.532, F.S., related to Bright Futures renewal awards, to reduce the number of credit hours that can be funded by Bright Futures by the number of credit hours earned through articulated acceleration mechanisms for students initially funded in 2022-2023 academic year.⁶⁹

Benacquisto Scholarship Program

The bill modifies s. 1009.898, F.S., to modify initial eligibility and remove award provisions related to COA. Specifically, the bill:

- Specifies that the 2021-2022 academic year is the final year of initial eligibility for nonresident students. However, current nonresident students receiving a scholarship may continue to receive renewal awards.

⁶⁸ The College Board, *The College Board National Recognition Programs*, <https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/psat-nmsqt-psat-10/scholarships-and-recognition/recognition-programs> (last visited Mar. 6, 2021).

⁶⁹ Articulated acceleration mechanisms are available to shorten the time necessary for a student to complete the requirements associated with the conference of a high school diploma and a postsecondary degree, broaden the scope of curricular options available to students, or increase the depth of study available for a particular subject. Articulated acceleration mechanisms include, but are not limited to, dual enrollment, advanced placement, credit by examination, IB Program, and AICE Program. Section 1007.27(1), F.S. First-time-in-college (FTIC) FAS students at a state university brought an average of 25.5 accelerated credits and FTIC FMS students at a state university were awarded an average of 18 accelerated credits. Email, Florida Board of Governors, Jason Jones (Nov. 2, 2020).

- Modifies the award to remove the requirement that the award level is tied to the cost of attendance for students who attend public and private educational institutions, and instead sets the award as specified in the GAA.

Students without a High School Diploma or Equivalent

Present Situation

In order to be eligible for a state financial aid award, a student must achieve the academic requirements of and acceptance at a public postsecondary institution, or specified private institution.⁷⁰ Generally, a student is required to have a high school diploma or high school equivalency diploma to enroll in an FCS institution,⁷¹ and students must have a high school diploma for admission to a state university.⁷² Eligibility for federal financial aid requires a high school diploma or a recognized equivalent, completion of a home education program, or enrolling in an eligible career pathway program and meeting one of the "ability-to-benefit" alternatives.⁷³

Between 2015 and 2019, 11.9 percent of persons age 25 and older living in Florida did not have a high school diploma or equivalent.⁷⁴ The dropout rate for Florida's 2019-20 high school cohort was 3.1 percent.⁷⁵ Only 44 percent of Florida's 2017-18 high school drop outs were found employed and three percent were found continuing their education at a postsecondary institution.⁷⁶

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill creates s. 1009.711, F.S., to establish the Florida Endeavor Scholarship. The program is for students without a high school diploma or equivalent who are enrolled at a career center or FCS institution. Specifically, the program:

- Award applies to students who did not earn a high school credential prior to enrolling in a career certificate or non-college-credit ATD program, or in a General Education Program at a FCS institution, district career center, or a charter technical career center.
- Requires the student to meet the following general eligibility requirements for state financial aid awards and tuition assistance grants:
 - Residency in Florida for at least one year prior to award of aid or tuition assistance grant;

⁷⁰ Section 1009.40(1)(a), F.S.

⁷¹ Section 1007.263(2)(a), F.S. Students may also have a home education affidavit, or demonstrated competency in college credit postsecondary coursework. *Id.* A student who has been awarded a certificate of completion is eligible to enroll in certificate career education programs. Section 1007.263(4), F.S.

⁷² Board of Governors Regulation 6.002.

⁷³ Federal Student Aid, Basic Eligibility Criteria, <https://studentaid.gov/understand-aid/eligibility/requirements> (last visited March 5, 2021). A student in an eligible career pathway program may demonstrate readiness for higher education by completion of an approved "ability to benefit" test, or completing six credit hours or equivalent course work. *Id.*

⁷⁴ U.S. Census Bureau, *QuickFacts, Florida*, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/FL/PST120219> (last visited March 5, 2021).

⁷⁵ Florida Department of Education, *Florida's High School Cohort 2019-20 Graduation Rate (January 2021)* available at <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7584/urlt/GradRates1920.pdf>.

⁷⁶ Florida Department of Education, *Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program Annual Outcomes Report (December 2019)* available at <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7592/urlt/1718AORFall.pdf>.

- Certification attesting to the accuracy, completeness, and correctness of information provided; and
- Beginning in the 2022-2023 academic year and thereafter, student enrollment in a program of study on a certificate and degree list approved by the BOG or SBE. Eligibility for state financial aid awards and tuition assistance grants must be reevaluated each term based on the program of study to which the student has been admitted and is enrolled.
- Does not allow an institution to impose additional criteria to determine a student’s eligibility.
- Requires the student to earn at least 225 clock hours⁷⁷ with a minimum 2.5 postsecondary GPA.
- Award covers tuition and registration fees for certificate or non-college-credit ATD program at a career center or FCS institution, and is awarded on a first-come first-served basis, with priority for returning students.
- Specifies requirements for the distribution and remittance of program funds.

Fee Waivers and Exemptions

Present Situation

All students in workforce education programs, FCS institutions, and state universities must be charged fees unless a fee waiver or exemption applies.⁷⁸ Tuition and fee exemptions can be distinguished from fee waivers or educational benefits. An exemption is “provided for certain students who are, by statutory definition, exempt from the payment of tuition and fees, including lab fees” and may generally include students who are in dual enrollment, apprenticeship programs, welfare transition, and in the custody of a relative, among other categories. In contrast, waivers transpire when students have their fees waived or forgiven by an institution. Examples of waivers include those related to state employees, college employees and their dependents, Purple Heart recipients, and certain classroom teachers.⁷⁹

A student who is or was at the time he or she reached 18 years of age in the custody of the Department of Children and Families (DCF) or in the custody of a relative or nonrelative specified in law,⁸⁰ is exempt from the payment of tuition and fees at a state university, FCS institution, or Florida school district that provides workforce education programs. Such exemption includes fees associated with enrollment in applied academics for adult education instruction and remains valid until the student reaches 28 years of age.⁸¹ Such exemptions are outlined by year in the following tables:

State University System DCF Specified Fee Exemptions by Academic Year⁸²

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
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⁷⁷ Federal Student Aid Ability-to-Benefit Alternative requires students without a diploma or GED to complete six credit hours or equivalent (225 clock hours course work). Federal Student Aid, *Basic Eligibility Criteria*, [Eligibility Requirements | Federal Student Aid](#) (last visited March 5, 2021).

⁷⁸ Sections 1009.22, 1009.23, and 1009.24, F.S., respectively.

⁷⁹ The Florida College System, *Exemptions and Waivers in The Florida College System* (March 2012), available at <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7724/urlt/0072361-fyi2012-02exemptions.pdf> at 1.

⁸⁰ Section 39.5085, F.S., or s. 39.6225, F.S.

⁸¹Section 1009.25(1)(c) and (d), F.S..

⁸² Florida Board of Governors (BOG) ODA Analysis (Nov. 9, 2020), Email, Troy Miller, Deputy Chief Data Officer, BOG (Nov. 10, 2020) (on file with the Senate Committee on Education).

	Headcount	Amount	Headcount	Amount	Headcount	Amount
Adopted	1,156	\$3,204,829	1,485	\$4,076,209	1,704	\$4,836,057
Foster Care/State Custody	1,035	\$2,911,275	811	\$2,444,456	801	\$2,477,687
Non-State Custody	127	\$365,738	449	\$1,118,653	488	\$1,255,052
Total	2,318	\$6,481,842	2,745	\$7,639,318	2,993	\$8,568,796

Florida College System DCF Specified Fee Exemptions by Academic Year⁸³

	2017-18		2018-19		2019-20	
	Headcount	Amount	Headcount	Amount	Headcount	Amount
Adopted from DCF Services	1,459	\$2,459,399	1,735	\$2,972,262	1,833	\$3,207,602
Custody of DCF	2,459	\$4,281,744	2,464	\$4,280,172	2,325	\$4,040,160
Custody of a Relative	283	\$501,827	318	\$588,870	324	\$573,952
Total	4,201	\$7,242,970	4,517	\$7,841,304	4,482	\$7,821,714

It is unclear to what extent all postsecondary institutions apply the tuition and fee exemptions to students who qualify for the exemption and begin postsecondary education before the age of 18.⁸⁴

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill amends s. 1009.25, F.S., to clarify that tuition and fee exemptions apply to a student who is currently in the custody of the Department of Children and Families (DCF) or in the custody of a relative or nonrelative defined in law, or was so at the time he or she reached 18 years of age. Therefore, the bill may reduce confusion in the identification of students under DCF custody who are eligible for a tuition and fee exemption, specifically those students who enroll at a postsecondary institution prior to the age of 18.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

⁸³ The Florida College System, *Summary of Student Fee Exemptions and Waivers For the 2017-2018 Fiscal Year* (2018), version 1, available at <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/19874/urlt/1718ExemptWaiverSS.PDF> at 1; The Florida College System, *Summary of Student Fee Exemptions and Waivers For the 2018-2019 Fiscal Year* (2019), version 1, available at <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/19874/urlt/1819ExemptWaiverSS.PDF> at 1; and The Florida College System, *Summary of Student Fee Exemptions and Waivers For the 2019-2020 Fiscal Year* (2020), version 1, available at <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/19874/urlt/1920ExemptWaiveresSS.pdf> at 1.

⁸⁴ Email, Alan F. Abramowitz, Executive Director, Florida Statewide Guardian ad Litem Office (Oct. 1, 2020) (on file with the Senate Committee on Education); see also *DCF Fee Exemptions in the Florida College System, FAQ*, The Florida College System, available at <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7480/urlt/0082785-faqscdfexemption.pdf> (last visited Jan. 6, 2021).

D. State Tax or Fee Increases:

None.

E. Other Constitutional Issues:

None.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:**A. Tax/Fee Issues:**

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

For fiscal year 2021-2022, the funding required for the Florida Bright Opportunities Grant Program and the Florida Endeavor Scholarship Program is subject to an appropriation in the General Appropriations Act.

The provisions of the bill that make changes to existing programs are expected to have a net positive effect on the state budget starting with the 2022-2023 fiscal year. Although additional students may qualify for Bright Futures through high school acceleration programs, Bright Futures students may no longer be eligible for funding if they are not enrolled in a degree program on the approved list. In addition, there would be a reduced cost to the state as it relates to the Benacquisto Scholarship program, as the state would no longer be funding new non-resident students. The net effect of these provisions is indeterminate at this time.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This bill substantially amends the following sections of the Florida Statutes: 1009.25, 1009.40, 1009.46, 1009.50, 1009.505, 1009.51, 1009.52, 1009.53, 1009.532, 1009.534, 1009.5341, 1009.535, 1009.71, 1009.711, and 1009.893.

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.

This Senate Bill Analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's introducer or the Florida Senate.



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LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Senate

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House

The Committee on Education (Baxley) recommended the following:

Senate Amendment (with title amendment)

Delete everything after the enacting clause
and insert:

Section 1. Section 1006.75, Florida Statutes, is created to
read:

1006.75 State university career planning and information.-
(1) To assist students and families in making better-
informed decisions about educational options and future
employment opportunities, the Board of Governors of the State
University System shall publicly publish an online dashboard.



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12 The dashboard must present data, by academic discipline, of
13 graduates of state universities, including at least the
14 following information:

15 (a) Post-graduation median salary 1, 5, and 10 years after
16 graduation;

17 (b) Median student loan debt;

18 (c) Debt-to-income ratio;

19 (d) Estimated monthly loan payment as a percentage of gross
20 monthly income; and

21 (e) The percentage of graduates who have continued their
22 education beyond the baccalaureate level.

23 (2) The online dashboard must be available by January 1,
24 2022. A link to the dashboard shall be prominently displayed on
25 each state university's office of admissions website.

26 (3) (a) Each state university board of trustees shall adopt
27 procedures to connect undergraduate students to career planning,
28 coaching, and related programs during the first academic year of
29 the student's enrollment. Such procedures must be approved by
30 the Board of Governors and include placing a hold on student
31 registration before the end of the first year of each student's
32 enrollment. To lift the hold and register for classes, each
33 student shall:

34 1. Register with the university's career center;

35 2. Complete a career readiness training module provided by
36 the career center; and

37 3. Be directed to the dashboard established in subsection
38 (1).

39 (b) The Board of Governors of the State University System
40 shall review and approve each university's procedures by March



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41 1, 2022.

42 Section 2. Paragraphs (c) and (d) of subsection (1) of
43 section 1009.25, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

44 1009.25 Fee exemptions.-

45 (1) The following students are exempt from the payment of
46 tuition and fees, including lab fees, at a school district that
47 provides workforce education programs, Florida College System
48 institution, or state university:

49 (c) A student who is, or was at the time he or she reached
50 18 years of age, in the custody of the Department of Children
51 and Families or who, after spending at least 6 months in the
52 custody of the department after reaching 16 years of age, was
53 placed in a guardianship by the court. Such exemption includes
54 fees associated with enrollment in applied academics for adult
55 education instruction. The exemption remains valid until the
56 student reaches 28 years of age.

57 (d) A student who is, or was at the time he or she reached
58 18 years of age, in the custody of a relative or nonrelative
59 under s. 39.5085 or s. 39.6225 or who was adopted from the
60 Department of Children and Families after May 5, 1997. Such
61 exemption includes fees associated with enrollment in applied
62 academics for adult education instruction. The exemption remains
63 valid until the student reaches 28 years of age.

64 Section 3. Paragraph (a) of subsection (1) of section
65 1009.40, Florida Statutes, is amended, and paragraph (c) is
66 added to that subsection, to read:

67 1009.40 General requirements for student eligibility for
68 state financial aid awards and tuition assistance grants.-

69 (1) (a) The general requirements for eligibility of students



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70 for state financial aid awards and tuition assistance grants
71 consist of the following:

72 1. Achievement of the academic requirements of and
73 acceptance at a state university or Florida College System
74 institution; a nursing diploma school approved by the Florida
75 Board of Nursing; a Florida college or university which is
76 accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the State
77 Board of Education; a Florida institution the credits of which
78 are acceptable for transfer to state universities; a career
79 center; or a private career institution accredited by an
80 accrediting agency recognized by the State Board of Education.

81 2. Residency in this state for no less than 1 year
82 preceding the award of aid or a tuition assistance grant for a
83 program established pursuant to s. 1009.50, s. 1009.505, s.
84 1009.51, s. 1009.52, s. 1009.53, s. 1009.60, s. 1009.62, s.
85 1009.71, s. 1009.711, s. 1009.72, s. 1009.73, s. 1009.75, s.
86 1009.77, s. 1009.89, ~~s.~~ 1009.891, or s. 1009.894. Residency
87 in this state must be for purposes other than to obtain an
88 education. Resident status for purposes of receiving state
89 financial aid awards shall be determined in the same manner as
90 resident status for tuition purposes pursuant to s. 1009.21.

91 3. Submission of certification attesting to the accuracy,
92 completeness, and correctness of information provided to
93 demonstrate a student's eligibility to receive state financial
94 aid awards or tuition assistance grants. Falsification of such
95 information shall result in the denial of a pending application
96 and revocation of an award or grant currently held to the extent
97 that no further payments shall be made. Additionally, students
98 who knowingly make false statements in order to receive state



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99 financial aid awards or tuition assistance grants commit a
100 misdemeanor of the second degree subject to the provisions of s.
101 837.06 and shall be required to return all state financial aid
102 awards or tuition assistance grants wrongfully obtained.

103 (c) Eligibility for funding for state merit-based
104 scholarship program awards under the Bright Futures Scholarship
105 Program and the Benacquisto Scholarship Program is contingent
106 upon a student meeting the minimum requirements specified in
107 paragraphs (a) and (b) and any additional requirements specified
108 in ss. 1009.531, 1009.532, 1009.534, 1009.535, 1009.536, and
109 1009.893, subject to the following:

110 1. Beginning with students who initially receive an award
111 in the 2023-2024 academic year:

112 a. A student enrolled in an associate in arts degree
113 program, or a student enrolled in a state university who has not
114 been admitted to an academic program, may receive an award up to
115 the maximum amount established for the scholarship program for a
116 maximum of 60 credit hours.

117 b. A student enrolled in a certificate program, technical
118 diploma program, career degree program, or major as a part of a
119 baccalaureate degree program:

120 (I) May receive an award up to the maximum amount
121 established for the program if the certificate, diploma, career
122 degree, or major is not identified on the list established
123 pursuant to s. 1009.46(2)(a).

124 (II) May receive a reduced award from the maximum
125 established for the program in the General Appropriations Act if
126 the certificate, diploma, career degree, or major is identified
127 on the list established pursuant to s. 1009.46(2)(a).



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128 2. Student eligibility for a reduced award from the maximum
129 award established for the scholarship program, as determined in
130 the General Appropriations Act, applies to a program of study
131 that was identified on the list pursuant to s. 1009.46(2)(a) at
132 the time of the student's initial enrollment, or if the student
133 changes his or her major program to a program identified on the
134 list. A student may receive a maximum award established for the
135 program if the program of study is removed from the list after
136 the student's initial enrollment, but before the student's
137 admission to the major.

138 3. Before disbursement of an award, each postsecondary
139 educational institution shall verify that the funding level a
140 student is provided aligns with the provisions established in
141 this paragraph.

142 Section 4. Section 1009.46, Florida Statutes, is created to
143 read:

144 1009.46 Duties relating to state financial aid and tuition
145 assistance programs.—

146 (1)(a) Each postsecondary educational institution that
147 receives state funds for state financial aid and tuition
148 assistance programs shall:

149 1. Complete and return the annual application for state aid
150 funds in the format and by the date established by the
151 Department of Education;

152 2. Maintain complete, accurate, and auditable student
153 records documenting the institution's administration of state
154 financial aid and tuition assistance funds;

155 3. Verify eligibility of enrolled students with the
156 department each academic term;



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157 4. Report each student's program of study to the department
158 using the most recent classification of instructional programs
159 taxonomy for the certificate or degree level as developed by the
160 United States Department of Education's National Center for
161 Education Statistics;

162 5. Disburse state financial aid and tuition assistance to
163 eligible students;

164 6. Notify students annually regarding the renewal
165 requirements for each state-funded award for which they are
166 eligible;

167 7. Complete and return to the department all reports for
168 the administration of state funds in the format and by the date
169 established by the department;

170 8. Complete and return to the department all legislatively
171 required reports in the format and by the date established by
172 the department;

173 9. Retain required records for the later of 5 years or
174 until such records are audited and any audit exceptions are
175 resolved; and

176 10. Refund to the department any undisbursed advances
177 within 60 days after the end of the regular registration period
178 each fall and spring term, within 30 days after the end of the
179 summer term, or within 60 days after the date a student's
180 ineligibility is determined.

181 (b) These requirements do not preclude higher standards
182 specified in other sections of this part or rules of the State
183 Board of Education.

184 (c) An institution that fails to perform its duties in
185 administering state financial aid or tuition assistance programs



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186 must be placed on probation by the department.

187 1. The department shall provide allocations on a
188 reimbursement basis to a participating institution that fails to
189 timely remit undisbursed funds for the previous academic year.

190 2. The department may suspend or revoke an institution's
191 eligibility to participate in state-funded programs if the
192 institution fails to provide the required audits, fails to
193 resolve audit findings, or fails to timely provide statutorily
194 required reports by established deadlines.

195 (2) (a) By December 31, 2021, the Board of Governors, the
196 State Board of Education, and the Independent Colleges and
197 Universities of Florida shall each identify and publish a list
198 of career certificate and undergraduate and graduate degree
199 programs offered by a district career center, charter technical
200 career center, Florida College System institution, independent
201 college or university, or state university, as applicable, which
202 do not lead directly to employment.

203 (b) In determining which programs will be included on a
204 list, the Board of Governors, the State Board of Education, and
205 the Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida shall
206 consider national, state, and regional industry demand for
207 certificateholders and graduates of such degree programs. For
208 each certificate and degree program listed, the Board of
209 Governors and the State Board of Education must identify
210 occupations, current job openings, estimates of job growth, and
211 employment wages. The State Board of Education list must include
212 programs at independent colleges and universities licensed by
213 the Commission for Independent Education.

214 (c) The Board of Governors, the State Board of Education,



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215 and the Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida must
216 publish the methodology used in determining whether programs
217 were included on a list.

218 (d) The respective lists must be updated annually, by
219 December 31, to be effective in the next academic year.

220 Section 5. Paragraph (a) of subsection (4) and subsection
221 (5) of section 1009.50, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:
222 1009.50 Florida Public Student Assistance Grant Program;
223 eligibility for grants.—

224 (4) (a) The funds appropriated for the Florida Public
225 Student Assistance Grant Program shall be distributed to
226 eligible institutions in accordance with a formula approved by
227 the State Board of Education. The formula must consider at least
228 the prior year's distribution of funds and, the number of
229 eligible applicants who did not receive awards, ~~the~~
230 ~~standardization of the expected family contribution, and~~
231 ~~provisions for unused funds.~~ The formula must account for
232 changes in the number of eligible students across all student
233 assistance grant programs established pursuant to this section
234 and ss. 1009.505, 1009.51, and 1009.52.

235 ~~(5) Funds appropriated by the Legislature for state student~~
236 ~~assistance grants may be deposited in the State Student~~
237 ~~Financial Assistance Trust Fund. Notwithstanding s. 216.301 and~~
238 ~~pursuant to s. 216.351, any balance in the trust fund at the end~~
239 ~~of any fiscal year which has been allocated to the Florida~~
240 ~~Public Student Assistance Grant Program shall remain therein and~~
241 ~~shall be available for carrying out the purposes of this~~
242 ~~section.~~

243 Section 6. Subsection (5) of section 1009.505, Florida



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244 Statutes, is amended to read:

245 1009.505 Florida Public Postsecondary Career Education
246 Student Assistance Grant Program.—

247 ~~(5) Funds appropriated by the Legislature for state student~~
248 ~~assistance grants may be deposited in the State Student~~
249 ~~Financial Assistance Trust Fund. Notwithstanding s. 216.301 and~~
250 ~~pursuant to s. 216.351, any balance in the trust fund at the end~~
251 ~~of any fiscal year which has been allocated to the Florida~~
252 ~~Public Postsecondary Career Education Student Assistance Grant~~
253 ~~Program shall remain therein and shall be available for carrying~~
254 ~~out the purposes of this section.~~

255 Section 7. Paragraph (a) of subsection (4) and subsection
256 (5) of section 1009.51, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

257 1009.51 Florida Private Student Assistance Grant Program;
258 eligibility for grants.—

259 (4) (a) The funds appropriated for the Florida Private
260 Student Assistance Grant Program shall be distributed to
261 eligible institutions in accordance with a formula approved by
262 the State Board of Education. The formula must consider at least
263 the prior year's distribution of funds and, the number of
264 eligible applicants who did not receive awards, ~~the~~
265 ~~standardization of the expected family contribution, and~~
266 ~~provisions for unused funds.~~ The formula must account for
267 changes in the number of eligible students across all student
268 assistance grant programs established pursuant to this section
269 and ss. 1009.50, 1009.505, and 1009.52.

270 ~~(5) Funds appropriated by the Legislature for Florida~~
271 ~~private student assistance grants may be deposited in the State~~
272 ~~Student Financial Assistance Trust Fund. Notwithstanding s.~~



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273 ~~216.301 and pursuant to s. 216.351, any balance in the trust~~
274 ~~fund at the end of any fiscal year which has been allocated to~~
275 ~~the Florida Private Student Assistance Grant Program shall~~
276 ~~remain therein and shall be available for carrying out the~~
277 ~~purposes of this section and as otherwise provided by law.~~

278 Section 8. Paragraph (a) of subsection (4) and subsection
279 (6) of section 1009.52, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

280 1009.52 Florida Postsecondary Student Assistance Grant
281 Program; eligibility for grants.—

282 (4) (a) The funds appropriated for the Florida Postsecondary
283 Student Assistance Grant Program shall be distributed to
284 eligible institutions in accordance with a formula approved by
285 the State Board of Education. The formula must consider at least
286 the prior year's distribution of funds and, the number of
287 eligible applicants who did not receive awards, ~~the~~
288 ~~standardization of the expected family contribution, and~~
289 ~~provisions for unused funds.~~ The formula must account for
290 changes in the number of eligible students across all student
291 assistance grant programs established pursuant to this section
292 and ss. 1009.50, 1009.505, and 1009.51.

293 ~~(6) Funds appropriated by the Legislature for Florida~~
294 ~~postsecondary student assistance grants may be deposited in the~~
295 ~~State Student Financial Assistance Trust Fund. Notwithstanding~~
296 ~~s. 216.301 and pursuant to s. 216.351, any balance in the trust~~
297 ~~fund at the end of any fiscal year which has been allocated to~~
298 ~~the Florida Postsecondary Student Assistance Grant Program shall~~
299 ~~remain therein and shall be available for carrying out the~~
300 ~~purposes of this section and as otherwise provided by law.~~

301 Section 9. Subsections (3), (4), and (7) of section



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302 1009.53, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

303 1009.53 Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program.—

304 (3) The Department of Education shall administer the Bright
305 Futures Scholarship Program according to rules and procedures
306 established by the State Board of Education. A single
307 application must be sufficient for a student to apply for any of
308 the awards. The department shall advertise the availability of
309 the scholarship program and shall notify students, teachers,
310 parents, certified school counselors, and principals or other
311 relevant school administrators of the criteria and application
312 procedures. The department must begin this process of
313 notification no later than September ~~January~~ 1 of each year.

314 (4) Funding for the Bright Futures Scholarship Program must
315 be allocated from the Education Enhancement Trust Fund and must
316 be provided before allocations from that fund are calculated for
317 disbursement to other educational entities.

318 ~~(a)~~ If funds appropriated are not adequate to provide the
319 maximum allowable award to each eligible applicant, awards in
320 all components of the program must be prorated using the same
321 percentage reduction.

322 ~~(b) Notwithstanding s. 216.301, if all funds allocated to~~
323 ~~the Bright Futures Scholarship Program are not used in any~~
324 ~~fiscal year, up to 10 percent of the total allocation may be~~
325 ~~carried forward and used for awards in the following year.~~

326 (7) A student may receive only one type of award from the
327 Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program at any given time,
328 but may transfer from one type of award to another through the
329 renewal application process, if the student's eligibility status
330 changes. However, a student is not eligible to transfer from a



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331 Florida Medallion Scholarship, a Florida Gold Seal CAPE
332 Scholarship, or a Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholarship to a
333 Florida Academic Scholarship. ~~A student who receives an award
334 from the program may also receive a federal family education
335 loan or a federal direct loan, and the value of the award must
336 be considered in the certification or calculation of the
337 student's loan eligibility.~~

338 Section 10. Paragraph (c) is added to subsection (3) of
339 section 1009.532, Florida Statutes, to read:

340 1009.532 Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program;
341 student eligibility requirements for renewal awards.-

342 (3)

343 (c) Notwithstanding paragraph (a), beginning with students
344 initially funded in the 2022-2023 academic year, the maximum
345 number of credit hours which can be awarded must be reduced by
346 the number of postsecondary credit hours the student has earned
347 from articulated acceleration mechanisms under s. 1007.27 which
348 are accepted by the postsecondary educational institution toward
349 the requirements of a career certificate, an applied technology
350 diploma, an associate in applied science degree, or an associate
351 in science degree or in partial fulfillment of general education
352 coursework requirements of an associate or baccalaureate degree.

353 Section 11. Subsections (1) and (2) of section 1009.534,
354 Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

355 1009.534 Florida Academic Scholars award.-

356 (1) A student is eligible for a Florida Academic Scholars
357 award if he or she meets the general eligibility requirements
358 for the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program and:

359 (a) Has achieved a 3.5 weighted grade point average as



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360 calculated pursuant to s. 1009.531, or its equivalent, in high
361 school courses that are designated by the State Board of
362 Education as college-preparatory academic courses and has
363 attained at least the score required under s. 1009.531(6) (a) ~~on~~
364 ~~the combined verbal and quantitative parts of the Scholastic~~
365 ~~Aptitude Test, the Scholastic Assessment Test, or the recentered~~
366 ~~Scholastic Assessment Test of the College Entrance Examination,~~
367 ~~or an equivalent score on the ACT Assessment Program;~~

368 (b) Has attended a home education program according to s.
369 1002.41 during grades 11 and 12, has completed the International
370 Baccalaureate curriculum but failed to earn the International
371 Baccalaureate Diploma, or has completed the Advanced
372 International Certificate of Education curriculum but failed to
373 earn the Advanced International Certificate of Education
374 Diploma, and has attained at least the score required under s.
375 1009.531(6) (a) ~~on the combined verbal and quantitative parts of~~
376 ~~the Scholastic Aptitude Test, the Scholastic Assessment Test, or~~
377 ~~the recentered Scholastic Assessment Test of the College~~
378 ~~Entrance Examination, or an equivalent score on the ACT~~
379 ~~Assessment Program;~~

380 (c) Has been awarded an International Baccalaureate Diploma
381 from the International Baccalaureate Office or an Advanced
382 International Certificate of Education Diploma from the
383 University of Cambridge International Examinations Office;

384 (d) Has been recognized by ~~the merit or achievement~~
385 ~~programs~~ of the National Merit Scholarship Corporation as a
386 scholar or finalist; ~~or~~

387 (e) Has been granted academic honors by one or more of the
388 College Board National Recognition Programs for students from



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389 underrepresented communities; or recognized by the National
390 Hispanic Recognition Program as a scholar recipient

391 (f) For a high school student who graduated in the 2021-
392 2022 academic year and thereafter:

393 1. Has earned an associate degree with a minimum
394 postsecondary cumulative grade point average of 3.5 on a 4.0
395 scale before graduating from high school; or

396 2. Has earned a College Board Advanced Placement Capstone
397 Diploma with scores of 4 or higher on six Advanced Placement
398 examinations.

399
400 The student must complete a program of volunteer service work,
401 as approved by the district school board, the administrators of
402 a nonpublic school, or the Department of Education for home
403 education program students, which must include a minimum of 75
404 hours of service work for high school students graduating in the
405 2010-2011 academic year and 100 hours of service work for high
406 school students graduating in the 2011-2012 academic year and
407 thereafter. The student must identify a social or civic issue or
408 a professional area that interests him or her, develop a plan
409 for his or her personal involvement in addressing the issue or
410 learning about the area, and, through papers or other
411 presentations, evaluate and reflect upon his or her experience.
412 Except for credit earned through service-learning courses
413 adopted pursuant to s. 1003.497, the student may not receive
414 remuneration or academic credit for the volunteer service work
415 performed. Such work may include, but is not limited to, a
416 business or governmental internship, work for a nonprofit
417 community service organization, or activities on behalf of a



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418 candidate for public office. The hours of volunteer service must
419 be documented in writing, and the document must be signed by the
420 student, the student's parent or guardian, and a representative
421 of the organization for which the student performed the
422 volunteer service work.

423 (2) A Florida Academic Scholar who is enrolled in a
424 certificate, diploma, associate, or baccalaureate degree program
425 at a public or nonpublic postsecondary educational ~~education~~
426 institution is eligible for an award equal to the amount
427 specified necessary to pay 100 percent of tuition and fees
428 ~~established under ss. 1009.22(3), (5), (6), and (7); 1009.23(3),~~
429 ~~(4), (7), (8), (10), and (11); and 1009.24(4), (7)-(13),~~
430 ~~(14)(r), and (16), as applicable, and is eligible for an~~
431 ~~additional stipend for textbooks, to assist with the payment of~~
432 ~~educational expenses as funds are specifically appropriated in~~
433 the General Appropriations Act to assist with the payment of
434 educational expenses.

435 Section 12. Section 1009.5341, Florida Statutes, is amended
436 to read:

437 1009.5341 Florida Bright Futures Scholarship awards for
438 graduate study.—

439 (1) For the 2021-2022 academic year, Florida Bright Futures
440 Scholarship recipients ~~who graduate in the 2010-2011 academic~~
441 ~~year and thereafter with a baccalaureate degree in 7 semesters,~~
442 ~~or the equivalent or fewer hours, and wish to pursue graduate~~
443 ~~study~~ may apply the unused portion of their Florida Academic
444 Scholars award or Florida Medallion Scholars award toward ~~±~~
445 ~~semester of graduate study, not to exceed 15 semester hours paid~~
446 ~~at the undergraduate rate. A baccalaureate degree may include,~~



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447 ~~but is not limited to, college credits earned through~~
448 ~~articulated acceleration mechanisms pursuant to s. 1007.27.~~

449 (2) Beginning with the 2022-2023 academic year, a Florida
450 Bright Futures Scholarship recipient may apply the unused
451 portion of his or her Florida Academic Scholars award or Florida
452 Medallion Scholars award toward graduate study in a degree field
453 that is not identified on a list developed pursuant to s.
454 1009.46(2)(a), which must be paid at the undergraduate rate.

455 Section 13. Subsections (1) and (2) of section 1009.535,
456 Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

457 1009.535 Florida Medallion Scholars award.-

458 (1) A student is eligible for a Florida Medallion Scholars
459 award if he or she meets the general eligibility requirements
460 for the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program and:

461 (a) Has achieved a weighted grade point average of 3.0 as
462 calculated pursuant to s. 1009.531, or the equivalent, in high
463 school courses that are designated by the State Board of
464 Education as college-preparatory academic courses and has
465 attained at least the score required under s. 1009.531(6)(b) ~~on~~
466 ~~the combined verbal and quantitative parts of the Scholastic~~
467 ~~Aptitude Test, the Scholastic Assessment Test, or the recentered~~
468 ~~Scholastic Assessment Test of the College Entrance Examination,~~
469 ~~or an equivalent score on the ACT Assessment Program;~~

470 (b) Has completed the International Baccalaureate
471 curriculum but failed to earn the International Baccalaureate
472 Diploma or has completed the Advanced International Certificate
473 of Education curriculum but failed to earn the Advanced
474 International Certificate of Education Diploma, and has attained
475 at least the score required under s. 1009.531(6)(b) ~~on the~~



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476 ~~combined verbal and quantitative parts of the Scholastic~~
477 ~~Aptitude Test, the Scholastic Assessment Test, or the recentered~~
478 ~~Scholastic Assessment Test of the College Entrance Examination,~~
479 ~~or an equivalent score on the ACT Assessment Program;~~

480 (c) Has attended a home education program according to s.
481 1002.41 during grades 11 and 12 and has attained at least the
482 score required under s. 1009.531(6) (b) ~~on the combined verbal~~
483 ~~and quantitative parts of the Scholastic Aptitude Test, the~~
484 ~~Scholastic Assessment Test, or the recentered Scholastic~~
485 ~~Assessment Test of the College Entrance Examination, or an~~
486 ~~equivalent score on the ACT Assessment Program;~~

487 (d) Has been recognized by the ~~merit or achievement program~~
488 ~~of the~~ National Merit Scholarship Corporation as a scholar or
489 finalist but has not completed the program of volunteer service
490 work required under s. 1009.534; ~~or~~

491 (e) Has been granted academic honors by one or more of the
492 College Board National Recognition Programs for students from
493 underrepresented communities ~~recognized by the National Hispanic~~
494 ~~Recognition Program as a scholar,~~ but has not completed the
495 program of volunteer service work required under s. 1009.534; or

496 (f) For a high school student who graduates in the 2021-
497 2022 academic year and thereafter:

498 1. Has earned an associate degree with a minimum cumulative
499 postsecondary grade point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale before
500 graduating from high school; or

501 2. Has earned an Advanced Placement Capstone Diploma with
502 scores of 3 or higher on six Advanced Placement Examinations.

503
504 A high school student graduating in the 2011-2012 academic year



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505 and thereafter must complete at least 75 hours of volunteer
506 service work approved by the district school board, the
507 administrators of a nonpublic school, or the Department of
508 Education for home education program students. The student must
509 identify a social or civic issue or a professional area that
510 interests him or her, develop a plan for his or her personal
511 involvement in addressing the issue or learning about the area,
512 and, through papers or other presentations, evaluate and reflect
513 upon his or her experience. Except for credit earned through
514 service-learning courses adopted pursuant to s. 1003.497, the
515 student may not receive remuneration or academic credit for
516 volunteer service work performed. Such work may include, but is
517 not limited to, a business or governmental internship, work for
518 a nonprofit community service organization, or activities on
519 behalf of a candidate for public office. The hours of volunteer
520 service must be documented in writing, and the document must be
521 signed by the student, the student's parent or guardian, and a
522 representative of the organization for which the student
523 performed the volunteer service work.

524 (2) A Florida Medallion Scholar who is enrolled in a
525 certificate, diploma, associate, or baccalaureate degree program
526 at a public or nonpublic postsecondary educational ~~education~~
527 institution is eligible, ~~beginning in the fall 2018 semester,~~
528 for an award equal to the amount specified in the General
529 Appropriations Act necessary to pay 75 percent of tuition and
530 ~~fees established under ss. 1009.22(3), (5), (6), and (7);~~
531 ~~1009.23(3), (4), (7), (8), (10), and (11); and 1009.24(4), (7)-~~
532 ~~(13), (14)(r), and (16), as applicable,~~ to assist with the
533 payment of educational expenses. Beginning in the fall 2021



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534 semester, a Florida Medallion Scholar who is enrolled in an
535 associate degree program at a Florida College System institution
536 is eligible for an award equal to the amount specified in the
537 General Appropriations Act necessary to pay 100 percent of
538 tuition and fees established under s. 1009.23(3), (4), (7), (8),
539 (10), and (11) to assist with the payment of educational
540 expenses.

541 Section 14. Section 1009.71, Florida Statutes, is created
542 to read:

543 1009.71 Florida Bright Opportunities Grant Program.-

544 (1) ESTABLISHMENT; PURPOSE.-The Florida Bright
545 Opportunities Grant Program is established and shall be
546 administered by the participating institutions in accordance
547 with rules of the State Board of Education. The program shall
548 provide an award equal to the amount necessary to cover tuition
549 and registration fees, after applying all other federal and
550 state financial aid, for eligible students at a Florida College
551 System institution, a career center operated by a district
552 school board under s. 1001.44, or a charter technical career
553 center under s. 1002.34.

554 (2) ELIGIBILITY.-In order to be eligible for the program, a
555 student must have a tuition and registration fee balance not
556 covered by all federal financial and state financial aid, and:

557 (a) Be enrolled as a student seeking a degree or career
558 certificate in an associate degree, technical certificate,
559 applied technology diploma, or clock hour certificate program at
560 a Florida College System institution, or a clock hour career
561 certificate or diploma program at a district career center or
562 charter technical career center. The students must be enrolled



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563 for at least 6 semester hours or the equivalent per term at a
564 Florida College System institution, district career center, or
565 charter technical career center;

566 (b) Meet the requirements under s. 1009.40(1)(a)2. and 3.
567 and (c); and

568 (c) Qualify and remain eligible each academic year for the
569 Pell Grant.

570
571 An institution may not impose additional criteria to determine a
572 student's eligibility to receive a grant under this section.

573 (3) GRANT AWARD.—The program shall:

574 (a) Cover remaining tuition and registration fees, with a
575 stipend for books as specified in the General Appropriations
576 Act, for eligible students after all other federal and state
577 financial aid is applied to tuition and fees.

578 (b) Be allocated, subject to the availability of funding,
579 on a first-come, first-served basis. The award may not exceed
580 the cost of tuition and fees at that institution, plus a stipend
581 for books as determined in the General Appropriations Act.

582 Returning students shall receive priority over new students.

583 (4) AWARD DURATION.—A student is eligible to receive an
584 award for the number of semesters or quarters specified in s.
585 1009.40(3).

586 (5) DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS.—

587 (a) The funds appropriated for the program must be
588 distributed to eligible institutions in accordance with a
589 formula approved by the State Board of Education. The formula
590 must take into account at least the prior year's distribution of
591 funds and the number of eligible applicants who did not receive



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592 awards.

593 (b) Subject to appropriation by the Legislature, payment of
594 grants must be transmitted to the institution in advance of the
595 registration period. Institutions shall notify students of the
596 amount of their awards.

597 (c) The eligibility status of each student to receive a
598 disbursement must be determined by each institution as of the
599 end of its regular registration period, inclusive of a drop-add
600 period. Institutions may not be required to reevaluate a
601 student's eligibility status after this date for purposes of
602 changing eligibility determinations previously made.

603 (d) Each participating institution shall report to the
604 department by the established date the number of students
605 eligible for the program for each academic term. Each
606 institution also shall report to the department any necessary
607 demographic and eligibility data for such students.

608 (e) Institutions shall certify to the department within 30
609 days after the end of regular registration each term the amount
610 of funds disbursed to each student. Institutions shall remit to
611 the department any undisbursed advances for the fall, spring,
612 and summer terms within 30 days after the end of the summer
613 term.

614 (6) RULES.—The State Board of Education shall adopt rules
615 to implement this section.

616 Section 15. Section 1009.711, Florida Statutes, is created
617 to read:

618 1009.711 Florida Endeavor Scholarship Program.—

619 (1) ESTABLISHMENT; PURPOSE.—The Florida Endeavor
620 Scholarship Program is established and shall be administered by



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621 participating institutions in accordance with rules of the State
622 Board of Education. The program shall provide an award equal to
623 the amount necessary to cover tuition, registration, and testing
624 fees, including high school equivalency diploma test fees, for
625 eligible students at a Florida College System institution, a
626 career center operated by a district school board under s.
627 1001.44, or a charter technical career center under s. 1002.34.

628 (2) ELIGIBILITY.—In order to be eligible for the program, a
629 student may not have earned a high school credential before
630 enrolling at the institution, and must:

631 (a) Be enrolled in a career certificate or noncollege-
632 credit applied technology diploma program or in a General
633 Education Program at a Florida College System institution, a
634 district career center, or a charter technical career center;

635 (b) Meet the requirements under s. 1009.40(1)(a)2. and 3.
636 and (c);

637 (c) Demonstrate readiness for enrollment in a postsecondary
638 clock hour program. The student shall:

639 1. Meet the basic skills assessment requirement for the
640 certificate or diploma program;

641 2. Demonstrate grade 9 level or above literacy and numeracy
642 skills on an assessment approved by the State Board of Education
643 for basic skills; or

644 3. Enroll for at least one term in a school district or
645 Florida College System institution Integrated Education and
646 Training program.

647 (d) To maintain eligibility after the initial term of
648 enrollment, a student must demonstrate progress toward the
649 completion of a clock hour certificate or diploma program



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650 through attendance and successful completion of program
651 standards. A student who does not maintain attendance and
652 progress toward completion of courses in the program is not
653 eligible for a renewal award.

654
655 An institution may not impose additional criteria to determine a
656 student's initial eligibility to receive a grant under this
657 section.

658 (3) SCHOLARSHIP AWARD.—A student is eligible to receive an
659 award equal to the amount to cover tuition and registration fees
660 for a career certificate or applied technology diploma program
661 for the number of semesters or quarters specified in s.
662 1009.40(3). The award may not exceed the cost of tuition and
663 registration fees at that institution. The institution shall
664 award scholarships subject to the availability of funding, on a
665 first-come, first-served basis. Returning students must be given
666 priority over new students.

667 (4) DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS.—

668 (a) The funds appropriated for the program must be
669 distributed to eligible institutions in accordance with a
670 formula approved by the State Board of Education. The formula
671 must take into account at least the prior year's distribution of
672 funds and the number of eligible applicants who did not receive
673 awards.

674 (b) Subject to the appropriation of funds by the
675 Legislature, the department shall transmit payment of grants to
676 the institution in advance of the registration period.
677 Institutions shall notify students of the amount of their
678 awards.



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679 (c) The eligibility status of each student to receive a
680 disbursement must be determined by each institution as of the
681 end of its regular registration period, inclusive of a drop-add
682 period. Institutions may not be required to reevaluate a
683 student's eligibility status after this date for purposes of
684 changing eligibility determinations previously made.

685 (d) Each participating institution shall report to the
686 department by the established date the number of students
687 eligible for the program for each academic term. Each
688 institution also shall report to the department any necessary
689 demographic and eligibility data for such students.

690 (e) Institutions shall certify to the department within 30
691 days after the end of regular registration each term the amount
692 of funds disbursed to each student. Institutions shall remit to
693 the department any undisbursed advances for the fall, spring,
694 and summer terms within 30 days after the end of the summer
695 term.

696 (5) RULES.—The State Board of Education shall adopt rules
697 to implement this section.

698 Section 16. Paragraph (b) of subsection (4) and subsection
699 (5) of section 1009.893, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

700 1009.893 Benacquisto Scholarship Program.—

701 (4) In order to be eligible for an initial award under the
702 scholarship program, a student must meet the requirements of
703 paragraph (a) or paragraph (b).

704 (b) A student who initially enrolls in a baccalaureate
705 degree program in the 2018-2019 through 2021-2022 academic years
706 ~~year or later~~ and who is not a resident of this state, as
707 determined in s. 1009.40 and rules of the State Board of



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708 Education, must:

709 1. Physically reside in this state on or near the campus of
710 the postsecondary educational institution in which the student
711 is enrolled;

712 2. Earn a high school diploma from a school outside Florida
713 which is comparable to a standard Florida high school diploma or
714 its equivalent pursuant to s. 1002.3105, s. 1003.4281, s.
715 1003.4282, or s. 1003.435 or must complete a home education
716 program in another state; and

717 3. Be accepted by and enrolled full-time in a baccalaureate
718 degree program at an eligible regionally accredited Florida
719 public or independent postsecondary educational institution
720 during the fall academic term following high school graduation.

721 (5) (a) 1. An eligible student who meets the requirements of
722 paragraph (4) (a), who is a National Merit Scholar, and who
723 attends a Florida public postsecondary educational institution
724 shall receive a scholarship award as specified in the General
725 Appropriations Act equal to the institutional cost of attendance
726 ~~minus the sum of the student's Florida Bright Futures~~
727 ~~Scholarship and National Merit Scholarship.~~

728 2. An eligible student who meets the requirements of
729 paragraph (4) (b), who is a National Merit Scholar, and who
730 attends a Florida public postsecondary educational institution
731 shall receive a scholarship award as specified in the General
732 Appropriations Act equal to the institutional cost of attendance
733 ~~for a resident of this state minus the student's National Merit~~
734 ~~Scholarship.~~ Such student is exempt from the payment of out-of-
735 state fees.

736 (b) An eligible student who is a National Merit Scholar and



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737 who attends a Florida independent postsecondary educational
738 institution shall receive a scholarship award as specified in
739 the General Appropriations Act ~~equal to the highest cost of~~
740 ~~attendance for a resident of this state enrolled at a Florida~~
741 ~~public university, as reported by the Board of Governors of the~~
742 ~~State University System, minus the sum of the student's Florida~~
743 ~~Bright Futures Scholarship and National Merit Scholarship.~~

744 Section 17. This act shall take effect July 1, 2021.

745
746 ===== T I T L E A M E N D M E N T =====

747 And the title is amended as follows:

748 Delete everything before the enacting clause
749 and insert:

750 A bill to be entitled
751 An act relating to student financial aid; creating s.
752 1006.75, F.S.; requiring the Board of Governors of the
753 State University System to create an online dashboard;
754 specifying minimum information to be included in the
755 dashboard; requiring the dashboard to be available by
756 a specified date; requiring each state university
757 office of admissions website to contain a link to the
758 dashboard; requiring each state university board of
759 trustees to adopt certain procedures; requiring the
760 procedures to include placing a hold on certain
761 students' registration; specifying the requirements
762 for students to lift the hold; requiring the Board of
763 Governors to approve such procedures by a specified
764 date; amending s. 1009.25, F.S.; making technical
765 changes; amending s. 1009.40, F.S.; conforming



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766 provisions to changes made by the act; revising
767 eligibility for an award under the Bright Futures
768 Scholarship Program or the Benacquisto Scholarship
769 Program; specifying funding award levels for students
770 initially funded in a certain academic year; requiring
771 postsecondary educational institutions to verify
772 funding levels before award disbursement; creating s.
773 1009.46, F.S.; specifying the duties of certain
774 postsecondary educational institutions with regard to
775 financial aid and tuition assistance programs;
776 specifying penalties for noncompliance; requiring the
777 Board of Governors, the State Board of Education, and
778 the Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida
779 to each approve, by a specified date, a list of career
780 certificate and undergraduate and graduate degree
781 programs that they determine do not lead directly to
782 employment; requiring that each list include specified
783 information; requiring that the state board list
784 include programs at independent colleges and
785 universities licensed by the Commission for
786 Independent Education; requiring each entity to
787 publish the methodology used in determining whether
788 programs are included on the list; requiring that the
789 lists be updated annually, by a specified date, to be
790 effective the next academic year; amending s. 1009.50,
791 F.S.; revising the formula for calculating how Florida
792 Public Student Assistance Grant Program funds are
793 distributed; deleting a provision authorizing Florida
794 Public Student Assistance Grant Program funds to be



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795 deposited in the State Student Financial Assistance
796 Trust Fund; deleting a provision requiring any balance
797 in the trust fund which was allocated to the Florida
798 Public Student Assistance Grant Program at the end of
799 the fiscal year to remain therein; amending s.
800 1009.505, F.S.; deleting a provision authorizing
801 Florida Public Postsecondary Career Education Student
802 Assistance Grant Program funds to be deposited in the
803 trust fund; deleting a provision requiring any balance
804 in the trust fund which was allocated to the Florida
805 Public Postsecondary Career Education Student
806 Assistance Grant Program at the end of the fiscal year
807 to remain therein; amending s. 1009.51, F.S.; revising
808 the formula for calculating how Florida Private
809 Student Assistance Grant Program funds are
810 distributed; deleting a provision authorizing Florida
811 Private Student Assistance Grant Program funds to be
812 deposited in the trust fund; deleting a provision
813 requiring any balance in the trust fund which was
814 allocated to the Florida Private Student Assistance
815 Grant Program at the end of the fiscal year to remain
816 therein; amending s. 1009.52, F.S.; revising the
817 formula for how Florida Postsecondary Student
818 Assistance Grant Program funds are distributed;
819 deleting a provision authorizing Florida Postsecondary
820 Student Assistance Grant Program funds to be deposited
821 in the trust fund; deleting a provision requiring any
822 balance in the trust fund which was allocated to the
823 Florida Postsecondary Student Assistance Grant Program



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824 at the end of the fiscal year to remain therein;
825 amending s. 1009.53, F.S.; requiring the Department of
826 Education to advertise the Florida Bright Futures
827 Scholarship Program to specified persons no later than
828 a specified date of each year; deleting a provision
829 authorizing unused Florida Bright Futures Scholarship
830 Program funds to be carried forward; deleting a
831 provision authorizing certain students to receive
832 specified loans; amending s. 1009.532, F.S.;
833 requiring, beginning with a specified academic year,
834 that the maximum number of credit hours which can be
835 awarded under the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship
836 Program be reduced by the number of postsecondary
837 credit hours the student has earned from certain
838 articulated acceleration mechanisms which are applied
839 toward certificate, diploma, or specified degree
840 requirements or to general education requirements;
841 amending s. 1009.534, F.S.; revising and expanding
842 eligibility requirements of the Florida Academic
843 Scholars award; providing that a Florida Academic
844 Scholar is eligible for an award equal to the amount
845 specified in the General Appropriations Act; amending
846 s. 1009.5341, F.S.; authorizing a Florida Bright
847 Futures Scholarship recipient to apply the unused
848 portion of a Florida Academic Scholars award or
849 Florida Medallion Scholars award toward graduate study
850 for a specified academic year; authorizing a Florida
851 Bright Futures Scholarship recipient to apply the
852 unused portion of a Florida Academic Scholars award or



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853 Florida Medallion Scholars award toward graduate study
854 in a specified degree field, paid at the undergraduate
855 rate, beginning with a specified academic year;
856 amending s. 1009.535, F.S.; revising and expanding
857 eligibility for a Florida Medallion Scholars award;
858 providing a Florida Medallion Scholar is eligible for
859 an award equal to the amount specified in the General
860 Appropriations Act; creating s. 1009.71, F.S.;
861 establishing the Florida Bright Opportunities Grant
862 Program; requiring the program to be administered by
863 the participating institutions subject to state board
864 rules; providing the purpose of the program;
865 specifying eligibility requirements for the program;
866 prohibiting institutions from imposing additional
867 eligibility requirements on students; requiring the
868 program to cover remaining tuition and fees for
869 eligible students after the application of all other
870 federal and state financial aid, with a stipend for
871 books as specified in the General Appropriations Act;
872 requiring program awards to be allocated on a first-
873 come, first-served basis; requiring returning students
874 to receive priority over new students; providing the
875 duration of the award; requiring funds to be
876 distributed to eligible institutions based on a
877 formula approved by the state board; requiring the
878 formula to take into account specified criteria;
879 requiring grants to be transmitted to institutions in
880 advance of the registration period; requiring
881 institutions to notify students of award amounts;



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882 requiring institutions to determine the eligibility
883 status of each student at a specified time;
884 prohibiting institutions from being required to
885 reevaluate student eligibility after the specified
886 time; requiring institutions to report specified
887 information to the department; requiring institutions
888 to remit to the department any undisbursed advances
889 within a specified timeframe; requiring the state
890 board to adopt rules; creating s. 1009.711, F.S.;
891 establishing the Florida Endeavor Scholarship Program;
892 requiring the award to cover tuition, registration,
893 and testing fees for eligible students at a Florida
894 College System institution, a career center, or a
895 charter technical career center; providing that
896 students who earned a high school credential before
897 enrolling at the institution are not eligible for the
898 program; requiring enrollment in specified programs;
899 requiring that students meet specified statutory
900 requirements; requiring that students demonstrate
901 readiness for enrollment in a postsecondary clock hour
902 program by meeting a specified requirement,
903 demonstrating specified literacy and numeracy skills,
904 or by enrolling in an Integrated Education and
905 Training program; specifying criteria for continuing
906 eligibility and for a renewal award; prohibiting
907 institutions from imposing additional criteria to
908 determine a student's initial eligibility; providing
909 that students are eligible to receive award amounts
910 equal to certain tuition and registration fees;



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911 requiring program awards to be allocated on a first-
912 come, first-served basis, with returning students
913 given priority over new students; requiring funds to
914 be distributed to eligible institutions based on a
915 formula approved by the state board; requiring that
916 the formula take into account specified criteria;
917 requiring that grants be transmitted to institutions
918 in advance of the registration period; requiring
919 institutions to notify students of award amounts;
920 requiring institutions to determine the eligibility
921 status of each student at a specified time;
922 prohibiting institutions from being required to
923 reevaluate student eligibility after the specified
924 time; requiring institutions to report specified
925 information to the department; requiring institutions
926 to remit to the department any undisbursed advances
927 within a specified timeframe; requiring the state
928 board to adopt rules; amending s. 1009.893, F.S.;
929 requiring a student who enrolls in a baccalaureate
930 degree program in specified academic years to comply
931 with certain requirements to attain a Benacquisto
932 Scholarship; providing that the amount awarded under
933 the program will be as specified in the General
934 Appropriations Act; providing an effective date.



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LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Senate	.	House
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	.	

The Committee on Education (Thurston) recommended the following:

Senate Amendment (with title amendment)

Delete lines 183 - 543

and insert:

Section 2. Paragraph (a) of subsection (4) of section 1009.50, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1009.50 Florida Public Student Assistance Grant Program; eligibility for grants.-

(4) (a) The funds appropriated for the Florida Public Student Assistance Grant Program shall be distributed to eligible institutions in accordance with a formula approved by



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12 the State Board of Education. The formula must consider at least
13 the prior year's distribution of funds and, the number of
14 eligible applicants who did not receive awards, ~~the~~
15 ~~standardization of the expected family contribution, and~~
16 ~~provisions for unused funds.~~ The formula must account for
17 changes in the number of eligible students across all student
18 assistance grant programs established pursuant to this section
19 and ss. 1009.505, 1009.51, and 1009.52.

20 Section 3. Paragraph (a) of subsection (4) of section
21 1009.51, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

22 1009.51 Florida Private Student Assistance Grant Program;
23 eligibility for grants.—

24 (4) (a) The funds appropriated for the Florida Private
25 Student Assistance Grant Program shall be distributed to
26 eligible institutions in accordance with a formula approved by
27 the State Board of Education. The formula must consider at least
28 the prior year's distribution of funds and, the number of
29 eligible applicants who did not receive awards, ~~the~~
30 ~~standardization of the expected family contribution, and~~
31 ~~provisions for unused funds.~~ The formula must account for
32 changes in the number of eligible students across all student
33 assistance grant programs established pursuant to this section
34 and ss. 1009.50, 1009.505, and 1009.52.

35 Section 4. Paragraph (a) of subsection (4) of section
36 1009.52, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

37 1009.52 Florida Postsecondary Student Assistance Grant
38 Program; eligibility for grants.—

39 (4) (a) The funds appropriated for the Florida Postsecondary
40 Student Assistance Grant Program shall be distributed to



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41 eligible institutions in accordance with a formula approved by
42 the State Board of Education. The formula must consider at least
43 the prior year's distribution of funds and, the number of
44 eligible applicants who did not receive awards, ~~the~~
45 ~~standardization of the expected family contribution, and~~
46 ~~provisions for unused funds~~. The formula must account for
47 changes in the number of eligible students across all student
48 assistance grant programs established pursuant to this section
49 and ss. 1009.50, 1009.505, and 1009.51.

50 Section 5. Subsection (3) of section 1009.53, Florida
51 Statutes, is amended to read:

52 1009.53 Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program.—

53 (3) The Department of Education shall administer the Bright
54 Futures Scholarship Program according to rules and procedures
55 established by the State Board of Education. A single
56 application must be sufficient for a student to apply for any of
57 the awards. The department shall advertise the availability of
58 the scholarship program and shall notify students, teachers,
59 parents, certified school counselors, and principals or other
60 relevant school administrators of the criteria and application
61 procedures. The department must begin this process of
62 notification no later than September ~~January~~ 1 of each year.

63 Section 6. Subsections (1) and (2) of section 1009.534,
64 Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

65 1009.534 Florida Academic Scholars award.—

66 (1) A student is eligible for a Florida Academic Scholars
67 award if he or she meets the general eligibility requirements
68 for the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program and:

69 (a) Has achieved a 3.5 weighted grade point average as



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70 calculated pursuant to s. 1009.531, or its equivalent, in high
71 school courses that are designated by the State Board of
72 Education as college-preparatory academic courses and has
73 attained at least the score required under s. 1009.531(6) (a) ~~on~~
74 ~~the combined verbal and quantitative parts of the Scholastic~~
75 ~~Aptitude Test, the Scholastic Assessment Test, or the recentered~~
76 ~~Scholastic Assessment Test of the College Entrance Examination,~~
77 ~~or an equivalent score on the ACT Assessment Program;~~

78 (b) Has attended a home education program according to s.
79 1002.41 during grades 11 and 12, has completed the International
80 Baccalaureate curriculum but failed to earn the International
81 Baccalaureate Diploma, or has completed the Advanced
82 International Certificate of Education curriculum but failed to
83 earn the Advanced International Certificate of Education
84 Diploma, and has attained at least the score required under s.
85 1009.531(6) (a) ~~on the combined verbal and quantitative parts of~~
86 ~~the Scholastic Aptitude Test, the Scholastic Assessment Test, or~~
87 ~~the recentered Scholastic Assessment Test of the College~~
88 ~~Entrance Examination, or an equivalent score on the ACT~~
89 ~~Assessment Program;~~

90 (c) Has been awarded an International Baccalaureate Diploma
91 from the International Baccalaureate Office or an Advanced
92 International Certificate of Education Diploma from the
93 University of Cambridge International Examinations Office;

94 (d) Has been recognized by ~~the merit or achievement~~
95 ~~programs~~ of the National Merit Scholarship Corporation as a
96 scholar or finalist; ~~or~~

97 (e) Has been granted academic honors by one or more of the
98 College Board National Recognition Programs for students from



99 underrepresented communities; or recognized by the National
100 Hispanic Recognition Program as a scholar recipient

101 (f) For a high school student who graduated in the 2021-
102 2022 academic year and thereafter:

103 1. Has earned an associate degree with a minimum
104 postsecondary cumulative grade point average of 3.5 on a 4.0
105 scale before graduating from high school; or

106 2. Has earned a College Board Advanced Placement Capstone
107 Diploma with scores of 4 or higher on six Advanced Placement
108 examinations.

109
110 The student must complete a program of volunteer service work,
111 as approved by the district school board, the administrators of
112 a nonpublic school, or the Department of Education for home
113 education program students, which must include a minimum of 75
114 hours of service work for high school students graduating in the
115 2010-2011 academic year and 100 hours of service work for high
116 school students graduating in the 2011-2012 academic year and
117 thereafter. The student must identify a social or civic issue or
118 a professional area that interests him or her, develop a plan
119 for his or her personal involvement in addressing the issue or
120 learning about the area, and, through papers or other
121 presentations, evaluate and reflect upon his or her experience.
122 Except for credit earned through service-learning courses
123 adopted pursuant to s. 1003.497, the student may not receive
124 remuneration or academic credit for the volunteer service work
125 performed. Such work may include, but is not limited to, a
126 business or governmental internship, work for a nonprofit
127 community service organization, or activities on behalf of a



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128 candidate for public office. The hours of volunteer service must
129 be documented in writing, and the document must be signed by the
130 student, the student's parent or guardian, and a representative
131 of the organization for which the student performed the
132 volunteer service work.

133 (2) A Florida Academic Scholar who is enrolled in a
134 certificate, diploma, associate, or baccalaureate degree program
135 at a public or nonpublic postsecondary education institution is
136 eligible for an award equal to the amount specified necessary to
137 pay 100 percent of tuition and fees established under ss.
138 1009.22(3), (5), (6), and (7); 1009.23(3), (4), (7), (8), (10),
139 and (11); and 1009.24(4), (7)-(13), (14)(r), and (16), as
140 applicable, and is eligible for an additional stipend for
141 textbooks, to assist with the payment of educational expenses as
142 funds are specifically appropriated in the General
143 Appropriations Act to assist with the payment of educational
144 expenses.

145 Section 7. Section 1009.5341, Florida Statutes, is amended
146 to read:

147 1009.5341 Florida Bright Futures Scholarship awards for
148 graduate study. For the 2021-2022 academic year, Florida Bright
149 Futures Scholarship recipients who graduate in the 2010-2011
150 academic year and thereafter with a baccalaureate degree in 7
151 semesters, or the equivalent or fewer hours, and wish to pursue
152 graduate study may apply the unused portion of their Florida
153 Academic Scholars award or Florida Medallion Scholars award
154 toward 1 semester of graduate study, not to exceed 15 semester
155 hours paid at the undergraduate rate. A baccalaureate degree may
156 include, but is not limited to, college credits earned through



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157 ~~articulated acceleration mechanisms pursuant to s. 1007.27.~~

158

159 ===== T I T L E A M E N D M E N T =====

160 And the title is amended as follows:

161 Delete lines 3 - 89

162 and insert:

163 1009.25, F.S.; making technical changes; amending s.
164 1009.50, F.S.; revising the formula for calculating
165 how Florida Public Student Assistance Grant Program
166 funds are distributed; amending s. 1009.51, F.S.;
167 revising the formula for calculating how Florida
168 Private Student Assistance Grant Program funds are
169 distributed; amending s. 1009.52, F.S.; revising the
170 formula for how Florida Postsecondary Student
171 Assistance Grant Program funds are distributed;
172 amending s. 1009.53, F.S.; revising the date by which
173 the Department of Education is annually required to
174 advertise the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship
175 Program to specified persons; amending s. 1009.534,
176 F.S.; revising and expanding eligibility requirements
177 of the Florida Academic Scholars award; providing that
178 a Florida Academic Scholar is eligible for an award
179 equal to the amount specified in the General
180 Appropriations Act; amending s. 1009.5341, F.S.;
181 authorizing a Bright Futures Scholarship recipient to
182 apply the unused portion of a Florida Academic
183 Scholars award or Florida Medallion Scholars award
184 toward graduate study for a specified academic year;



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LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Senate

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House

The Committee on Education (Polsky) recommended the following:

Senate Amendment (with title amendment)

Between lines 243 and 244

insert:

Section 3. Subsection (1) of section 1009.42, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1009.42 Financial aid appeal process.-

(1) (a) The State Board of Education shall adopt, by rule, procedures ~~a procedure~~ for the appeal of:

1. Errors in eligibility determinations, or failure to transfer awards between eligible institutions, made by the



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12 Office of Student Financial Assistance of the Department of
13 Education, regarding applicants' eligibility for receiving state
14 student financial aid awards; and

15 2. Beginning with the 2022-2023 academic year, eligibility
16 determinations made under s. 1009.40(1)(c) based solely on
17 whether a student is enrolled in a career certificate or degree
18 program on an approved list developed pursuant to s.
19 1009.46(2)(a).

20 (b) The ~~procedures~~ procedure must provide for establishment
21 of a committee to consider appeals that are not resolved by
22 other administrative action. Each committee must be comprised of
23 four members appointed by the Commissioner of Education,
24 including one representative of the Office of Student Financial
25 Assistance; two practicing financial aid administrators from
26 public or private postsecondary institutions in this state, one
27 of whom must be from an institution other than one to which the
28 applicant is seeking admission or enrolled in, as applicable;
29 and one student enrolled in a public postsecondary institution
30 in this state, nominated by the Florida Student Association.

31 (c) An applicant for state student financial aid may submit
32 an appeal ~~who believes an error has been made in determining~~
33 eligibility for student financial assistance or ~~who believes the~~
34 department has failed to transfer an award between eligible
35 institutions ~~may appeal the decision~~ in writing to the Office of
36 Student Financial Assistance based on the circumstances
37 described in subparagraphs (a)1. and 2. The Office of Student
38 Financial Assistance shall investigate the complaint and take
39 appropriate action within 30 days after its receipt of the
40 appeal. Notwithstanding s. 1009.40(1)(c), a student submitting



41 an appeal under subparagraph (a)2. must be deemed eligible to
42 receive state student financial aid awards if the appeal
43 demonstrates that the student's chosen program would help the
44 student attain a career in the future. If the student wishes
45 further review of the appeal, the Office of Student Financial
46 Assistance shall forward the appeal to the committee. Within 30
47 days after the receipt of a request for a hearing, a final
48 decision shall be rendered by the committee established under
49 this section, and a copy of the decision shall be provided to
50 the applicant. The decision rendered by the committee
51 constitutes final agency action.

52 (d) A description of the financial aid appeals process
53 shall be included in the application form for each state student
54 financial aid program.

55
56 ===== T I T L E A M E N D M E N T =====

57 And the title is amended as follows:

58 Delete line 15

59 and insert:

60 to receive certain funding; amending s. 1009.42, F.S.;

61 revising the postsecondary financial aid appeal

62 process; requiring the State Board of Education to

63 adopt procedures; authorizing students to appeal

64 eligibility determinations based solely on whether the

65 student is enrolled in a career certificate or degree

66 program on certain approved lists; requiring such

67 students to be deemed eligible to receive state

68 student financial aid awards if the appeal

69 demonstrates that the chosen program would help the



70 students attain a career in the future; creating s.
71 1009.46, F.S.;

By Senator Baxley

12-00821G-21

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1 A bill to be entitled
 2 An act relating to student financial aid; amending s.
 3 1009.25, F.S.; making technical changes; amending s.
 4 1009.40, F.S.; conforming provisions to changes made
 5 by the act; requiring that eligibility for state
 6 financial aid awards and tuition assistance grants be
 7 reevaluated each term and identify students' program
 8 of study; providing additional eligibility criteria
 9 for financial aid awards and tuition assistance
 10 grants, beginning with a specified academic year;
 11 providing that eligibility for such funds is
 12 contingent on enrollment in certain career certificate
 13 or degree programs; providing that students who have
 14 not yet been admitted to such a program are eligible
 15 to receive certain funding; creating s. 1009.46, F.S.;
 16 providing the duties of postsecondary educational
 17 institutions with regard to financial aid and tuition
 18 assistance programs; specifying penalties for
 19 noncompliance; requiring the Board of Governors and
 20 the State Board of Education to each approve, by a
 21 specified date, a list of career certificate and
 22 undergraduate and graduate degree programs that they
 23 determine lead directly to employment; requiring that
 24 each list include specified information; requiring
 25 each list to include programs from independent
 26 colleges and universities; requiring that the lists be
 27 updated annually; amending s. 1009.50, F.S.; revising
 28 the formula for calculating how Florida Public Student
 29 Assistance Grant Program funds are distributed;

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CODING: Words ~~stricken~~ are deletions; words underlined are additions.

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30 deleting a provision authorizing Florida Public
 31 Student Assistance Grant Program funds to be deposited
 32 in the State Student Financial Assistance Trust Fund;
 33 deleting a provision requiring any balance in the
 34 trust fund which was allocated to the Florida Public
 35 Student Assistance Grant Program at the end of the
 36 fiscal year to remain therein; amending s. 1009.505,
 37 F.S.; deleting a provision authorizing Florida Public
 38 Postsecondary Career Education Student Assistance
 39 Grant Program funds to be deposited in the trust fund;
 40 deleting a provision requiring any balance in the
 41 trust fund which was allocated to the Florida Public
 42 Postsecondary Career Education Student Assistance
 43 Grant Program at the end of the fiscal year to remain
 44 therein; amending s. 1009.51, F.S.; revising the
 45 formula for calculating how Florida Private Student
 46 Assistance Grant Program funds are distributed;
 47 deleting a provision authorizing Florida Private
 48 Student Assistance Grant Program funds to be deposited
 49 in the trust fund; deleting a provision requiring any
 50 balance in the trust fund which was allocated to the
 51 Florida Private Student Assistance Grant Program at
 52 the end of the fiscal year to remain therein; amending
 53 s. 1009.52, F.S.; revising the formula for how Florida
 54 Postsecondary Student Assistance Grant Program funds
 55 are distributed; deleting a provision authorizing
 56 Florida Postsecondary Student Assistance Grant Program
 57 funds to be deposited in the trust fund; deleting a
 58 provision requiring any balance in the trust fund

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59 which was allocated to the Florida Postsecondary
 60 Student Assistance Grant Program at the end of the
 61 fiscal year to remain therein; amending s. 1009.53,
 62 F.S.; requiring the Department of Education to
 63 advertise the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship
 64 Program to specified persons no later than September 1
 65 of each year; deleting a provision authorizing unused
 66 Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program funds to be
 67 carried forward; deleting a provision authorizing
 68 certain students to receive specified loans; amending
 69 s. 1009.532, F.S.; requiring, beginning with a
 70 specified academic year, that the maximum number of
 71 credit hours which can be awarded under the Florida
 72 Bright Futures Scholarship Program be reduced by the
 73 number of postsecondary credit hours the student has
 74 earned from certain articulated acceleration
 75 mechanisms; amending s. 1009.534, F.S.; revising and
 76 expanding eligibility requirements of the Florida
 77 Academic Scholars award; providing that a Florida
 78 Academic Scholar is eligible for an award equal to the
 79 amount specified in the General Appropriations Act;
 80 amending s. 1009.5341, F.S.; authorizing a Bright
 81 Futures Scholarship recipient to apply the unused
 82 portion of a Florida Academic Scholars award or
 83 Florida Medallion Scholars award toward graduate study
 84 for a specified academic year; authorizing a Bright
 85 Futures Scholarship recipient to apply the unused
 86 portion of a Florida Academic Scholars award or
 87 Florida Medallion Scholars award toward graduate study

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88 in a specified degree field, paid at the undergraduate
 89 rate, beginning with a specified academic year;
 90 amending s. 1009.535, F.S.; revising and expanding
 91 eligibility for Florida Medallion Scholars awards;
 92 providing that the amount of Florida Medallion
 93 Scholars' awards is as specified in the General
 94 Appropriations Act; creating s. 1009.71, F.S.;
 95 establishing the Florida Bright Opportunities Grant
 96 Program; requiring the program to be administered by
 97 the participating institutions subject to state board
 98 rules; providing the purpose of the program;
 99 specifying eligibility requirements for the program;
 100 prohibiting institutions from imposing additional
 101 eligibility requirements on students; requiring the
 102 program to cover remaining tuition and fees for
 103 eligible students after the application of all other
 104 federal and state financial aid, with a stipend for
 105 books as specified in the General Appropriations Act;
 106 requiring program awards to be allocated on a first-
 107 come, first-served basis; requiring returning students
 108 to receive priority over new students; providing the
 109 duration of the award; requiring funds to be
 110 distributed to eligible institutions based on a
 111 formula approved by the state board; requiring the
 112 formula to consider specified criteria; requiring
 113 grants to be transmitted to institutions in advance of
 114 the registration period; requiring institutions to
 115 notify students of award amounts; requiring
 116 institutions to determine the eligibility status of

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117 each student at a specified time; prohibiting
 118 institutions from being required to reevaluate student
 119 eligibility after the specified time; requiring
 120 institutions to report specified information to the
 121 department; requiring institutions to remit to the
 122 department any undisbursed advances within a specified
 123 timeframe; requiring the state board to adopt rules;
 124 creating s. 1009.711, F.S.; establishing the Florida
 125 Endeavor Scholarship Program; requiring the award to
 126 cover tuition and registration fees for eligible
 127 students at a Florida College System institution, a
 128 career center, or a charter technical career center;
 129 specifying eligibility for students without a high
 130 school credential; requiring enrollment in specified
 131 programs; requiring completion of specified clock
 132 hours and a minimum postsecondary grade point average;
 133 requiring program awards to be allocated on a first-
 134 come, first-served basis; requiring returning students
 135 to be given priority over new students; providing the
 136 duration of the award; requiring funds to be
 137 distributed to eligible institutions based on a
 138 formula approved by the state board; requiring the
 139 formula to consider specified criteria; requiring
 140 grants to be transmitted to institutions in advance of
 141 the registration period; requiring institutions to
 142 notify students of award amounts; requiring
 143 institutions to determine the eligibility status of
 144 each student at a specified time; prohibiting
 145 institutions from being required to reevaluate student

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146 eligibility after the specified time; requiring
 147 institutions to report specified information to the
 148 department; requiring institutions to remit to the
 149 department any undisbursed advances within a specified
 150 timeframe; requiring the state board to adopt rules;
 151 amending s. 1009.893, F.S.; requiring a student who
 152 enrolls in a baccalaureate degree program in specified
 153 academic years to comply with certain requirements to
 154 attain a Benacquisto Scholarship; providing that the
 155 amount awarded under the program will be as specified
 156 in the General Appropriations Act; providing an
 157 effective date.

158
 159 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

160
 161 Section 1. Paragraphs (c) and (d) of subsection (1) of
 162 section 1009.25, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

163 1009.25 Fee exemptions.—

164 (1) The following students are exempt from the payment of
 165 tuition and fees, including lab fees, at a school district that
 166 provides workforce education programs, Florida College System
 167 institution, or state university:

168 (c) A student who is l or was at the time he or she reached
 169 18 years of age l in the custody of the Department of Children
 170 and Families or who, after spending at least 6 months in the
 171 custody of the department after reaching 16 years of age, was
 172 placed in a guardianship by the court. Such exemption includes
 173 fees associated with enrollment in applied academics for adult
 174 education instruction. The exemption remains valid until the

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175 student reaches 28 years of age.

176 (d) A student who is, or was at the time he or she reached
177 18 years of age, in the custody of a relative or nonrelative
178 under s. 39.5085 or s. 39.6225 or who was adopted from the
179 Department of Children and Families after May 5, 1997. Such
180 exemption includes fees associated with enrollment in applied
181 academics for adult education instruction. The exemption remains
182 valid until the student reaches 28 years of age.

183 Section 2. Paragraph (a) of subsection (1) of section
184 1009.40, Florida Statutes, is amended, and paragraph (c) is
185 added to that subsection, to read:

186 1009.40 General requirements for student eligibility for
187 state financial aid awards and tuition assistance grants.—

188 (1) (a) The general requirements for eligibility of students
189 for state financial aid awards and tuition assistance grants
190 consist of the following:

191 1. Achievement of the academic requirements of and
192 acceptance at a state university or Florida College System
193 institution; a nursing diploma school approved by the Florida
194 Board of Nursing; a Florida college or university which is
195 accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the State
196 Board of Education; a Florida institution the credits of which
197 are acceptable for transfer to state universities; a career
198 center; or a private career institution accredited by an
199 accrediting agency recognized by the State Board of Education.

200 2. Residency in this state for no less than 1 year
201 preceding the award of aid or a tuition assistance grant for a
202 program established pursuant to s. 1009.50, s. 1009.505, s.
203 1009.51, s. 1009.52, s. 1009.53, s. 1009.60, s. 1009.62, s.

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204 1009.71, s. 1009.711, s. 1009.72, s. 1009.73, s. 1009.75, s.
205 1009.77, s. 1009.89, ~~ex~~ s. 1009.891, or s. 1009.894. Residency
206 in this state must be for purposes other than to obtain an
207 education. Resident status for purposes of receiving state
208 financial aid awards shall be determined in the same manner as
209 resident status for tuition purposes pursuant to s. 1009.21.

210 3. Submission of certification attesting to the accuracy,
211 completeness, and correctness of information provided to
212 demonstrate a student's eligibility to receive state financial
213 aid awards or tuition assistance grants. Falsification of such
214 information shall result in the denial of a pending application
215 and revocation of an award or grant currently held to the extent
216 that no further payments shall be made. Additionally, students
217 who knowingly make false statements in order to receive state
218 financial aid awards or tuition assistance grants commit a
219 misdemeanor of the second degree subject to the provisions of s.
220 837.06 and shall be required to return all state financial aid
221 awards or tuition assistance grants wrongfully obtained.

222 (c) Eligibility for state financial aid awards and tuition
223 assistance grants must be reevaluated each term based on the
224 program of study to which the student has been admitted and in
225 which he or she is enrolled. Beginning with the 2022-2023
226 academic year and thereafter, eligibility for such awards and
227 grants is contingent on the student's enrollment in a career
228 certificate or degree program on an approved list developed
229 pursuant to s. 1009.46(2) (a).

230 1. A student who has been admitted to such a program:
231 a. Is eligible to receive an award for each term that he or
232 she is enrolled in the program.

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233 b. Is ineligible to receive funding for each term that he
 234 or she is enrolled in a program that is not on an approved list.

235 2. A student who has not yet been admitted to a program is
 236 eligible to receive funding for up to 60 credit hours or until
 237 he or she is enrolled in a program that is not on an approved
 238 list, whichever comes first.

239 3. The program of study identified on an approved list
 240 shall apply to a student if the program to which the he or she
 241 is admitted is on an approved list at the time of admittance to
 242 the program or at the time he or she initially entered an
 243 eligible Florida postsecondary institution.

244 Section 3. Section 1009.46, Florida Statutes, is created to
 245 read:

246 1009.46 Duties of postsecondary educational institutions
 247 for state financial aid and tuition assistance programs.-

248 (1) (a) Each postsecondary educational institution that
 249 receives state funds for state financial aid and tuition
 250 assistance programs shall:

251 1. Complete and return the annual application for state aid
 252 funds in the format and by the date established by the
 253 department;

254 2. Maintain complete, accurate, and auditable student
 255 records documenting the institution's administration of state
 256 financial aid and tuition assistance funds;

257 3. Verify eligibility of enrolled students with the
 258 department each academic term;

259 4. Verify eligibility of enrolled students by reporting the
 260 program of study to the department using the most recent
 261 classification instruction program taxonomy for the certificate

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262 or degree level as developed by the United States Department of
 263 Education's National Center for Education Statistics;

264 5. Disburse state financial aid and tuition assistance to
 265 eligible students;

266 6. Notify students annually regarding the renewal
 267 requirements for each state-funded award for which they are
 268 eligible;

269 7. Complete and return to the department in the format and
 270 by the date established by the department all reports for the
 271 administration of state funds;

272 8. Complete and return to the department in the format and
 273 by the date established by the department all legislatively
 274 required reports;

275 9. Retain required records for the later of 5 years or
 276 until such records are audited and any audit exceptions are
 277 resolved; and

278 10. Refund to the department any undisbursed advances
 279 within 60 days after the end of the regular registration each
 280 fall and spring term, within 30 days after the end of the summer
 281 term, or within 60 days after the date that a student's
 282 ineligibility is determined.

283 (b) These requirements do not preclude higher standards
 284 specified in other sections of this part or rules of the state
 285 board.

286 (c) An institution that fails to perform its duties in
 287 administering state financial aid or tuition assistance programs
 288 must be placed on probation by the department.

289 1. The department shall provide allocations on a
 290 reimbursement basis to a participating institution that fails to

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291 timely remit undisbursed funds for the previous academic year.

292 2. The department may suspend or revoke an institution's
 293 eligibility to participate in state-funded programs if the
 294 institution fails to provide the required audits, fails to
 295 resolve audit findings, or fails to timely provide statutorily
 296 required reports by established deadlines.

297 (2) (a) By December 31, 2021, the Board of Governors and the
 298 State Board of Education shall each approve a list of career
 299 certificate and undergraduate and graduate degree programs
 300 offered by a district career center, charter technical career
 301 center, Florida College System institution, or state university,
 302 as applicable, which lead directly to employment.

303 (b) In determining which programs will be included on a
 304 list, the Board of Governors and the State Board of Education
 305 shall consider national, state, and regional industry demand for
 306 certificateholders and graduates of such degree programs. For
 307 each certificate and degree program listed, the Board of
 308 Governors and the State Board of Education must identify
 309 occupations, current job openings, estimates of job growth, and
 310 employment wages. Each approved list must also include
 311 appropriate certificate and degree programs offered by eligible
 312 independent colleges and universities.

313 (c) Each approved list must be updated by each December 31.

314 Section 4. Paragraph (a) of subsection (4) and subsection
 315 (5) of section 1009.50, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

316 1009.50 Florida Public Student Assistance Grant Program;
 317 eligibility for grants.-

318 (4) (a) The funds appropriated for the Florida Public
 319 Student Assistance Grant Program shall be distributed to

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320 eligible institutions in accordance with a formula approved by
 321 the State Board of Education. The formula must consider at least
 322 the prior year's distribution of funds ~~and~~, the number of
 323 eligible applicants who did not receive awards, ~~the~~
 324 ~~standardization of the expected family contribution, and~~
 325 ~~provisions for unused funds.~~ The formula must account for
 326 changes in the number of eligible students across all student
 327 assistance grant programs established pursuant to this section
 328 and ss. 1009.505, 1009.51, and 1009.52.

329 ~~(5) Funds appropriated by the Legislature for state student~~
 330 ~~assistance grants may be deposited in the State Student~~
 331 ~~Financial Assistance Trust Fund. Notwithstanding s. 216.301 and~~
 332 ~~pursuant to s. 216.351, any balance in the trust fund at the end~~
 333 ~~of any fiscal year which has been allocated to the Florida~~
 334 ~~Public Student Assistance Grant Program shall remain therein and~~
 335 ~~shall be available for carrying out the purposes of this~~
 336 ~~section.~~

337 Section 5. Subsection (5) of section 1009.505, Florida
 338 Statutes, is amended to read:

339 1009.505 Florida Public Postsecondary Career Education
 340 Student Assistance Grant Program.-

341 ~~(5) Funds appropriated by the Legislature for state student~~
 342 ~~assistance grants may be deposited in the State Student~~
 343 ~~Financial Assistance Trust Fund. Notwithstanding s. 216.301 and~~
 344 ~~pursuant to s. 216.351, any balance in the trust fund at the end~~
 345 ~~of any fiscal year which has been allocated to the Florida~~
 346 ~~Public Postsecondary Career Education Student Assistance Grant~~
 347 ~~Program shall remain therein and shall be available for carrying~~
 348 ~~out the purposes of this section.~~

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349 Section 6. Paragraph (a) of subsection (4) and subsection
350 (5) of section 1009.51, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:
351 1009.51 Florida Private Student Assistance Grant Program;
352 eligibility for grants.—

353 (4) (a) The funds appropriated for the Florida Private
354 Student Assistance Grant Program shall be distributed to
355 eligible institutions in accordance with a formula approved by
356 the State Board of Education. The formula must consider at least
357 the prior year's distribution of funds and, the number of
358 eligible applicants who did not receive awards, ~~the~~
359 ~~standardization of the expected family contribution, and~~
360 ~~provisions for unused funds~~. The formula must account for
361 changes in the number of eligible students across all student
362 assistance grant programs established pursuant to this section
363 and ss. 1009.50, 1009.505, and 1009.52.

364 ~~(5) Funds appropriated by the Legislature for Florida~~
365 ~~private student assistance grants may be deposited in the State~~
366 ~~Student Financial Assistance Trust Fund. Notwithstanding s.~~
367 ~~216.301 and pursuant to s. 216.351, any balance in the trust~~
368 ~~fund at the end of any fiscal year which has been allocated to~~
369 ~~the Florida Private Student Assistance Grant Program shall~~
370 ~~remain therein and shall be available for carrying out the~~
371 ~~purposes of this section and as otherwise provided by law.~~

372 Section 7. Paragraph (a) of subsection (4) and subsection
373 (6) of section 1009.52, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:
374 1009.52 Florida Postsecondary Student Assistance Grant
375 Program; eligibility for grants.—

376 (4) (a) The funds appropriated for the Florida Postsecondary
377 Student Assistance Grant Program shall be distributed to

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378 eligible institutions in accordance with a formula approved by
379 the State Board of Education. The formula must consider at least
380 the prior year's distribution of funds and, the number of
381 eligible applicants who did not receive awards, ~~the~~
382 ~~standardization of the expected family contribution, and~~
383 ~~provisions for unused funds~~. The formula must account for
384 changes in the number of eligible students across all student
385 assistance grant programs established pursuant to this section
386 and ss. 1009.50, 1009.505, and 1009.51.

387 ~~(6) Funds appropriated by the Legislature for Florida~~
388 ~~postsecondary student assistance grants may be deposited in the~~
389 ~~State Student Financial Assistance Trust Fund. Notwithstanding~~
390 ~~s. 216.301 and pursuant to s. 216.351, any balance in the trust~~
391 ~~fund at the end of any fiscal year which has been allocated to~~
392 ~~the Florida Postsecondary Student Assistance Grant Program shall~~
393 ~~remain therein and shall be available for carrying out the~~
394 ~~purposes of this section and as otherwise provided by law.~~

395 Section 8. Subsections (3), (4), and (7) of section
396 1009.53, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

397 1009.53 Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program.—

398 (3) The Department of Education shall administer the Bright
399 Futures Scholarship Program according to rules and procedures
400 established by the State Board of Education. A single
401 application must be sufficient for a student to apply for any of
402 the awards. The department shall advertise the availability of
403 the scholarship program and shall notify students, teachers,
404 parents, certified school counselors, and principals or other
405 relevant school administrators of the criteria and application
406 procedures. The department must begin this process of

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407 notification no later than ~~September~~ January 1 of each year.

408 (4) Funding for the Bright Futures Scholarship Program must
409 be allocated from the Education Enhancement Trust Fund and must
410 be provided before allocations from that fund are calculated for
411 disbursement to other educational entities.

412 ~~(a)~~ If funds appropriated are not adequate to provide the
413 maximum allowable award to each eligible applicant, awards in
414 all components of the program must be prorated using the same
415 percentage reduction.

416 ~~(b) Notwithstanding s. 216.301, if all funds allocated to
417 the Bright Futures Scholarship Program are not used in any
418 fiscal year, up to 10 percent of the total allocation may be
419 carried forward and used for awards in the following year.~~

420 (7) A student may receive only one type of award from the
421 Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program at any given time,
422 but may transfer from one type of award to another through the
423 renewal application process, if the student's eligibility status
424 changes. However, a student is not eligible to transfer from a
425 Florida Medallion Scholarship, a Florida Gold Seal CAPE
426 Scholarship, or a Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholarship to a
427 Florida Academic Scholarship. ~~A student who receives an award
428 from the program may also receive a federal family education
429 loan or a federal direct loan, and the value of the award must
430 be considered in the certification or calculation of the
431 student's loan eligibility.~~

432 Section 9. Paragraph (c) is added to subsection (3) of
433 section 1009.532, Florida Statutes, to read:

434 1009.532 Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program;
435 student eligibility requirements for renewal awards.-

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436 (3)

437 (c) Notwithstanding paragraph (a), beginning with students
438 initially funded in the 2022-2023 academic year, the maximum
439 number of credit hours which can be awarded must be reduced by
440 the number of postsecondary credit hours the student has earned
441 from articulated acceleration mechanisms under s. 1007.27.

442 Section 10. Subsections (1) and (2) of section 1009.534,
443 Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

444 1009.534 Florida Academic Scholars award.-

445 (1) A student is eligible for a Florida Academic Scholars
446 award if he or she meets the general eligibility requirements
447 for the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program and:

448 (a) Has achieved a 3.5 weighted grade point average as
449 calculated pursuant to s. 1009.531, or its equivalent, in high
450 school courses that are designated by the State Board of
451 Education as college-preparatory academic courses and has
452 attained at least the score required under s. 1009.531(6) (a) ~~on~~
453 ~~the combined verbal and quantitative parts of the Scholastic~~
454 ~~Aptitude Test, the Scholastic Assessment Test, or the recentered~~
455 ~~Scholastic Assessment Test of the College Entrance Examination,~~
456 ~~or an equivalent score on the ACT Assessment Program;~~

457 (b) Has attended a home education program according to s.
458 1002.41 during grades 11 and 12, has completed the International
459 Baccalaureate curriculum but failed to earn the International
460 Baccalaureate Diploma, or has completed the Advanced
461 International Certificate of Education curriculum but failed to
462 earn the Advanced International Certificate of Education
463 Diploma, and has attained at least the score required under s.
464 1009.531(6) (a) ~~on the combined verbal and quantitative parts of~~

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465 ~~the Scholastic Aptitude Test, the Scholastic Assessment Test, or~~
 466 ~~the recentered Scholastic Assessment Test of the College~~
 467 ~~Entrance Examination, or an equivalent score on the ACT~~
 468 ~~Assessment Program;~~

469 (c) Has been awarded an International Baccalaureate Diploma
 470 from the International Baccalaureate Office or an Advanced
 471 International Certificate of Education Diploma from the
 472 University of Cambridge International Examinations Office;

473 (d) Has been recognized by ~~the merit or achievement~~
 474 ~~programs~~ of the National Merit Scholarship Corporation as a
 475 scholar or finalist; ~~or~~

476 (e) Has been granted academic honors by one or more of the
 477 College Board National Recognition Programs for students from
 478 underrepresented communities; or recognized by the National
 479 Hispanic Recognition Program as a scholar recipient

480 (f) For a high school student who graduated in the 2021-
 481 2022 academic year and thereafter:

482 1. Has earned an associate degree with a minimum
 483 postsecondary cumulative grade point average of 3.5 on a 4.0
 484 scale before graduating from high school; or

485 2. Has earned a College Board Advanced Placement Capstone
 486 Diploma with scores of 4 or higher on six Advanced Placement
 487 examinations.

488 The student must complete a program of volunteer service work,
 489 as approved by the district school board, the administrators of
 490 a nonpublic school, or the Department of Education for home
 491 education program students, which must include a minimum of 75
 492 hours of service work for high school students graduating in the
 493

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494 2010-2011 academic year and 100 hours of service work for high
 495 school students graduating in the 2011-2012 academic year and
 496 thereafter. The student must identify a social or civic issue or
 497 a professional area that interests him or her, develop a plan
 498 for his or her personal involvement in addressing the issue or
 499 learning about the area, and, through papers or other
 500 presentations, evaluate and reflect upon his or her experience.
 501 Except for credit earned through service-learning courses
 502 adopted pursuant to s. 1003.497, the student may not receive
 503 remuneration or academic credit for the volunteer service work
 504 performed. Such work may include, but is not limited to, a
 505 business or governmental internship, work for a nonprofit
 506 community service organization, or activities on behalf of a
 507 candidate for public office. The hours of volunteer service must
 508 be documented in writing, and the document must be signed by the
 509 student, the student's parent or guardian, and a representative
 510 of the organization for which the student performed the
 511 volunteer service work.

512 (2) A Florida Academic Scholar who is enrolled in a
 513 certificate, diploma, associate, or baccalaureate degree program
 514 at a public or nonpublic postsecondary education institution is
 515 eligible for an award equal to the amount specified necessary to
 516 pay 100 percent of tuition and fees established under ss.
 517 1009.22(3), (5), (6), and (7); 1009.23(3), (4), (7), (8), (10),
 518 and (11); and 1009.24(4), (7)-(13), (14) (r), and (16), as
 519 applicable, and is eligible for an additional stipend for
 520 textbooks, to assist with the payment of educational expenses as
 521 funds are specifically appropriated in the General
 522 Appropriations Act to assist with the payment of educational

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523 expenses.

524 Section 11. Section 1009.5341, Florida Statutes, is amended
525 to read:

526 1009.5341 Florida Bright Futures Scholarship awards for
527 graduate study.—

528 (1) For the 2021-2022 academic year, Florida Bright Futures
529 Scholarship recipients who graduate in the 2010-2011 academic
530 year and thereafter with a baccalaureate degree in 7 semesters,
531 or the equivalent or fewer hours, and wish to pursue graduate
532 study may apply the unused portion of their Florida Academic
533 Scholars award or Florida Medallion Scholars award toward 1
534 semester of graduate study, not to exceed 15 semester hours paid
535 at the undergraduate rate. A baccalaureate degree may include,
536 but is not limited to, college credits earned through
537 articulated acceleration mechanisms pursuant to s. 1007.27.

538 (2) Beginning with the 2022-2023 academic year, a Bright
539 Futures scholarship recipient may apply the unused portion of
540 his or her Florida Academic Scholars award or Florida Medallion
541 Scholars award toward graduate study in a degree field on an
542 approved list developed pursuant to s. 1009.46(2) (a), which must
543 be paid at the undergraduate rate.

544 Section 12. Subsections (1) and (2) of section 1009.535,
545 Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

546 1009.535 Florida Medallion Scholars award.—

547 (1) A student is eligible for a Florida Medallion Scholars
548 award if he or she meets the general eligibility requirements
549 for the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program and:

550 (a) Has achieved a weighted grade point average of 3.0 as
551 calculated pursuant to s. 1009.531, or the equivalent, in high

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552 school courses that are designated by the State Board of
553 Education as college-preparatory academic courses and has
554 attained at least the score required under s. 1009.531(6) (b) ~~on~~
555 ~~the combined verbal and quantitative parts of the Scholastic~~
556 ~~Aptitude Test, the Scholastic Assessment Test, or the recentered~~
557 ~~Scholastic Assessment Test of the College Entrance Examination,~~
558 ~~or an equivalent score on the ACT Assessment Program;~~

559 (b) Has completed the International Baccalaureate
560 curriculum but failed to earn the International Baccalaureate
561 Diploma or has completed the Advanced International Certificate
562 of Education curriculum but failed to earn the Advanced
563 International Certificate of Education Diploma, and has attained
564 at least the score required under s. 1009.531(6) (b) ~~on the~~
565 ~~combined verbal and quantitative parts of the Scholastic~~
566 ~~Aptitude Test, the Scholastic Assessment Test, or the recentered~~
567 ~~Scholastic Assessment Test of the College Entrance Examination,~~
568 ~~or an equivalent score on the ACT Assessment Program;~~

569 (c) Has attended a home education program according to s.
570 1002.41 during grades 11 and 12 and has attained at least the
571 score required under s. 1009.531(6) (b) ~~on the combined verbal~~
572 ~~and quantitative parts of the Scholastic Aptitude Test, the~~
573 ~~Scholastic Assessment Test, or the recentered Scholastic~~
574 ~~Assessment Test of the College Entrance Examination, or an~~
575 ~~equivalent score on the ACT Assessment Program;~~

576 (d) Has been recognized by the ~~merit or achievement program~~
577 ~~of the~~ National Merit Scholarship Corporation as a scholar or
578 finalist but has not completed the program of volunteer service
579 work required under s. 1009.534; ~~or~~

580 (e) Has been granted academic honors by one or more of the

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581 College Board National Recognition Programs for students from
 582 underrepresented communities ~~recognized by the National Hispanic~~
 583 ~~Recognition Program as a scholar~~, but has not completed the
 584 program of volunteer service work required under s. 1009.534; or
 585 (f) For a high school student who graduates in the 2021-
 586 2022 academic year and thereafter:

587 1. Has earned an associate degree with a minimum cumulative
 588 postsecondary grade point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale before
 589 graduating from high school; or

590 2. Has earned an Advanced Placement Capstone Diploma with
 591 scores of 3 or higher on six Advanced Placement Examinations.

592

593 A high school student graduating in the 2011-2012 academic year
 594 and thereafter must complete at least 75 hours of volunteer
 595 service work approved by the district school board, the
 596 administrators of a nonpublic school, or the Department of
 597 Education for home education program students. The student must
 598 identify a social or civic issue or a professional area that
 599 interests him or her, develop a plan for his or her personal
 600 involvement in addressing the issue or learning about the area,
 601 and, through papers or other presentations, evaluate and reflect
 602 upon his or her experience. Except for credit earned through
 603 service-learning courses adopted pursuant to s. 1003.497, the
 604 student may not receive remuneration or academic credit for
 605 volunteer service work performed. Such work may include, but is
 606 not limited to, a business or governmental internship, work for
 607 a nonprofit community service organization, or activities on
 608 behalf of a candidate for public office. The hours of volunteer
 609 service must be documented in writing, and the document must be

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610 signed by the student, the student's parent or guardian, and a
 611 representative of the organization for which the student
 612 performed the volunteer service work.

613 (2) A Florida Medallion Scholar who is enrolled in a
 614 certificate, diploma, associate, or baccalaureate degree program
 615 at a public or nonpublic postsecondary education institution is
 616 eligible, ~~beginning in the fall 2018 semester~~, for an award
 617 equal to the amount specified in the General Appropriations Act
 618 ~~necessary to pay 75 percent of tuition and fees established~~
 619 ~~under ss. 1009.22(3), (5), (6), and (7); 1009.23(3), (4), (7),~~
 620 ~~(8), (10), and (11); and 1009.24(4), (7)-(13), (14) (#), and~~
 621 ~~(16), as applicable~~, to assist with the payment of educational
 622 expenses. Beginning in the fall 2021 semester, a Florida
 623 Medallion Scholar who is enrolled in an associate degree program
 624 at a Florida College System institution is eligible for an award
 625 equal to the amount specified in the General Appropriations Act
 626 ~~necessary to pay 100 percent of tuition and fees established~~
 627 ~~under s. 1009.23(3), (4), (7), (8), (10), and (11)~~ to assist
 628 with the payment of educational expenses.

629 Section 13. Section 1009.71, Florida Statutes, is created
 630 to read:

631 1009.71 Florida Bright Opportunities Grant Program.-
 632 (1) ESTABLISHMENT; PURPOSE.-The Florida Bright
 633 Opportunities Grant Program is established and shall be
 634 administered by the participating institutions in accordance
 635 with rules of the State Board of Education. The program shall
 636 provide an award equal to the amount necessary to cover tuition
 637 and registration fees, after applying all other federal and
 638 state financial aid, for eligible students at a Florida College

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639 System institution, a career center operated by a district
 640 school board under s. 1001.44, or a charter technical career
 641 center under s. 1002.34.

642 (2) ELIGIBILITY.—In order to be eligible for the program, a
 643 student must have a tuition and registration fee balance not
 644 covered by all federal financial and state financial aid, and:

645 (a) Be enrolled as a student seeking a degree or career
 646 certificate, in an associate degree, technical certificate,
 647 applied technology diploma, or clock hour certificate program at
 648 a Florida College System institution, or a clock hour career
 649 certificate or diploma program at a district career center or
 650 charter technical career center. The students must be enrolled
 651 for at least 6 semester hours, or the equivalent per term, at a
 652 Florida College System institution, district career center, or
 653 charter technical career center;

654 (b) Meet the requirements under s. 1009.40(1)(a)2. and 3.
 655 and (c); and

656 (c) Qualify and remain eligible each academic year for the
 657 Pell Grant.

659 An institution may not impose additional criteria to determine a
 660 student's eligibility to receive a grant under this section.

661 (3) GRANT AWARD.—The program shall:

662 (a) Cover remaining tuition and registration fees, with a
 663 stipend for books as specified in the General Appropriations
 664 Act, for eligible students after all other federal and state
 665 financial aid is applied to tuition and fees.

666 (b) Be allocated, subject to the availability of funding,
 667 on a first-come, first-served basis. The award may not exceed

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668 the cost of tuition and fees at that institution, plus a stipend
 669 for books as determined in the General Appropriations Act.
 670 Returning students shall receive priority over new students.

671 (4) AWARD DURATION.—A student is eligible to receive an
 672 award for the number of semesters or quarters specified in s.
 673 1009.40(3).

674 (5) DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS.—

675 (a) The funds appropriated for the Florida Bright
 676 Opportunities Grant Program must be distributed to eligible
 677 institutions in accordance with a formula approved by the State
 678 Board of Education. The formula must consider at least the prior
 679 year's distribution of funds and the number of eligible
 680 applicants who did not receive awards.

681 (b) Subject to appropriation by the Legislature, payment of
 682 grants must be transmitted to the institution in advance of the
 683 registration period. Institutions shall notify students of the
 684 amount of their awards.

685 (c) The eligibility status of each student to receive a
 686 disbursement must be determined by each institution as of the
 687 end of its regular registration period, inclusive of a drop-add
 688 period. Institutions may not be required to reevaluate a
 689 student's eligibility status after this date for purposes of
 690 changing eligibility determinations previously made.

691 (d) Each participating institution shall report to the
 692 department by the established date the number of students
 693 eligible for the program for each academic term. Each
 694 institution also shall report to the department any necessary
 695 demographic and eligibility data for such students.

696 (e) Institutions shall certify to the department within 30

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697 days after the end of regular registration each term the amount
 698 of funds disbursed to each student. Institutions shall remit to
 699 the department any undisbursed advances for the fall, spring,
 700 and summer terms within 30 days after the end of the summer
 701 term.

702 (6) RULES.—The State Board of Education shall adopt rules
 703 to implement this section.

704 Section 14. Section 1009.711, Florida Statutes, is created
 705 to read:

706 1009.711 Florida Endeavor Scholarship Program.—

707 (1) ESTABLISHMENT; PURPOSE.—The Florida Endeavor
 708 Scholarship Program is established and shall be administered by
 709 participating institutions in accordance with rules of the State
 710 Board of Education. The program shall provide an award equal to
 711 the amount necessary to cover tuition and registration fees for
 712 eligible students at a Florida College System institution, a
 713 career center operated by a district school board under s.
 714 1001.44, or a charter technical career center under s. 1002.34.

715 (2) ELIGIBILITY.—In order to be eligible for the program, a
 716 student may not have earned a high school credential prior to
 717 enrolling at the institution, and must:

718 (a) Be enrolled in a career certificate or noncollege-
 719 credit applied technology diploma program or in a General
 720 Education Program at a Florida College System institution, a
 721 district career center, or a charter technical career center;

722 (b) Meet the requirements under s. 1009.40(1)(a)2. and 3.
 723 and (c);

724 (c) Earn at least 225 clock hours; and

725 (d) Earn a minimum 2.5 postsecondary grade point average.

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726
 727 An institution may not impose additional criteria to determine a
 728 student's eligibility to receive a grant under this section.

729 (3) SCHOLARSHIP AWARD.—A student is eligible to receive an
 730 award equal to the amount to cover tuition and registration fees
 731 for a career certificate or applied technology diploma program
 732 for the number of semesters or quarters specified in s.
 733 1009.40(3). The award may not exceed the cost of tuition and
 734 registration fees at that institution. The institution shall
 735 award scholarships subject to the availability of funding, on a
 736 first-come, first-served basis. Returning students must be given
 737 priority over new students.

738 (4) DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS.—

739 (a) The funds appropriated for the Florida Endeavor
 740 Scholarship Program must be distributed to eligible institutions
 741 in accordance with a formula approved by the State Board of
 742 Education. The formula must consider at least the prior year's
 743 distribution of funds and the number of eligible applicants who
 744 did not receive awards.

745 (b) Subject to the appropriation of funds by the
 746 Legislature, the department shall transmit payment of grants to
 747 the institution in advance of the registration period.
 748 Institutions shall notify students of the amount of their
 749 awards.

750 (c) The eligibility status of each student to receive a
 751 disbursement must be determined by each institution as of the
 752 end of its regular registration period, inclusive of a drop-add
 753 period. Institutions may not be required to reevaluate a
 754 student's eligibility status after this date for purposes of

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755 changing eligibility determinations previously made.

756 (d) Each participating institution shall report to the
 757 department by the established date the number of students
 758 eligible for the program for each academic term. Each
 759 institution also shall report to the department any necessary
 760 demographic and eligibility data for such students.

761 (e) Institutions shall certify to the department within 30
 762 days after the end of regular registration each term the amount
 763 of funds disbursed to each student. Institutions shall remit to
 764 the department any undisbursed advances for the fall, spring,
 765 and summer terms within 30 days after the end of the summer
 766 term.

767 (5) RULES.—The State Board of Education shall adopt rules
 768 to implement this section.

769 Section 15. Paragraph (b) of subsection (4) and subsection
 770 (5) of section 1009.893, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:
 771 1009.893 Benacquisto Scholarship Program.—

772 (4) In order to be eligible for an initial award under the
 773 scholarship program, a student must meet the requirements of
 774 paragraph (a) or paragraph (b).

775 (b) A student who initially enrolls in a baccalaureate
 776 degree program in the 2018-2019 through 2021-2022 academic years
 777 ~~year or later~~ and who is not a resident of this state, as
 778 determined in s. 1009.40 and rules of the State Board of
 779 Education, must:

780 1. Physically reside in this state on or near the campus of
 781 the postsecondary educational institution in which the student
 782 is enrolled;

783 2. Earn a high school diploma from a school outside Florida

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784 which is comparable to a standard Florida high school diploma or
 785 its equivalent pursuant to s. 1002.3105, s. 1003.4281, s.
 786 1003.4282, or s. 1003.435 or must complete a home education
 787 program in another state; and

788 3. Be accepted by and enrolled full-time in a baccalaureate
 789 degree program at an eligible regionally accredited Florida
 790 public or independent postsecondary educational institution
 791 during the fall academic term following high school graduation.

792 (5)(a)1. An eligible student who meets the requirements of
 793 paragraph (4)(a), who is a National Merit Scholar, and who
 794 attends a Florida public postsecondary educational institution
 795 shall receive a scholarship award as specified in the General
 796 Appropriations Act equal to the institutional cost of attendance
 797 minus the sum of the student's Florida Bright Futures
 798 Scholarship and National Merit Scholarship.

799 2. An eligible student who meets the requirements of
 800 paragraph (4)(b), who is a National Merit Scholar, and who
 801 attends a Florida public postsecondary educational institution
 802 shall receive a scholarship award as specified in the General
 803 Appropriations Act equal to the institutional cost of attendance
 804 for a resident of this state minus the student's National Merit
 805 Scholarship. Such student is exempt from the payment of out-of-
 806 state fees.

807 (b) An eligible student who is a National Merit Scholar and
 808 who attends a Florida independent postsecondary educational
 809 institution shall receive a scholarship award as specified in
 810 the General Appropriations Act equal to the highest cost of
 811 attendance for a resident of this state enrolled at a Florida
 812 public university, as reported by the Board of Governors of the

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813 ~~State University System, minus the sum of the student's Florida~~
814 ~~Bright Futures Scholarship and National Merit Scholarship.~~

815 Section 16. This act shall take effect July 1, 2021.

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.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Education

BILL: SB 1372

INTRODUCER: Senator Burgess

SUBJECT: Literacy Improvement

DATE: March 15, 2021

REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	Brick	Bouck	ED	Pre-meeting
2.			AED	
3.			AP	

I. Summary:

SB 1372 establishes the New Worlds Reading Initiative to improve literacy skills and instill a love of reading by providing high-quality free books to students in kindergarten through grade 5 who are reading below grade level. The bill:

- Requires the Department of Education or a contracted third party to administer the program using state funds to pay for half of the cost to provide free books to students.
- Authorizes school districts, and charter schools in nonparticipating school districts, to provide for free monthly book delivery to students in kindergarten through grade 5 who exhibit a substantial deficiency in reading and choose to participate in the program.
- Requires participating school districts or charter schools to partner with a nonprofit organization to implement the initiative and to provide half the cost of the program from local funding sources.
- Requires the administrator to annually report to the Legislature and the Commissioner of Education on the performance of the program.

The bill provides an effective date of July 1, 2021.

II. Present Situation:

Forty-three percent of the students entering kindergarten in 2020 demonstrated literacy skills that fell below grade-level expectations.¹ Forty-two percent of third grade students were assessed as

¹ Florida Department of Education, FLKRS Statewide Results, *Fall 2020 Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener (FLKRS)*, available at <http://www.fldoe.org/accountability/assessments/k-12-student-assessment/flkrs/flkrs-sw-results.stml> (download excel file "Fall 2020 FLKRS Results by District") (last visited Mar. 5, 2021).

reading below grade level in 2019.² Students who read below grade level at the end of third grade are less likely to graduate high school by age 19.³

The availability of learning materials in the home supports children's language and literacy skills.⁴ Children who participate in free book distribution programs between birth to age five experience a positive effect on literacy development.⁵

Student Reading Progression

Each district school board is required to establish a comprehensive plan for student progression which must provide for a student's progression from one grade to another based on the student's mastery of English Language Arts, mathematics, science, and social studies standards.⁶ The plan must include criteria that emphasize student reading proficiency in kindergarten through grade 3. Students in kindergarten through grade 3 who exhibit a substantial deficiency in reading based upon screening, diagnostic, progress monitoring, or assessment data; statewide assessments; or teacher observations must be provided intensive, explicit, systematic, and multisensory reading interventions immediately following the identification of the reading deficiency.⁷

Research-Based Reading Instruction Allocation

The state allocates funding to school districts for research-based reading instruction to students in kindergarten through grade 12.⁸ Funds must be used to provide a system of comprehensive reading instruction to students enrolled in kindergarten through grade 12, including, for example:⁹

- Summer reading camps for students in kindergarten through grade 5 who exhibit certain reading deficiencies, depending on grade level.¹⁰

² Florida Department of Education, *Florida Standards Assessments* (2019), available at <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/5668/urlt/80FSAResults19.pdf>, at 4.

³ Donald J. Hernandez, The Annie E. Casey Foundation, *Double Jeopardy: How Third-Grade Reading Skills and Poverty Influence High School Graduation* (2012), available at <https://www.aecf.org/m/resourcedoc/AECF-DoubleJeopardy-2012-Full.pdf#page=3> (last visited Mar. 5, 2021).

⁴ Eileen T. Rodriguez & Catherine S. Tamis-LeMonda, *Trajectories of the Home Learning Environment Across the First 5 Years: Associations with Children's Vocabulary and Literacy Prekindergarten*, 82 CHILD DEVELOPMENT 1058, 1059 (2011).

⁵ Merel de Bondt et al., *Do Book Giveaway Programs Promote Home Literacy Environment and Children's Literacy-Related Behavior and Skills?*, 90 Review of Education Research 349 (2020), available at <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.3102/0034654320922140>.

⁶ Section 1008.25(2), F.S.

⁷ Section 1008.25(5)(a), F.S. Students in kindergarten through grade 2 do not participate in statewide, standardized assessments.

⁸ Section 1011.62(9), F.S. The state appropriated \$130 million to school districts for the research-based reading instruction allocation for the 2020-2021 fiscal year. Specific Appropriations 8 and 92, s. 2, ch. 2020-111, L.O.F.

⁹ Section 1011.62(9)(c), F.S. The state also appropriated \$236.6 million to school districts for instructional materials for the 2020-2021 fiscal year. Specific Appropriations 8 and 92, s. 2, ch. 2020-111, L.O.F. School districts are authorized to use half of the funds allocated for instructional materials for library books. Section 1006.40(3)(b), F.S. School district expenditures for library books in the 2019-2020 fiscal year totaled \$63.4 million. Florida Department of Education, *School District Annual Financial Reports* (2019-2020), available at <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7507/urlt/1920afrStateSummary.PDF>, at 23 (last visited Mar. 5, 2021).

¹⁰ All students in kindergarten through grade 2 who demonstrate a reading deficiency as determined by district and state assessments, and students in grades 3 through 5 who score at Level 1 on the statewide, standardized English Language Arts assessment. Section 1011.62(9)(c)5., F.S.

- Supplemental instructional materials that are grounded in scientifically based reading research as identified by the Just Read, Florida! Office.¹¹
- Intensive interventions for students in kindergarten through grade 12 who have been identified as having a reading deficiency or who are reading below grade level as determined by the statewide, standardized English Language Arts assessment.

District school boards must develop K-12 comprehensive reading plans which detail the specific uses of the research-based reading instruction allocation. The plans must provide for intensive reading interventions through integrated curricula that incorporate strategies identified by the Just Read, Florida! Office and are delivered by a teacher who is certified or endorsed in reading.¹² In the 2020-2021 fiscal year, school districts allocated \$36.9 million of the total \$130 million appropriated under the research-based reading instruction allocation¹³ for elementary reading intervention teachers, supplemental reading materials and interventions, and summer reading camps.¹⁴

Parental Notification and Choice

The parent of any student who exhibits a substantial deficiency in reading must be notified in writing of the deficiency and of all available services and proposed interventions, and be provided with a “read at home plan,” which outlines strategies that parents can use to help their children improve in reading.¹⁵

Students enrolled in public school in grades 3 through 5 and score below grade level on the statewide, standardized English Language Arts (ELA) assessment in the prior school year may also be eligible for a reading scholarship account of \$500.¹⁶ A total of 6,763 students received reading scholarship accounts in the 2019-2020 school year.¹⁷ The state appropriated \$7.6 million for reading scholarship accounts for the 2020-2021 school year.¹⁸

In the 2020-2021 school year, 112,295 students enrolled in public schools in kindergarten through grade 5 were identified as having substantial deficiencies in reading.¹⁹

Book Distribution Programs

An Act to amend the national reading program in 1975²⁰ authorized the federal government to contract with a third-party entity to subcontract with local agencies to establish, operate, and provide an equal share of the cost of reading motivational programs which include the

¹¹ Just Read, Florida! is an office within the Department of Education (DOE) established to help students read at their highest potential. Section 1001.215, F.S.

¹² Section 1011.62(9)(d)1., F.S.

¹³ *Supra*, note 8.

¹⁴ Email, Florida Department of Education (Mar. 11, 2021).

¹⁵ Section 1008.25(5)(c), F.S.

¹⁶ Section 1002.411, F.S.

¹⁷ Email, Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability, *School Choice Landscape*, at 34 (March 5, 2021).

¹⁸ Specific Appropriation 112, s. 2, ch. 2020-111, L.O.F.

¹⁹ Email, Florida Department of Education (Mar. 11, 2021).

²⁰ Pub. L. No. 94-194, 89 Stat. 1103.

distribution of books to schoolchildren.²¹ The inexpensive book distribution program was last financed with \$25 million in 2010.²² The Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015²³ repealed the inexpensive book distribution program.²⁴

In 2020, the Tennessee Governor’s Early Literacy Foundation (GELF) and the Tennessee Department of Education, in collaboration with Scholastic, the global children’s publishing, education and media company, announced the launch of a new K-3 Book Delivery program to deliver 580,000 books to 58,000 kindergarten through third grade students and teachers across the state.²⁵ The GELF has operated a book distribution program in collaboration with Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library to distribute books to children from birth to the age of five since 2004.²⁶ The Tennessee Legislature appropriated \$4,525,000 for the Governor’s Books from Birth Fund for the 2019 fiscal year,²⁷ and the Books from Birth program mailed 3.4 million books.²⁸

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

SB 1372 creates s. 1003.485, F.S., to establish the New Worlds Reading Initiative to improve literacy skills and instill a love of reading by providing high-quality free books to students in kindergarten through grade 5 who are reading below grade level expectations.

Under the initiative, a high-quality, hardcopy book is delivered on a monthly basis to eligible students enrolled in a participating school district or a charter school that chooses to participate when its sponsor chooses not to participate. The bill defines a participating school district or charter school as a “participating entity.” Parents of students who participate in the program are provided resources to help improve their student’s reading skills and instill a love of reading.

State-Level Administrator

Implementation of the initiative is split between participating entities, in partnership with local nonprofit organizations, and a state administrator, who may either be the Department of Education (DOE) or a contracted, third-party entity. The bill requires the state-level administrator to:

- Develop a process for participating entities to apply to participate in the program. A participating entity is required to identify:

²¹ *Id.* at 89 Stat. 1105.

²² U.S. Office of Management and Budget, *Appendix, Budget of the United States Government, Fiscal Year 2012*, available at <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/BUDGET-2012-APP/pdf/BUDGET-2012-APP.pdf>, at 344.

²³ Pub. L. 114-95, 129 Stat. 1802.

²⁴ *Id.* at 129 Stat. 1967.

²⁵ Governor’s Early Literacy Foundation, *Press Release* (Oct. 21, 2020), <https://governorsfoundation.org/governors-early-literacy-foundation-scholastic-and-tn-department-of-education-to-provide-580000-books-to-k-3-students-and-teachers-in-tennessee/> (last visited Mar. 11, 2020).

²⁶ Governor’s Books from Birth Foundation, *2019 Year in Review*, available at <https://gelf.app.box.com/s/z7w8nj75b82ofkbs0pkq1f9sij1826ho> (last visited Mar. 11, 2021).

²⁷ 2019 Tenn. Pub. Ch. 405 page no. 3, available at <https://legiscan.com/TN/text/HB1508/2019> (last visited Mar. 11, 2021).

²⁸ Governor’s Books from Birth Foundation, *2019 Year in Review*, available at <https://gelf.app.box.com/s/z7w8nj75b82ofkbs0pkq1f9sij1826ho>, at 9 (last visited Mar. 11, 2021).

- At least one partnership with a nonprofit organization to raise public awareness of the initiative, perform fundraising, and conduct or facilitate family literacy engagement activities.
- Local funding sources to pay for 50 percent of the total costs associated with participation.
- Develop, in consultation with the Just Read, Florida! Office, a selection of high-quality books, encompassing diverse subjects and genres, appropriate for each grade level to be mailed to students enrolled in the initiative.
- Facilitate book distribution directly or through an agreement with a book distribution company.
- Develop and provide marketing materials to help school districts and their local partners raise funding and awareness of the initiative, including through the use of partnerships between public libraries and participating entities to implement family engagement events such as family library nights, library card drives, summer access, and other activities.
- Maintain a clearinghouse for information on national, state, and local nonprofit organizations that support efforts to provide books to children.
- Develop training materials, including video training modules resources, to assist families as they engage in reading and improve literacy skills.
- Periodically distribute to participating families helpful tips and hyperlinks to video modules via text message and e-mail.

The bill requires that if the DOE contracts with a third-party entity to act as administrator, the entity must be capable of coordinating statewide marketing, dissemination of books, and development of video training modules, as well as completing all other duties of the administrator.

Annual Report

Beginning September 30, 2022, and annually thereafter, the administrator must submit a report to the Senate President, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the Commissioner of Education documenting the number of students enrolled in the initiative in each participating entity, the academic performance of enrolled students based on available data provided by participating entities, and the amount of funds raised by any local nonprofit organization identified by the participating entity in the application.

Student Participation

A student in kindergarten through grade 5 who is enrolled in a participating entity is eligible under the bill to receive books through the initiative if the student has a substantial reading deficiency or scored below a level 3 on the prior year's statewide, standardized English Language Arts (ELA) assessment. The bill requires the participating entity to notify the parents of eligible students that the student is eligible to receive books at no cost through the New Worlds Reading Initiative and provide the parent the opportunity to enroll his or her child using an application form developed by the administrator.

After a student enrolls in the initiative, the bill requires the participating entity to coordinate with the administrator to initiate monthly book delivery during the school year, which must begin no

later than October 31 and last through at least June 30. The bill authorizes book delivery to continue through the summer months using local funds. Students remain in the initiative until they are promoted to sixth grade or their parent opts out, whichever is earlier.

The bill requires that enrolled students have the opportunity, at the beginning of each school year, to identify preferred genres and topics in order to maximize their interest in reading.

Participating entities and partnering nonprofit organizations are required by the bill to raise awareness of the initiative, including information on eligibility and video training modules, through:

- The student handbook.
- The read-at-home plan provided to the parents of students identified with a substantial reading deficiency. The bill also amends s. 1008.25, F.S., to require that the parents of students with a substantial reading deficiency be provided information about the student's eligibility for the New Worlds Reading Initiative, and information on parent training modules and other reading engagement resources available through the initiative.
- Curriculum or parent nights or separate initiative awareness events at each elementary school.
- Events held jointly with the local public library. The bill specifies that library events should coincide with similar family engagement initiatives such as library card drives.

The bill requires books to be delivered at no cost to families. Funding for the delivery of books must be shared equally by the administrator and the applicable local funding source identified by the participating entity in the application on a pro rata basis for each enrolled student. The bill permits the administrator to solicit donations and apply for grants for the purpose of implementing the initiative.

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.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:**A. Tax/Fee Issues:**

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

The cost of book distribution required by this bill will require the appropriation of state funds.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This bill substantially amends section 1008.25 of the Florida Statutes.

This bill creates section 1003.485 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.

By Senator Burgess

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1 A bill to be entitled
 2 An act relating to literacy improvement; creating s.
 3 1003.485, F.S.; establishing the New Worlds Reading
 4 Initiative under the Department of Education;
 5 providing definitions; providing duties of the
 6 administrator; requiring the administrator to develop
 7 an application process; requiring the administrator,
 8 in consultation with a specified entity, to develop a
 9 selection of books; requiring the administrator to
 10 coordinate monthly book distribution to certain
 11 students; requiring the administrator to assist with
 12 local implementation of the initiative; requiring the
 13 administrator to maintain a clearinghouse of specified
 14 information; requiring the administrator to develop
 15 and disseminate certain training materials by
 16 specified means; establishing reporting requirements;
 17 providing that certain entities may participate in the
 18 initiative by completing an application; providing
 19 that participating school districts must allow public
 20 school students to enroll in the program; establishing
 21 student eligibility requirements; requiring
 22 participating entities to notify parents of eligible
 23 students; requiring participating entities to
 24 coordinate with the administrator to initiate book
 25 delivery; providing requirements for book delivery;
 26 allowing local funds to be used to purchase books
 27 during certain months; requiring that students be
 28 offered certain options relating to books; specifying
 29 when student enrollment ends; requiring participating

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CODING: Words ~~stricken~~ are deletions; words underlined are additions.

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30 entities and certain nonprofits to perform certain
 31 actions to raise awareness of the initiative;
 32 requiring that books be delivered at no cost to
 33 families; providing requirements for funding;
 34 authorizing the department to contract with a third-
 35 party entity; providing requirements for such third-
 36 party entity; amending s. 1008.25, F.S.; requiring
 37 that a certain notification include information about
 38 the initiative; providing an effective date.
 39
 40 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:
 41
 42 Section 1. Section 1003.485, Florida Statutes, is created
 43 to read:
 44 1003.485 The New Worlds Reading Initiative.-
 45 (1) The New Worlds Reading Initiative is established under
 46 the Department of Education to improve literacy skills and
 47 instill a love of reading by providing high-quality free books
 48 to students in kindergarten through grade 5 who are reading
 49 below grade level.
 50 (2) DEFINITIONS.- As used in this section the term:
 51 (a) "Administrator" means the Department of Education or a
 52 third-party entity contracted to administer the initiative.
 53 (b) "Initiative" means the New Worlds Reading Initiative.
 54 (c) "Participating entity" means a school district
 55 participating in the initiative or a charter school located in a
 56 nonparticipating school district which is participating in the
 57 initiative, as specified in subsection (4).
 58 (3) The administrator shall:

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59 (a) Develop an application process for participating
60 entities that identifies:

61 1. At least one partnership with a nonprofit organization
62 to raise public awareness of the initiative, perform
63 fundraising, and conduct or facilitate family literacy
64 engagement activities.

65 2. Local funding sources to meet the requirements of
66 subsection (7).

67 (b) Develop, in consultation with the Just Read, Florida!
68 Office under s. 1001.215, a selection of high-quality books
69 encompassing diverse subjects and genres for each grade level to
70 be mailed to students enrolled in the initiative.

71 (c) Facilitate the distribution of books as provided in
72 paragraph (5) (c) either directly or through an agreement with a
73 book distribution company.

74 (d) Assist local implementation of the initiative by:

75 1. Providing assistance to local communities to raise
76 awareness of the initiative, including through the use of
77 partnerships between public libraries and participating entities
78 to implement events such as family library nights, library card
79 drives, summer access and activities, and other activities
80 designed to increase family engagement and instill a love of
81 reading in students.

82 2. Developing and providing marketing materials to
83 participating entities and partnering nonprofit organizations to
84 assist with public awareness campaigns.

85 (e) Maintain a clearinghouse for information on national,
86 state, and local nonprofit organizations that support efforts to
87 provide books to children.

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88 (f) Develop training materials for parents of students
89 enrolled in the initiative, including brief video training
90 modules, which engage families in reading and assist with
91 improving student literacy skills. The administrator shall
92 periodically send, via text message and e-mail, tips for
93 facilitating reading at home and hyperlinks to the video
94 training modules.

95 (g) Beginning September 30, 2022, and annually thereafter,
96 report to the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House
97 of Representatives, and the Commissioner of Education the number
98 of students enrolled in the initiative in each participating
99 entity, the academic performance of enrolled students based on
100 data provided by participating entities as permitted under s.
101 1002.22, and the amount of funds raised by any local nonprofit
102 organization identified by the participating entity in the
103 application.

104 (4) A school district or a charter school located in a
105 nonparticipating school district may participate in the
106 initiative by completing the application process under paragraph
107 (3) (a). A participating school district must allow a student at
108 any public school, including a charter school, in the district
109 to enroll in the program.

110 (5) (a) A student in kindergarten through grade 5 who is
111 enrolled in a participating entity is eligible to receive books
112 through the initiative if the student has a substantial reading
113 deficiency identified under s. 1008.25(5) (a) or scored below a
114 level 3 on the preceding year's statewide, standardized English
115 Language Arts assessment under s. 1008.22.

116 (b) The participating entity shall notify the parent of a

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117 student who meets the criteria under paragraph (a) that the
 118 student is eligible to receive books at no cost through the New
 119 Worlds Reading Initiative and provide the parent the opportunity
 120 to enroll his or her child using an application form developed
 121 by the administrator.

122 (c) Once an eligible student is enrolled in the initiative,
 123 the participating entity shall coordinate with the administrator
 124 to initiate book delivery on a monthly basis during the school
 125 year, which must begin no later than October 31 and continue
 126 through at least June 30. The participating entity may use local
 127 funds to continue the initiative through the summer months.

128 (d) At the beginning of each school year, students must be
 129 provided options for specific book topics or genres in order to
 130 maximize student interest in reading.

131 (e) A student's enrollment in the initiative continues
 132 until promotion to grade 6 or until the student's parent opts
 133 out of the initiative.

134 (6) Participating entities and partnering nonprofit
 135 organizations shall raise awareness of the initiative, including
 136 information on eligibility and video training modules under
 137 paragraph (3)(f), through, at least, the following:

138 (a) The student handbook and the read-at-home plan under s.
 139 1008.25(5)(c).

140 (b) A parent or curriculum night or separate initiative
 141 awareness event at each elementary school.

142 (c) Partnering with the county library to host awareness
 143 events, which should coincide with other initiatives such as
 144 library card drives and other family engagement programming.

145 (7) Books must be provided under this section at no cost to

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146 families. The administrator shall pay 50 percent of the costs,
 147 with the remaining funds coming from the local funding source
 148 identified by the participating entity in the application.
 149 Funding will be on a pro rata basis for each enrolled student,
 150 taking into consideration total student enrollment in the
 151 initiative and available funding. The administrator may solicit
 152 donations and apply for grants to supplement funds for the
 153 purpose of implementing this section.

154 (8) If the department contracts with a third-party entity
 155 to act as administrator, the entity must be capable of
 156 coordinating statewide marketing, dissemination of books, and
 157 development of video training modules, as well as completing all
 158 other duties of the administrator.

159 Section 2. Paragraph (c) of subsection (5) of section
 160 1008.25, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

161 1008.25 Public school student progression; student support;
 162 reporting requirements.—

163 (5) READING DEFICIENCY AND PARENTAL NOTIFICATION.—

164 (c) The parent of any student who exhibits a substantial
 165 deficiency in reading, as described in paragraph (a), must be
 166 notified in writing of the following:

167 1. That his or her child has been identified as having a
 168 substantial deficiency in reading, including a description and
 169 explanation, in terms understandable to the parent, of the exact
 170 nature of the student's difficulty in learning and lack of
 171 achievement in reading.

172 2. A description of the current services that are provided
 173 to the child.

174 3. A description of the proposed intensive interventions

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175 and supports that will be provided to the child that are
 176 designed to remediate the identified area of reading deficiency.

177 4. That if the child's reading deficiency is not remediated
 178 by the end of grade 3, the child must be retained unless he or
 179 she is exempt from mandatory retention for good cause.

180 5. Strategies, including multisensory strategies, through a
 181 read-at-home plan the parent can use in helping his or her child
 182 succeed in reading.

183 6. That the statewide, standardized English Language Arts
 184 assessment is not the sole determiner of promotion and that
 185 additional evaluations, portfolio reviews, and assessments are
 186 available to the child to assist parents and the school district
 187 in knowing when a child is reading at or above grade level and
 188 ready for grade promotion.

189 7. The district's specific criteria and policies for a
 190 portfolio as provided in subparagraph (6)(b)4. and the evidence
 191 required for a student to demonstrate mastery of Florida's
 192 academic standards for English Language Arts. A parent of a
 193 student in grade 3 who is identified anytime during the year as
 194 being at risk of retention may request that the school
 195 immediately begin collecting evidence for a portfolio.

196 8. The district's specific criteria and policies for
 197 midyear promotion. Midyear promotion means promotion of a
 198 retained student at any time during the year of retention once
 199 the student has demonstrated ability to read at grade level.

200 9. If applicable, information about the student's
 201 eligibility for the New Worlds Reading Initiative under s.
 202 1003.485 and information on parent training modules and other
 203 reading engagement resources available through the initiative.

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CODING: Words ~~stricken~~ are deletions; words underlined are additions.

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204 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2021.

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CODING: Words ~~stricken~~ are deletions; words underlined are additions.

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.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Education

BILL: SB 1898
 INTRODUCER: Senator Rodriguez
 SUBJECT: Student Literacy
 DATE: March 15, 2021 REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	Brick	Bouck	ED	Pre-meeting
2.			AED	
3.			AP	

I. Summary:

SB 1898 includes requirements to identify student deficiencies in literacy and intervene as early as prekindergarten, support students in transitioning to kindergarten, and monitor student progress. The bill establishes a coordinated screening and progress monitoring system for students enrolled in the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program and students enrolled in public schools in kindergarten through grade 8. The bill also requires:

- The Department of Education (DOE) to review the competencies for the reading endorsement and provide a new pathway for teachers to achieve the reading endorsement.
- The DOE to develop a handbook to provide to parents of students with a reading deficiency to support parental engagement in student learning.
- The Just Read, Florida! Office (JRFO) to identify instructional materials that implement evidence-based reading practices and streamlines the process by which school districts may adopt identified and approved instructional materials.
- The JRFO to work with the Office of Early Learning in the development of the emergent literacy training courses and specifies that the courses must be consistent with evidence-based reading instructional and intervention programs.
- Establishes the Reading Achievement Initiative for Scholastic Excellence (RAISE) Program to provide literacy supports statewide through at least 20 regional literacy support teams.
- Establishes a tutoring program that affords high school juniors and seniors the opportunity to satisfy community service requirements and earn a designation as a New Worlds Scholar by providing 500 verified tutoring hours to students with a substantial deficiency in reading in kindergarten through grade 3.
- Voluntary Prekindergarten Program (VPK) instructors to take a required emergent literacy training course every five years.
- VPK providers to be rated based on student performance during the VPK school year.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2021.

II. Present Situation:

The present situation for the relevant portions of the bill is discussed under the Effect of Proposed Changes of this bill analysis.

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

Educator Certification Requirements

Florida law specifies certification requirements to assure that educational personnel in public schools possess appropriate skills in reading, writing, and mathematics; adequate pedagogical knowledge; and relevant subject matter competence so as to demonstrate an acceptable level of professional performance.¹

In order to seek educator certification, a person must meet general eligibility requirements, which include receipt of a bachelor's or higher degree from an approved postsecondary institution.² Individuals must also demonstrate mastery of general knowledge, if the person serves as a classroom teacher; mastery of subject area knowledge; and mastery of professional preparation.³

Education Preparation Programs

Present Situation

In Florida, teacher preparation programs are accountable for producing individuals with the competencies and skills necessary to achieve state education goals.⁴ State approved teacher preparation program uniform core curricula must include scientifically researched and evidence-based reading instructional strategies that improve reading performance for all students, including explicit, systematic, and sequential approaches to teaching phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and text comprehension and multisensory intervention strategies.⁵ Teacher preparation program completers are eligible for a Florida Professional Educator's Certification upon program completion.⁶

Each teacher preparation program must be approved by the Department of Education (DOE) based on criteria specified in law.⁷ In order to be admitted into an approved teacher preparation program, a student must, at a minimum:⁸

¹ Section 1012.54, F.S.

² Section 1012.56(2)(c), F.S., and Rule 6A-4.003, F.A.C.

³ Section 1012.56(2)(g)-(i), F.S.

⁴ Section 1004.04(1)(b), F.S.

⁵ Section 1004.04(2)(b)3., F.S.

⁶ Florida Department of Education, *Educator Preparation*, <http://www.fldoe.org/teaching/preparation/> (last visited Mar. 12, 2021), and Rule 6A-5.066(1)(p), F.A.C.

⁷ Section 1004.04(3)(a), F.S.

⁸ Section 1004.04(3), F.S.

- Have a grade point average of at least 2.5 on a 4.0 scale for the general education component of undergraduate studies or have completed the requirements for a baccalaureate degree with a minimum grade point average of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale from an approved college or university.⁹
- Demonstrate mastery of general knowledge sufficient for entry into the program, including the ability to read, write, and perform in mathematics, by passing the General Knowledge Test of the Florida Teacher Certification Examination or, for a graduate level program, obtain a baccalaureate degree from an approved institution.¹⁰

Each teacher preparation program may waive these admissions requirements for up to ten percent of the students admitted. Programs must implement strategies to ensure that students admitted under a waiver receive assistance to demonstrate competencies to successfully meet requirements for certification, and must annually report to the DOE the status of each candidate admitted under such a waiver.¹¹

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill modifies s. 1004.04, F.S., to allow students in public postsecondary teacher preparation programs to meet grade point average and General Knowledge Test requirements as a condition to completing the program instead of as a condition of admission to the program. Accordingly, the bill removes the authority for teacher preparation programs to waive admission requirements. These modifications may enable more people to enter teacher preparation programs and become certified teachers.

Teacher Professional Development

Present Situation

To renew a professional certificate, an applicant must earn a minimum of 6 college credits or 120 inservice points or a combination thereof.¹² Florida provides subject area specialization requirements for college credits or inservice points.¹³ An applicant for renewal of a professional certificate in any area of certification identified by SBE rule¹⁴ that includes reading instruction or intervention for any students in kindergarten through grade 6 must earn a minimum of two college credits or forty inservice points in the use of explicit, systematic, and sequential approaches to reading instruction, developing phonemic awareness, and implementing

⁹ An approved institution is one that is accredited by a specified regional accrediting association or an accrediting agency approved by the United States Department of Education. A qualifying non-accredited institution is one that is identified as having a quality program resulting in a bachelor's degree or higher by criteria specified in SBE rule. Rule 6A-4.003, F.A.C.

¹⁰ Rule 6A-4.003, F.A.C.

¹¹ Section 1004.04(3), F.S.

¹² Section 1012.585(3)(a), F.S.

¹³ Section 1012.585(3), F.S.

¹⁴ Rule 6A-4.0051, F.A.C., requires specialized training in reading instruction for certificate covering Elementary Education (K-6), Prekindergarten/Primary Education (age 3 through grade 3), Elementary Education (grades 1-6), Primary Education (grades K-3), English (grades 1-6), Middle Grades English (grades 5-9), Middle Grades Integrated Curriculum (grades 5-9), English (6-12), Reading (K-12), Reading (Endorsement), and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) (grades K-12).

multisensory intervention strategies.¹⁵ Such training must be provided by teacher preparation programs or school district professional development systems approved by the DOE.¹⁶

School District Professional Development

Each school district is required to establish a professional development system that provides training to reading coaches, classroom teachers, and school administrators in effective methods of identifying characteristics of conditions such as dyslexia and other causes of diminished phonological processing skills; incorporating instructional techniques into the general education setting which are proven to improve reading performance for all students; and using predictive and other data to make instructional decisions based on individual student needs.¹⁷ The training must help teachers integrate phonemic awareness; phonics, word study, and spelling; reading fluency; vocabulary, including academic vocabulary; and text comprehension strategies into an explicit, systematic, and sequential approach to reading instruction, including multisensory intervention strategies.¹⁸

Each district must provide all elementary grades instructional personnel access to training sufficient to meet the requirements for a certificate in an area of certification that includes reading instruction or intervention for students in kindergarten through grade 6.¹⁹

William Cecil Golden Professional Development Program for School Leaders

The William Cecil Golden Professional Development Program for School Leaders provides high standards and sustained support for principals as instructional leaders.²⁰ The program consists of a collaborative network of state and national professional leadership organizations to respond to instructional leadership needs throughout the state. The goals of the network leadership program include:²¹

- Providing resources to support and enhance the principal's role as the instructional leader.
- Maintaining a clearinghouse and disseminating data-supported information related to enhanced student achievement, based on educational research and best practices.
- Building the capacity to increase the quality of programs for preservice education for aspiring principals and inservice professional development for principals and principal leadership teams.
- Supporting best teaching and research-based instructional practices through dissemination and modeling at the preservice and inservice levels for both teachers and principals.

Just Read, Florida! Office

¹⁵ Section 1012.585(3)(f), F.S.

¹⁶ Section 1012.585(3)(f), F.S.; Rule 6A-4.0051(7)(a), F.A.C.

¹⁷ Section 1012.98(4)(b)11., F.S.

¹⁸ *Id.*

¹⁹ *Id.*

²⁰ Section 1012.986(1), F.S.

²¹ *Id.*

The Just Read, Florida! Office (JRFO) within the DOE is generally directed to perform duties that relate to improving student literacy, and, accordingly, developing training for educational personnel to support student literacy.²²

The JRFO, in collaboration with the Lastinger Center for Learning at the University of Florida (Lastinger Center), is required to develop training for K-12 teachers, reading coaches, and school principals on effective content-area-specific reading strategies; the integration of content-rich curriculum from other core subject areas into reading instruction; and evidence-based reading strategies to improve student reading performance.²³ For secondary teachers, emphasis must be on technical text.²⁴ These strategies must be developed for all content areas in the K-12 curriculum.²⁵

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill modifies s. 1012.98, F.S., to require the DOE to identify professional development opportunities that require a teacher to demonstrate proficiency in a specific classroom practice, with priority given to implementing evidence-based reading instructional and intervention strategies identified by the JRFO. The bill amends s. 1012.585, F.S., to provide that a teacher may earn inservice points only once during each 5-year validity period for any mandatory training topic that is not linked to student learning or professional growth.

The bill modifies s. 1012.986, F.S., to add to the goals of the William Cecil Golden Professional Development Program the support, through training on observation and evaluation practices aligned to the science of reading, the professional growth of instructional personnel who provide reading instruction and interventions.

The bill modifies s. 1001.215, F.S., to require the JRFO to provide evidence-based reading instruction training to school administrators. To fulfill this requirement, the JRFO must work with the Lastinger Center to modify the training that has been developed for K-12 teachers, reading coaches, and school principals. The bill also replaces the requirement to integrate social studies into the reading instruction curriculum with the requirement to integrate civic literacy into the reading instruction curriculum.

The additional opportunities for training in reading instruction for teachers may support teachers delivering reading instruction or interventions to students enrolled in public schools in kindergarten through grade 12.

²² Section 1001.215, F.S.

²³ Section 1001.215(3), F.S.

²⁴ *Id.*

²⁵ *Id.*

Reading Certification and Endorsement

Present Situation

Teachers are able to earn a subject area certification or endorsement in reading.²⁶ A teacher is required to be certified or endorsed in reading to:²⁷

- Teach summer reading camps.
- Provide instruction to a third grade student retained for failing the English Language Arts (ELA) assessment.
- Provide reading interventions to students with a substantial deficiency in reading, beginning July 1, 2021.
- Qualify as a literacy coach.

A teacher may earn a certification in reading by completing:²⁸

- A master's or higher degree with a graduate major in reading.
- A bachelor's or higher degree with thirty semester hours in reading.

A certified teacher may earn an endorsement to a valid Florida certificate by completing the appropriate subject area testing requirements, the requirements of an approved school district program, or the inservice components for an endorsement.²⁹ There are four pathways to earn a reading endorsement:³⁰

- Completing 15 semester hours in college-level reading coursework rooted in scientifically based reading research with a focus on both preventions and remediation of reading difficulties.
- Completing the required competencies through a school district's approved reading endorsement add-on program.
- Obtaining a certificate from an approved internationally known organization with a reputation for setting reading standards.³¹
- Passing the K-12 Reading Certification Subject Area Exam administered by the DOE.

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill modifies s. 1004.04, F.S., to require, beginning with the 2022-2023 school year, that school district personnel be certified or endorsed in reading if they supervise teacher preparation students during internships in kindergarten through grade 3 or during enrollment in a reading certificate program.

The bill also modifies s. 1012.586, F.S., to require the DOE to review the competencies for the reading endorsement for alignment with evidence-based instructional and intervention practices rooted in the science of reading and consistent with training developed by the Lastinger Center

²⁶ Rule 6A-6.053, F.A.C.

²⁷ *Id.*

²⁸ Rule 6A-4.0291, F.A.C.

²⁹ Section 1012.586(1), F.S.

³⁰ Rule 6A-4.0292, F.A.C.

³¹ Section 1012.586(1)(b), F.S. Reading Recovery Teacher of the National Louis University Reading Recovery Center is the only approved program. Florida Department of Education, *Florida Internationally Recognized Organizations*, available at <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7539/urlt/FAIRO.pdf> (last visited Mar. 12, 2021).

and the JRFO, and recommend improvements to the SBE, which must address identification of the characteristics of conditions such as dyslexia, implementation of evidence-based classroom instruction and interventions, and effective progress monitoring. Accordingly, each school district is required to resubmit its reading endorsement add-on program to the DOE for approval by July 1, 2023. The bill provides that, beginning July 1, 2024, instructional personnel may not earn a reading endorsement simply by passing the K-12 reading certification subject area assessment.

The bill requires the DOE to adopt at least one statewide, competency-based pathway, by which instructional personnel may earn a reading endorsement, by the beginning of the 2022-2023 school year. The pathway must be available for a participant to complete in person or remotely. The DOE is required by the bill to place a microcredential on a teacher certificate indicating each competency module the teacher successfully completes.

The additional pathway for teachers to earn a reading endorsement may assist district school boards in meeting state requirements for teachers delivering reading instruction or interventions to students enrolled in public schools in kindergarten through grade 12.

Student Literacy Supports

Present Situation

Student Progress Monitoring

State board rule provides criteria for determining whether a student has a substantial deficiency in reading. A student is identified as having a substantial deficiency in reading if the student:³²

- Scores the lowest level or benchmark on any assessment identified in the school district's reading plan.
- Scores the lowest achievement level during a progress monitoring assessment identified in the school district's K-12 comprehensive reading plan (reading plan).
- Demonstrates, through consecutive formative assessments or teacher observation, skills that are below grade-level expectations in one or more areas of phonological awareness; phonics; vocabulary, including oral language skills; reading fluency; and reading comprehension.

Students in kindergarten through grade 3 who are determined to have a substantial deficiency in reading based on any of these criteria must be given intensive reading interventions immediately following the identification of the deficiency.³³ Students who do not achieve a Level 3 or above on the statewide, standardized ELA assessment must be evaluated to determine the nature of the student's difficulty, the areas of academic need, and strategies for providing academic supports to improve the student's performance.³⁴ District school boards are required to prioritize remedial and supplemental instruction resources first to students in kindergarten through grade 3 who have a substantial reading deficiency and then to students who fail to meet performance levels required for promotion under the district's student progression plan.³⁵

³² Rule 6A-6.053(12), F.A.C..

³³ Section 1008.25(5)(a), F.S.

³⁴ Section 1008.25(4)(a), F.S.

³⁵ Section 1008.25(3), F.S.

School districts have a variety of intervention and progress monitoring options available to help students improve their academic performance. The law requires districts to develop and implement a multi-tiered system of supports, which utilizes a problem-solving process to identify and support student needs based upon available data, including attendance, behavior and discipline, statewide assessment, and progress monitoring data.³⁶ Retention is mandatory for 3rd grade students who score at Level 1 on the statewide, standardized ELA assessment.³⁷ Any student retained in 3rd grade because of his or her statewide, standardized ELA assessment score must receive intensive interventions and be taught by a “highly-effective” teacher with a reading endorsement or certification.³⁸ This intervention process must include parent involvement, student observation, review of data, vision and hearing screening to rule out sensory deficits, and evidence-based interventions implemented in the general education environment.³⁹

Research-Based Reading Instruction Allocation

The state allocates funding to school districts for research-based reading instruction to students in kindergarten through grade 12.⁴⁰ Funds must be used to provide a system of comprehensive reading instruction to students enrolled in kindergarten through grade 12, including:⁴¹

- An additional hour of intensive reading instruction beyond the normal school day for students in the 300 lowest-performing elementary schools.
- Reading intervention teachers and reading coaches.
- Professional development for teachers to earn a certification or an endorsement in reading.
- Summer reading camps for students in kindergarten through grade 5 who exhibit certain reading deficiencies, depending on grade level.⁴²
- Supplemental instructional materials that are grounded in scientifically based reading research as identified by the JRFO.
- Intensive interventions for students in kindergarten through grade 12 who have been identified as having a reading deficiency or who are reading below grade level as determined by the statewide, standardized ELA assessment.

District school boards must develop reading plans which detail the specific uses of the research-based reading instruction allocation.⁴³ The plans must be annually submitted to the DOE for approval and provide for intensive reading interventions through integrated curricula that incorporate strategies identified by the JRFO and are delivered by a teacher who is certified or endorsed in reading.⁴⁴ The DOE monitors and tracks the implementation of each district plan and

³⁶ See Rules 6A-6.0331(1) and 6A-1.099811(2)(r), F.A.C.

³⁷ Section 1008.25(5)(b), F.S. A student may be promoted if he or she meets a “good cause” exception as provided in s. 1008.25(6)(b), F.S.

³⁸ See ss. 1008.25(5)(b) and (7) and 1012.34(2)(e), F.S.

³⁹ Rule 6A-6.0331(1), F.A.C.

⁴⁰ Section 1011.62(9), F.S. The state appropriated \$130 million to school districts for the research-based reading instruction allocation for the 2020-2021 fiscal year. Specific Appropriations 8 and 92, s. 2, ch. 2020-111, L.O.F.

⁴¹ Section 1011.62(9)(c), F.S.

⁴² All students in kindergarten through grade 2 who demonstrate a reading deficiency as determined by district and state assessments, and students in grades 3 through 5 who score at Level 1 on the statewide, standardized English Language Arts assessment. Section 1011.62(9)(c)5., F.S.

⁴³ Section 1011.62(9)(d)1., F.S.

⁴⁴ *Id.*

collects specific data on expenditures and reading improvement results.⁴⁵ By February 1 of each year, the DOE reports its findings to the Legislature.⁴⁶

Parental Notification and Supports

The parent of any student who exhibits a substantial deficiency in reading must be notified in writing of the deficiency and of all available services and proposed interventions, and be provided with a “read at home plan,” which outlines strategies that parents can use to help their children improve in reading.⁴⁷

Students enrolled in public school in grades 3 through 5 and score below grade level on the statewide, standardized ELA assessment in the prior school year may also be eligible for a reading scholarship account of \$500. A total of 6,763 students received reading scholarship accounts in the 2019-2020 school year. The state appropriated \$7.6 million for reading scholarship accounts for the 2020-2021 school year.

In the 2020-2021 school year, 112,295 students enrolled in public schools in kindergarten through grade 5 were identified as having substantial deficiencies in reading.⁴⁸

Federally-funded Department of Education Literacy Initiatives

As part of its plan for federal funding provided under the CARES Act,⁴⁹ the DOE has launched a statewide system of regional reading supports.⁵⁰ The program allocates \$5 million from the CARES Act funds for the establishment of 20 regions in the state, each with a designated regional reading consultant that will lead a regional literacy support team.⁵¹ The reading consultants and their teams will be trained to monitor district-level, school-level and classroom-level data in order to identify and provide needed professional development and interventions.⁵² The first year of the program will support implementation of reading plans in the early grades while overall the program focus will be on building capacity of the teams with an emphasis on updated standards, evidence-based⁵³ practices, and data-based decision making.⁵⁴

⁴⁵ Section 1011.62(9)(d)1., F.S.

⁴⁶ *Id.*

⁴⁷ Section 1008.25(5)(c), F.S.

⁴⁸ Email, Florida Department of Education (Mar. 11, 2021).

⁴⁹ Pub. L. No. 116-136, 134 Stat. 281 (Mar. 27, 2020).

⁵⁰ Florida Department of Education, *Reopening Florida's Schools and the CARES Act*, available at <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/19861/urlt/FLDOEReopeningCARESAct.pdf> (last visited Mar. 12, 2021).

⁵¹ *Id.* at 105. Each regional literacy director retains employment with the district with a salary of \$80,000 plus benefits funded by the DOE.

⁵² *Id.*

⁵³ Federal law defines the term “evidence-based” as an activity, strategy, or intervention that demonstrates a statistically significant effect on improving student outcomes or other relevant outcomes based on: strong evidence from at least 1 well-designed and well-implemented experimental study; moderate evidence from at least 1 well-designed and well-implemented quasi-experimental study; or promising evidence from at least 1 well-designed and well-implemented correlational study with statistical controls for selection bias; or demonstrates a rationale based on high-quality research findings or positive evaluation that such activity, strategy, or intervention is likely to improve student outcomes or other relevant outcomes, and includes ongoing efforts to examine the effects of such activity, strategy, or intervention. 20 U.S.C. s. 7801(21)(a)(i).

⁵⁴ Florida Department of Education, *Act with Urgency for Literacy*, available at <https://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7506/urlt/Act-with-Urgency-for-Literacy.pdf> at 11, (last visited Mar. 13, 2021).

Implementation has been set to begin in 2021, during the second half of the 2020-2021 school year.

The DOE allocated \$20 million from the CARES Act funds for progress monitoring and data informed supports.⁵⁵ From October 1, 2020, through February 19, 2021, the DOE made available to all public schools on a voluntary basis a new progress monitoring tool developed by Cambium Assessment, Inc., to serve as a connective support between the foundational skills that students seek to acquire and their progress through early education years and drive informed teaching practices and curriculum decisions.⁵⁶ The progress monitoring tool was available for multiple administrations and was aligned to the state standards for grades 3 through 10 ELA Reading and grades 3 through 8 Mathematics.⁵⁷

The DOE also used funds from the CARES Act to develop several other programs related to improving student literacy. Specifically, the DOE allocated:⁵⁸

- \$5 million to upskill highly effective reading coaches.
- \$20 million, in addition to \$4 million of the funds reserved under the CARES Act to the Governor, for strengthening K-3 reading instructional materials.
- \$5 million for deploying professional development for teachers to attain a reading endorsement; training on how to use progress monitoring data to inform instruction; improving existing reading endorsement options; and improved resources for teachers and families.

In addition, the DOE secured a Comprehensive Literacy State Development Grant (CLSD) of \$21 million.⁵⁹ A CLSD is a discretionary federal grant to create a comprehensive literacy program to advance literacy skills, including pre-literacy skills, reading, and writing, for children from birth through grade 12, with an emphasis on disadvantaged children, including children living in poverty, English learners, and children with disabilities.⁶⁰

Effect of Proposed Changes

Coordinated Screening and Progress Monitoring

The bill modifies s. 1008.25, F.S., to require the DOE, in collaboration with the OEL, to procure and require, and provide training and support for implementing, a statewide, standardized coordinated screening and progress monitoring (CSPM) for VPK program providers and for public schools serving kindergarten through grade 8 students, whom the bill requires to

⁵⁵ Florida Department of Education, *Reopening Florida's Schools and the CARES Act*, available at <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/19861/urlt/FLDOEReopeningCARESAct.pdf> at 102, (last visited Mar. 13, 2021).

⁵⁶ Florida Department of Education, *Free Optional Progress Monitoring Tool Available to Public Schools* (Sept. 2, 2020), available at <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/19861/urlt/CambiumProgressMonitoring2020-21.pdf> (last visited Mar. 13, 2021).

⁵⁷ *Id.*

⁵⁸ Florida Department of Education, *Act with Urgency for Literacy*, available at <https://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7506/urlt/Act-with-Urgency-for-Literacy.pdf> at 15, (last visited Mar. 13, 2021).

⁵⁹ Florida Department of Education, *Reopening Florida's Schools and the CARES Act*, available at <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/19861/urlt/FLDOEReopeningCARESAct.pdf> at 15, (last visited Mar. 13, 2021).

⁶⁰ 20 U.S.C. s. 6642.

participate in the CSPM. The bill outlines requirements for the CSPM. Specifically, the CSPM must:

- Measure student progress in early literacy, ELA, and mathematics standards.
- Measure student performance in oral language, development, phonemic and phonological awareness, knowledge of print and letters, decoding, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.
- Be a valid, reliable and developmentally appropriate computer-adaptive direct instrument that provides screening and diagnostic capabilities for monitoring student progress; identifies students with a substantial deficiency in reading, including students with characteristics of dyslexia; and informs instruction.
- Provide data sufficient for VPK program accountability.
- Provide data and resources to enhance differentiated instruction.
- Provide information to the DOE to aid in the development of educational programs, policies, and supports for providers, districts, and schools.
- Beginning with the 2022-2023 school year, be administered at least three times within a program year or school year, as applicable, with the first administration occurring no later than the first 30 instructional days after the start of the program year or school year.

Results of the CSPM, including the number of students who demonstrate characteristics of dyslexia, must:

- Be reported to the DOE and maintained in the DOE's Educational Data Warehouse.
- Be timely provided to a student's teachers and parents.
- Inform parents annually of their child's educational progress based on the CSPM.

Evidence-based Reading Instruction Allocation

The bill modifies s. 1011.62, F.S., to rename the "research-based reading instruction allocation" as the "evidence-based reading instruction allocation" to conform the reading instruction allocation with the other evidence-based initiatives. The bill aligns the definition of evidence-based with federal law, to provide that evidence-based means demonstrating a statistically significant effect on improving student outcomes or other relevant outcomes.

The bill also modifies the requirements and the authorized uses by school districts of the allocation. Specifically, the bill:

- Provides that funds may be used for supports to assist students identified with a substantial deficiency in early literacy transition from the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program (VPK) to kindergarten.
- Replaces the requirement to integrate social studies with the requirement for the coordinated integration of civic literacy in the curriculum for the extra hour of reading instruction for the 300 lowest performing elementary schools.
- Provides that a school district's reading plan will no longer be deemed approved if it is not approved by June 1 or if 100 percent of the funds are spent.
- Makes mandatory the withholding of funds by the DOE upon a determination that reading instruction allocation funds are not being used to implement the approved plan.

- Requires school district reading plans to include a root-cause analysis of student performance data and reflection tool developed by the DOE to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions implemented in the prior year.

The bill requires the annual report of the DOE to the Legislature on the evidence-based reading instruction allocation to also be submitted to the SBE and include recommendations for improving implementation of evidence-based reading and intervention strategies in classrooms.

Reading Achievement Initiative for Scholastic Excellence Program

The bill creates s. 1008.365, F.S., to establish within the DOE the Reading Achievement Initiative for Scholastic Excellence Program (RAISE Program) to provide instructional supports to school districts and their staff in implementing evidence-based reading instruction and interventions in order to improve student reading achievement. Under the RAISE Program, and similar to current federally-funded initiatives of the DOE, the DOE must establish at least 20 literacy support regions and regional support teams, each at the direction of a regional literacy support director appointed by the commissioner, to assist school districts in improving low reading scores. Each regional literacy support director must be an employee of a school district and manage a regional support team. Directors and teams are required by the bill to consist of personnel who have completed the competency-based reading endorsement pathway and meet other specified requirements related to reading instruction and progress monitoring.

The bill requires the DOE to provide progress monitoring data to the regional literacy support teams to assist with providing to designated schools supports, which must include:

- Professional development aligned with evidence based strategies for reading instruction.
- Evaluating a school's improvement plan for alignment with the school district's reading plan.
- Assistance with implementing:
 - Data-informed instructional decision making.
 - The selection and consistent, coordinated use of high-quality instructional materials.
 - Reading instruction in other core subject area curricula, with an emphasis on civic literacy.
 - A multitiered system of supports in order to provide students effective interventions and identify students who may require an evaluation for special educational services, including identifying characteristics of conditions that affect phonological processing, such as dyslexia.

The bill authorizes the DOE to establish criteria to identify a school that must receive supports from a regional support team. The bill also modifies s. 1001.42, F.S., to require each school district to include in its school improvement plan schools identified for supports under the RAISE Program, but specifies that regardless of a school's grade, a school must receive supports if at least 50 percent of the school's students who take the statewide, standardized ELA assessment score below a Level 3 for any grade level, or, for students in kindergarten through grade 3, if results from the CSPM demonstrate that at least 50 percent of the students are not on track to pass the statewide, standardized grade 3 ELA assessment. If the regional support team determines that the school district's reading plan does not address the school's need to improve student outcomes, the regional literacy support director, the district school superintendent, or his

or her designee, and the director of the JRFO are required by the bill to convene a meeting to rectify the deficiencies of the reading plan.

A school identified for supports is not required by the bill to implement a turnaround option or take other corrective action under the state's school improvement program. The bill authorizes a school to stop receiving supports and implementing a school improvement plan when the school's data reflects that it no longer meets the requirements to receive supports and implement a school improvement plan. The school may nevertheless continue to receive supports based on the availability of resources.

RAISE Program Tutors

The RAISE Program also requires the DOE to establish a tutoring program and develop training in effective reading tutoring practices and content, based on evidence-based practices, and aligned to the state ELA standards, to prepare eligible high school students to tutor students with a substantial deficiency in reading in kindergarten through grade 3. The bill requires the SBE to adopt rules to administer the program.

The bill requires school districts that wish to participate to recruit, train, and deploy eligible high school students. Tutoring must occur during the school day on school district property in the presence and under the supervision of instructional personnel who are school district employees. A student is required by the bill to obtain written permission from his or her parent before receiving tutoring services.

The bill prescribes eligibility requirements for tutors. Specifically, a tutor must:

- Be a rising junior or senior.
- 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 course requirements for graduation.
- Have written recommendations from at least two of his or her present or former high school teachers of record or extracurricular activity sponsors.

The bill authorizes a district school board to adopt a service-learning⁶¹ course that includes a tutoring program and authorizes students to:

- Earn up to 3 elective credits for high school graduation based on the verified number of hours the student spends tutoring.

⁶¹ The hours that high school students devote to course-based service-learning activities may be counted toward meeting community service requirements for high school graduation and community service requirements for participation in the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program. School districts are encouraged to include service learning as part of any course or activity required for high school graduation and to include and accept service-learning activities and hours in requirements for academic awards, especially those awards that currently include community service as a criterion or selection factor. Section 1003.497(3)(b), F.S.

- Count hours devoted to tutoring toward meeting community service requirements for high school graduation⁶² and participation in the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program.⁶³
- Earn a New Worlds Scholar award from the DOE by providing at least 500 verified hours of tutoring.

The option for a high school student to tutor a K-3 student may support both students in their academic development.

Parental Notification and Supports

The bill requires a school to apprise in writing, at least monthly, the parent of a student who has a substantial deficiency in reading of the student's progress in response to intensive reading interventions and supports. The written appraisal must inform the parent of any additional interventions or supports to be provided to the student if the initial supports do not lead to improvement.

To further encourage parental participation in a student's reading progress, the bill requires the DOE to develop a handbook that schools must provide to the parent of a student who is identified as having a substantial reading deficiency. The handbook must be made available in an electronic format that is accessible online and must include:

- An overview of the types and frequency of assessments used to identify reading deficiencies and the requirements for interventions and supports that districts must provide to students who do not make adequate academic progress.
- An overview of the process for initiating and conducting evaluations for exceptional education eligibility. The overview must include an explanation that a diagnosis of a medical condition alone is not sufficient to establish exceptional education eligibility but may be used to document how that condition relates to the student's eligibility determination and may be disclosed in an eligible student's individual education plan when necessary to inform school personnel responsible for implementing the plan.
- Characteristics of conditions associated with learning disorders, including dyslexia, dysgraphia, dyscalculia, and developmental aphasia.
- A list of resources that support informed parent involvement in decision making processes for students who have difficulty in learning.

The handbook may support parental awareness and involvement in the progress of a student's education.

⁶² A student is not specifically required to complete a minimum number of community service hours to earn a standard high school diploma, but school districts are encouraged to include service learning as part of a course or activity required for high school graduation. *See* ss. 1003.4282 and 1003.497(3)(b), F.S.

⁶³ Scholarship awards for students under the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program have varying minimum service hour requirements, based on the amount of the award. For eligibility requirements, *see* Florida Department of Education, Office of Student Financial Assistance, *2020-2021 Bright Futures Student Handbook, Chapter 1: Initial Eligibility Requirements*, available at <https://www.floridastudentfinancialaidsg.org/PDF/BFHandbookChapter1.pdf> (last visited Mar. 13, 2021).

Instructional Material Review Process

Present Situation

The DOE is authorized to allocate and distribute to each district an amount as prescribed annually by the Legislature for instructional materials for students in grades K-12.⁶⁴ Each district school superintendent is required to certify to the commissioner that the district school board has approved a comprehensive staff development plan that supports fidelity of implementation of instructional materials programs, including verification that training was provided; that the materials are being implemented as designed; and, beginning July 1, 2021, for core reading materials and reading intervention materials used in kindergarten through grade 5, that the materials have been identified by JRFO in collaboration with the Florida Center for Reading Research as scientifically researched and evidence-based reading instructional and intervention programs that incorporate explicit, systematic, and sequential approaches to teaching phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and text comprehension and incorporate decodable or phonetic text instructional strategies.⁶⁵

The term of adoption of any instructional materials must be a five-year period beginning on April 1 following the adoption, except that the commissioner may approve terms of adoption of less than five years for materials in content areas which require more frequent revision.⁶⁶

Prior to the purchase of any instructional material, whether from the state-adopted list or through a district-established instructional materials review process, the district school board must:⁶⁷

- Establish a process to allow student editions of recommended instructional materials to be accessed and viewed online by the public at least 20 calendar days before the required school board hearing and public meeting. This process must include reasonable safeguards against the unauthorized use, reproduction, and distribution of instructional materials considered for adoption.
- Conduct an open, noticed school board hearing to receive public comment on the recommended instructional materials.
- Conduct an open, noticed public meeting to approve an annual instructional materials plan to identify any instructional materials that will be purchased. This public meeting must be held on a different date than the school board hearing.
- Provide notice for the school board hearing and the public meeting that specifically states the instructional materials being reviewed and how the instructional materials can be accessed for public review.

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill modifies s. 1001.215, F.S., to require the JRFO, as part of the adoption cycle for ELA instructional materials, to:

- Assist in evaluating elementary grades instructional materials submitted for adoption consideration.

⁶⁴ Section 1011.67(1), F.S. The state appropriated \$236.6 million to school districts for instructional materials for the 2020-2021 fiscal year. Specific Appropriations 8 and 92, s. 2, ch. 2020-111, L.O.F.

⁶⁵ Sections 1011.67(2) and 1001.215(8), F.S.

⁶⁶ Section 1006.36(1), F.S.

⁶⁷ Sections 1006.40(4)(b) and 1006.283(2)(b)8., 9., and 11., F.S.

- Identify those materials that are closely aligned to the content and evidence-based strategies for reading instructional and intervention programs that have been identified in collaboration with the Florida Center for Reading Research.
- Incorporate professional development to implement such strategies.

The bill modifies s. 1011.67, F.S., to authorize instructional materials identified by JRFO to be purchased by a school district without undergoing the comprehensive process for adopting instructional materials at the local level.

The Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program

Present Situation

The Florida Constitution requires the State to provide every four-year old child a high quality pre-kindergarten learning opportunity in the form of an early childhood development and education program which must be voluntary, high quality, free, and delivered according to professionally accepted standards.⁶⁸ In 2004, the State established a free VPK program offered to eligible four-year-old children.⁶⁹ Parents may choose either a school-year or summer program offered by either a public or private school.⁷⁰

VPK Administration

Early Learning Coalitions (ELCs) and district school boards administer the VPK program at the county or regional level. Each ELC is the single point of entry for VPK program registration and enrollment in the coalition's county or multi-county service area.⁷¹ A local ELC must coordinate with the local school district in the ELC's service area to develop procedures for enrolling children in public school VPK programs.⁷²

The Office of Early Learning (OEL) adopts procedures governing the administration of the VPK program for ELCs and school districts, including procedures for:⁷³

- Child enrollment.
- Attendance reporting.
- Eligibility of VPK program providers.
- Regulating the compliance of VPK program providers.
- Reimbursing VPK program providers for the costs of the VPK program.

⁶⁸ Art. IX, s. 1(b), Fla. Const. An early childhood development and education program means an organized program designed to address and enhance each child's ability to make age appropriate progress in an appropriate range of settings in the development of language and cognitive capabilities and emotional, social, regulatory and moral capacities through education in basic skills and such other skills as the Legislature may determine to be appropriate.

⁶⁹ Section 1, ch. 2004-484, L.O.F.; part V, ch. 1002, F.S.; *see also* Art. IX, s. 1(b)-(c), Fla. Const.

⁷⁰ Section 1002.53(3), F.S.

⁷¹ Section 1002.53(4), F.S. There are currently 30 ELCs. Florida's Office of Early Learning, *Early Learning Coalitions*, <http://www.floridaearlylearning.com/family-resources/find-quality-child-care/locate-your-early-learning-coalition> (last visited Mar. 13, 2021).

⁷² Section 1002.53(4), F.S.

⁷³ Section 1002.75(2), F.S.

VPK Instructor Requirements

A VPK provider offering a school-year VPK program must have, for each class, at least one instructor with the following credentials:⁷⁴

- A Child Development Associate (CDA) issued by the National Credentialing Program of the Council for Professional Recognition.
- A credential approved by the Department of Children and Families as being equivalent to or greater than the CDA.
- Five clock hours of training in emergent literacy and successful completion of a student performance standards training course.

In lieu of the minimum credentials listed above, a private VPK program instructor may hold:⁷⁵

- An associate's or higher degree in child development;
- An associate's or higher degree in an unrelated field, at least six credit hours in early childhood education or child development, and at least 480 hours of teaching or providing child care services for children any age from birth through eight years of age;
- A bachelor's or higher degree in early childhood education, prekindergarten or primary education, preschool education, or family and consumer science;
- A bachelor's or higher degree in elementary education, if the instructor has been certified to teach children any age from birth through grade 6, regardless of whether the educator certificate is current; or
- An educational credential approved by the OEL as being equivalent to or greater than any of these educational credentials.

VPK Instructor Training

The OEL sets minimum standards for emergent literacy training courses for VPK instructors.⁷⁶ Each course must be at least five clock hours long and provide strategies and techniques regarding the age-appropriate progress of prekindergarten students in developing emergent literacy skills, including:⁷⁷

- Oral communication;
- Knowledge of print and letters;
- Phonemic and phonological awareness; and
- Vocabulary and comprehension.

Each emergent literacy training course must also provide strategies for helping students with disabilities and other special needs maximize their benefit from the VPK program.⁷⁸ In addition, the OEL must adopt minimum standards for training courses on the VPK performance standards

⁷⁴ Sections 1002.55(3)(c)1.a. and 2., 1002.59, and 1002.63(4), F.S. An active Birth Through Five Child Care Credential awarded as a Florida Child Care Professional Credential, Florida Department of Education Child Care Apprenticeship Certificate, or Early Childhood Professional Certificate satisfies the staff credential requirement. Florida Department of Children and Families, *Child Care Facility Handbook* (2019), incorporated by reference in Rule 65C-22.001(7), F.A.C.

⁷⁵ Section 1002.55(4), F.S.

⁷⁶ Section 1002.59(1), F.S.

⁷⁷ *Id.*

⁷⁸ *Id.*

for students.⁷⁹ Each course on performance standards must be at least three clock hours, provide instruction in strategies and techniques to address age-appropriate progress of each child in attaining the standards, and be available online.⁸⁰

OEL outlines a 5-Tier career pathway with certifications that require different levels of foundational training up to a bachelor's degree or higher.⁸¹

Early Learning Florida, developed in partnership between the OEL and the Lastinger Center, is a statewide professional learning system designed to support the development of early childhood professionals' knowledge and skills in effectively educating and caring for young children.⁸² Since 2015, Early Learning Florida has delivered over 400,000 hours of online and blended training to more than 30,000 early childhood practitioners in Florida, at no cost to educators.⁸³ All Early Learning Florida courses and trainings provide teachers with Continuing Education Units that articulate to national and state credentials.⁸⁴

The OEL has also developed early learning professional development and career pathways.⁸⁵ Professional development and teacher resources are available online, including courses developed by the OEL in collaboration with the Lastinger Center, to provide opportunities to earn educator credentials.⁸⁶

VPK Accountability

The DOE developed a statewide kindergarten readiness screening⁸⁷ and requires each school district to administer the statewide kindergarten readiness screening within the first 30 days of each school year.⁸⁸ The screening must measure a child's readiness for kindergarten in eight domains: physical development; approaches to learning; social and emotional development; language and literacy; mathematical thinking; scientific inquiry; social studies; and creative expression through the arts.⁸⁹

⁷⁹ Section 1002.59(2), F.S.

⁸⁰ *Id.*

⁸¹ Office of Early Learning, *Florida Early Care and Education Career Pathway*, available at http://www.floridaearlylearning.com/Content/Uploads/floridaearlylearning.com/files/Career%20Pathway%20Revised_ADA.pdf.

⁸² Early Learning Florida, *Who We Are*, <https://www.earlylearningflorida.com/about> (last visited Mar. 13, 2021).

⁸³ The Lastinger Center at the University of Florida, *Early Learning Florida*, <https://lastinger.center.ufl.edu/early-learning/early-learning-florida/> (last visited Mar. 13, 2021).

⁸⁴ *Id.*

⁸⁵ Section 1002.995, F.S., and Rule 6A-4.735, F.A.C.

⁸⁶ See Florida Office of Early Learning, *Professional Development*, <http://www.floridaearlylearning.com/providers/professional-development/professional-development-training-resources> (last visited Mar. 13, 2021). See also Early Learning Florida, *Courses*, <https://www.earlylearningflorida.com/catalog> (last visited Mar. 13, 2021).

⁸⁷ The DOE selected the Star Early Literacy Assessment, developed by Renaissance Learning, Inc., as the Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener (FLKRS). Rule 6M-8.601(3)(b)1., F.A.C.; see also FDOE, *Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener*, <http://www.fldoe.org/accountability/assessments/k-12-student-assessment/flkrs/> (last visited Mar. 13, 2021).

⁸⁸ Sections 1002.69(1)-(3) and 1002.73, F.S.

⁸⁹ See s. 1002.67(1), F.S. See also Florida's Office of Early Learning, *Early Learning and Developmental Standards: 4 Years Old to Kindergarten* (2017) at 1, incorporated by reference in rule 6M-8.602, F.A.C.

The OEL annually calculates a kindergarten readiness rate for each VPK provider based on results of the annual screening.⁹⁰ The readiness rates are expressed as the percentage of children whose scores demonstrate readiness for kindergarten.⁹¹ The methodology for calculating the readiness rate must include student learning gains, when available, based on a VPK preassessment and postassessment, known as the “Florida VPK Assessment.”⁹² The OEL must determine learning gains using a value-added measure based on growth demonstrated by the results of the Florida VPK Assessment from at least two successive years of administration.⁹³

At least 60 percent of a VPK provider’s students must meet the “ready for kindergarten” score on the screening in order for the provider to avoid probationary status.⁹⁴ Providers that do not meet the minimum readiness rate are placed on probation.⁹⁵ An ELC or school district must require a VPK provider that falls below the minimum kindergarten readiness rate to:⁹⁶

- Submit for approval and implement an improvement plan;
- Place the provide or school on probation; and
- Take certain corrective actions, including the use of an OEL-approved curriculum or an OEL approved staff development plan to strengthen instruction in language development and phonological awareness.

Out of 126,238 students who completed the VPK program, 63 percent were “ready for kindergarten” in the fall of 2019.⁹⁷ Of 6,611 rated VPK providers, 2,175 failed to meet the minimum rate.⁹⁸ Of these 2,175 providers, 2,203 remained on probation.⁹⁹

A VPK provider on probation and failing to meet the minimum readiness rate for two consecutive years must be removed from eligibility to provide the VPK program for 5 years; unless the provider receives from the OEL a good cause exemption.¹⁰⁰

The DOE launched a VPK progress monitoring pilot program by permitting, beginning in January 2021 and continuing through the 2021-2022 school year, up to 1900 VPK providers to

⁹⁰ Rule 6M-8.601(3)(b), F.A.C.

⁹¹ Sections 1002.69(5)-(6), F.S.; To be considered “ready for kindergarten,” a student must achieve a score of 500 or higher on the Star Early Literacy assessment. Rule 6M-8.601, F.A.C.

⁹² Section 1002.69(5), F.S.; Rule 6A-1.09433(1)(b), F.A.C.

⁹³ Section 1002.69(5), F.S.; Rule 6M-8.601(3)(b), F.A.C.

⁹⁴ *Id.*

⁹⁵ Section 1002.67(4), F.S.

⁹⁶ Section 1002.67(4)(c)1., F.S.

⁹⁷ Email, Florida Department of Education (Dec. 15, 2020).

⁹⁸ *Id.*

⁹⁹ Email, Office of Early Learning (Mar. 29, 2019).

¹⁰⁰ Section 1002.67(4)(c)3., F.S. A VPK provider must submit a request for a good cause exemption to the OEL for review and approval and include specified data. Section 1002.69(7)(b)-(c), F.S. A VPK provider that receives a good cause exemption must continue to implement its improvement plan and take corrective actions until the provider meets the minimum kindergarten readiness rate. Sections 1002.69(7)(e) and 1002.67(3)(c)2., F.S.

access the assessment used for the statewide kindergarten screening.¹⁰¹ The DOE allocated \$2.9 million from the CARES Act funds for the program.¹⁰²

The DOE allocated \$18 million of the Child Care Development and Block Grant Fund from the CARES Act to implement summer programs for rising kindergarten students identified with limited language and emergent literacy skills as determined by the VPK assessments and teacher recommendations.¹⁰³

Effect of Proposed Changes

VPK Instructor Requirements

The bill modifies s. 1002.59, to add requirements to the emergent literacy training courses, developed by the OEL, for prekindergarten instructors. The bill requires the JRFO to work with the OEL in the development of the emergent literacy training courses and specifies that the courses must be consistent with the evidence-based reading instructional and intervention programs developed by the JRFO and the Florida Center for Reading Research.

The bill also modifies s. 1002.55, F.S., to revise emergent literacy training to require that the training course be available online and that private prekindergarten instructors complete at least one qualifying emergent literacy training course every 5 years. The additional requirements for VPK instructors may provide instructors with more skills to teach VPK students.

VPK Accountability

The bill modifies s. 1008.25, F.S., to require a VPK student who demonstrates a substantial deficiency in early literacy skills based upon the results of the CSPM to be referred to the school district following completion of the VPK term and prior to the beginning of the next school year. The bill makes the student eligible for intensive reading interventions from the school district, which may be funded from the evidence-based reading instruction allocation. The additional reading interventions may provide additional opportunities for students to improve reading skills.

The CSPM replaces current VPK program progress monitoring and accountability requirements in ss. 1002.67 and 1002.69, F.S. With the implementation of the CSPM beginning with the 2022-2023 school year, the bill:

- Phases out the pre- and post-assessment and the statewide kindergarten readiness screening.
- Requires learning gains and kindergarten readiness rates to be calculated using data from the CSPM.

¹⁰¹ Florida Department of Education, *Progress Monitoring: Building Effective, Data-Informed Strategies to Close Achievement Gaps* (Nov. 18, 2020), available at <https://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/19925/urlt/2-3.pdf> at 6, (last visited Mar. 13, 2021).

¹⁰² *Id.*

¹⁰³ Florida Department of Education, *Reopening Florida's Schools and the CARES Act*, available at <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/19861/urlt/FLDOEReopeningCARESAct.pdf> at 98, (last visited Mar. 13, 2021).

The VPK accountability metrics provided in the bill may measure student performance more contemporaneously with the instruction provided and support the timely provision of information to parents, school districts, and VPK providers.

Kindergarten Readiness

To assist all parents with the transition from prekindergarten to kindergarten, the bill modifies s. 1002.83, F.S. to require the OEL to provide guidance for successful kindergarten transitions to ELCs, school districts, charter schools, and parents. The bill requires each ELC to develop a best-practices plan for transitioning students into kindergarten, which must include:

- Opportunities for prekindergarten students and their parents to visit schools in which they may be enrolled in kindergarten.
- Written information for parents on school registration and academic and social expectations for kindergarten.
- Meetings at least annually with school districts and charter schools in the coalition's service area to identify and address areas for improvement in transitioning prekindergarten students into kindergarten.
- Transferring prekindergarten student information for continuity in progress monitoring and the provision of supports.

The additional supports for transitioning students to kindergarten may help prepare students for kindergarten. ELCs may require coordination from school districts regarding kindergarten enrollment, visits, and student data.

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.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:**A. Tax/Fee Issues:**

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

The coordinated screening and progress monitoring required by the bill for students enrolled in the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program through grade 8 will require the expenditure of state funds. The deployment of regional literacy support directors and teams as provided in the bill will also require the expenditure of state funds.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

Section 15 of the bill includes an incorrect cross-reference to federal law. A provision of the bill that defines “evidence-based” to mean demonstrating a statistically significant effect on improving student outcomes or other relevant outcomes as provided in 20 U.S.C. s. 8101(21)(A)(i). The definition of the term “evidence-based” is included in the United States Code at 20 U.S.C. s. 7801(21)(A)(i).

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This bill substantially amends the following sections of the Florida Statutes: 1001.215, 1001.42, 1002.33, 1002.55, 1002.59, 1002.67, 1002.69, 1002.83, 1002.995, 1003.621, 1004.04, 1008.25, 1008.345, 1011.62, 1011.67, 1012.585, 1012.586, 1012.98, 1012.986.

This bill creates the following section of the Florida Statutes: 1008.365.

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.

By Senator Rodriguez

39-01370-21

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1 A bill to be entitled
 2 An act relating to student literacy; amending s.
 3 1001.215, F.S.; revising and providing duties for the
 4 Just Read, Florida! Office within the Department of
 5 Education; amending s. 1001.42, F.S.; revising a
 6 district school board's duty to implement a school
 7 improvement plan for certain low-performing schools to
 8 conform to changes made by the act; amending s.
 9 1002.33, F.S.; conforming a provision to changes made
 10 by the act; amending s. 1002.55, F.S.; revising
 11 requirements for prekindergarten instructors relating
 12 to completing an emergent literacy training course;
 13 amending s. 1002.59, F.S.; requiring the Office of
 14 Early Learning to adopt minimum standards for such
 15 course in collaboration with the Just Read, Florida!
 16 Office; requiring such course to be consistent with
 17 certain strategies identified by the Just Read,
 18 Florida! Office; amending s. 1002.67, F.S.; requiring
 19 certain private prekindergarten providers and public
 20 schools to use a coordinated screening and progress
 21 monitoring system; amending s. 1002.69, F.S.;
 22 requiring the Department of Education, in consultation
 23 with the Office of Early Learning, to implement a
 24 coordinated screening and progress monitoring system
 25 for students in the Voluntary Prekindergarten
 26 Education Program through grade 8; requiring such
 27 screening and progress monitoring system to be used to
 28 assess kindergarten readiness and to determine student
 29 learning gains; amending s. 1002.83, F.S.; requiring

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30 early learning coalitions to adopt best-practices
 31 plans for transitioning prekindergarten students into
 32 kindergarten; providing requirements for such plans;
 33 requiring the Office of Early Learning to provide
 34 certain guidelines to assist early learning
 35 coalitions, schools districts, charter schools, and
 36 parents; amending ss. 1002.995 and 1003.621, F.S.;
 37 conforming provisions to changes made by the act;
 38 amending s. 1004.04, F.S.; revising provisions
 39 relating to teacher preparation programs; removing
 40 provisions authorizing the waiver of certain admission
 41 requirements for such programs; requiring certain
 42 school district and instructional personnel to have
 43 evidence of being certified or endorsed in reading
 44 beginning in a specified school year; amending s.
 45 1008.25, F.S.; requiring certain students to
 46 participate in a certain coordinated screening and
 47 progress monitoring system; requiring schools to
 48 communicate with parents at least monthly regarding
 49 the progress of certain students; providing
 50 requirements for such communication; requiring the
 51 department to develop a handbook for schools to
 52 provide to parents of certain students; providing
 53 requirements for such handbook; requiring the
 54 department, in collaboration with the Office of Early
 55 Learning, to procure and require the use of a certain
 56 coordinated screening and progress monitoring system;
 57 providing requirements for such system; requiring
 58 private Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program

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59 providers and public schools to participate in such
 60 system beginning in a specified school year; providing
 61 the frequency with which such system must be
 62 administered during the program year or school year,
 63 as applicable; providing that certain prekindergarten
 64 students may be eligible for intensive reading
 65 interventions; authorizing a school district to pay
 66 for such interventions using certain funds; requiring
 67 screening and progress monitoring system results to be
 68 reported to the department and maintained in a
 69 specified department warehouse; requiring such results
 70 to be provided to a student's teacher and parent;
 71 requiring the department, in collaboration with the
 72 Office of Early Learning, to provide certain training
 73 and support; amending s. 1008.345, F.S.; conforming a
 74 cross-reference; creating s. 1008.365, F.S.; providing
 75 a short title; establishing the Reading Achievement
 76 Initiative for Scholastic Excellence Program within
 77 the department; providing a purpose; requiring the
 78 department to establish a specified number of literacy
 79 support regions and regional support teams for a
 80 certain purpose; requiring a regional literacy support
 81 director to meet certain criteria; providing duties
 82 and requirements for such teams; authorizing the
 83 department to establish criteria for identifying
 84 schools that need supports; requiring such schools to
 85 implement a certain plan; requiring the department to
 86 provide progress monitoring data to such teams
 87 regarding the implementation of supports; providing

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88 requirements for such supports; providing that certain
 89 schools are not required to implement a turnaround
 90 option or take other corrective actions; authorizing a
 91 school to discontinue receiving supports and
 92 implementing a school improvement plan under certain
 93 circumstances; requiring the department to establish a
 94 tutoring program and develop certain training to
 95 prepare high school students to tutor certain
 96 students; providing eligibility criteria for high
 97 school students to participate in a tutoring program;
 98 requiring school districts that wish to participate in
 99 such program to recruit, train, and deploy eligible
 100 high school students; providing requirements for such
 101 program; requiring the department to designate certain
 102 high school students as New Worlds Scholars; requiring
 103 the State Board of Education to adopt rules; amending
 104 s. 1011.62, F.S.; renaming the research-based reading
 105 instruction allocation as the evidence-based reading
 106 instruction allocation; requiring such allocation to
 107 be used to provide comprehensive reading instruction
 108 to certain prekindergarten students; requiring a
 109 school district's K-12 comprehensive reading plan to
 110 be developed with input from certain personnel and
 111 provide for certain interventions delivered by certain
 112 instructional personnel; requiring the department to
 113 annually release to certain school districts their
 114 allocations of appropriated funds by a specified date;
 115 requiring the department to annually report certain
 116 findings and recommendations to the State Board of

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117 Education by a specified date; providing a definition;
 118 amending s. 1011.67, F.S.; authorizing school
 119 districts to purchase certain instructional materials
 120 with specified funds without undergoing certain
 121 adoption procedures; amending s. 1012.585, F.S.;
 122 providing a limitation on earning certain inservice
 123 points; amending s. 1012.586, F.S.; requiring the
 124 department to adopt competency-based pathways for
 125 instructional personnel to earn a reading endorsement
 126 by the beginning of a specified school year; providing
 127 requirements for such pathways; requiring the
 128 department to place microcredentials on participants'
 129 educator certificates; providing requirements for the
 130 department in adopting such pathways; requiring school
 131 districts to resubmit certain programs to the
 132 department for approval by a specified date;
 133 prohibiting instructional personnel from earning a
 134 reading endorsement solely by achieving a passing
 135 score on a specified assessment; amending s. 1012.98,
 136 F.S.; requiring the department to identify certain
 137 professional development opportunities to be
 138 implemented by school districts; amending s. 1012.986,
 139 F.S.; revising the goals of the William Cecil Golden
 140 Professional Development Program for School Leaders to
 141 include support for instructional personnel who
 142 provide reading instruction and interventions;
 143 providing an effective date.

144
 145 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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146
 147 Section 1. Subsections (1) through (6) and subsection (11)
 148 of section 1001.215, Florida Statutes, are amended, and
 149 subsection (8) of that section is republished, to read:
 150 1001.215 Just Read, Florida! Office.—There is created in
 151 the Department of Education the Just Read, Florida! Office. The
 152 office is fully accountable to the Commissioner of Education and
 153 shall:
 154 (1) Provide training to ~~Train~~ reading coaches and school
 155 administrators on the evidence-based strategies identified
 156 pursuant to subsection (8) for purposes of implementation,
 157 modeling, and classroom observations to support professional
 158 growth and inform performance evaluations of instructional
 159 personnel.
 160 (2) Create multiple designations of effective reading
 161 instruction, with accompanying credentials and microcredentials,
 162 to enable all teachers to integrate reading instruction into
 163 their content areas and indicate mastery of specific, evidence-
 164 based strategies.
 165 (3) Work with the Lastinger Center for Learning at the
 166 University of Florida to develop training for K-12 teachers,
 167 reading coaches, and school ~~administrators principals~~ on
 168 effective content-area-specific reading strategies; the
 169 coordinated integration of content-rich curriculum from other
 170 core subject areas into reading instruction, with an emphasis on
 171 civic literacy; and evidence-based reading strategies identified
 172 pursuant to ~~is~~ subsection (8) to improve student reading
 173 performance. For secondary teachers, emphasis shall be on
 174 technical text. These strategies must be developed for all

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175 content areas in the K-12 curriculum.

176 (4) Develop and provide access to sequenced, content-rich
 177 curriculum programming, instructional practices, and resources
 178 that help elementary schools use state-adopted instructional
 179 materials to increase students' background knowledge and
 180 literacy skills, including student attainment of the Next
 181 Generation Sunshine State Standards for social studies, science,
 182 and the arts. The office shall, as part of the adoption cycle
 183 for English Language Arts instructional materials, assist in
 184 evaluating elementary grades instructional materials submitted
 185 for adoption consideration, identify those materials that are
 186 closely aligned to the content and evidence-based strategies
 187 identified pursuant to subsection (8), and incorporate
 188 professional development to implement such strategies.

189 (5) Provide parents with information and evidence-based
 190 strategies for assisting their children in reading, including
 191 reading in content areas.

192 (6) Provide technical assistance to school districts in the
 193 development and implementation of district plans for use of the
 194 evidence-based ~~research-based~~ reading instruction allocation
 195 provided in s. 1011.62(9) and annually review and approve such
 196 plans.

197 (8) Work with the Florida Center for Reading Research to
 198 identify scientifically researched and evidence-based reading
 199 instructional and intervention programs that incorporate
 200 explicit, systematic, and sequential approaches to teaching
 201 phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and text
 202 comprehension and incorporate decodable or phonetic text
 203 instructional strategies. Reading intervention includes

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204 evidence-based strategies frequently used to remediate reading
 205 deficiencies and includes, but is not limited to, individual
 206 instruction, multisensory approaches, tutoring, mentoring, or
 207 the use of technology that targets specific reading skills and
 208 abilities.

209 (11) Work with teacher preparation programs approved
 210 pursuant to ss. 1004.04 and 1004.85 to integrate effective,
 211 ~~research-based~~ and evidence-based reading instructional and
 212 intervention strategies, including explicit, systematic, and
 213 sequential reading strategies, multisensory intervention
 214 strategies, and reading in content area instructional strategies
 215 into teacher preparation programs.

216 Section 2. Paragraph (a) of subsection (18) of section
 217 1001.42, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

218 1001.42 Powers and duties of district school board.—The
 219 district school board, acting as a board, shall exercise all
 220 powers and perform all duties listed below:

221 (18) IMPLEMENT SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY.—
 222 Maintain a system of school improvement and education
 223 accountability as provided by statute and State Board of
 224 Education rule. This system of school improvement and education
 225 accountability shall be consistent with, and implemented
 226 through, the district's continuing system of planning and
 227 budgeting required by this section and ss. 1008.385, 1010.01,
 228 and 1011.01. This system of school improvement and education
 229 accountability shall comply with the provisions of ss. 1008.33,
 230 1008.34, 1008.345, and 1008.385 and include the following:

231 (a) *School improvement plans.*—The district school board
 232 shall annually approve and require implementation of a new,

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233 amended, or continuation school improvement plan for each school
 234 in the district which has a school grade of "D" or "F"; has a
 235 significant gap in achievement on statewide, standardized
 236 assessments administered pursuant to s. 1008.22 by one or more
 237 student subgroups, as defined in the federal Elementary and
 238 Secondary Education Act (ESEA), 20 U.S.C. s.
 239 6311(b)(2)(C)(v)(II); has not significantly increased the
 240 percentage of students passing statewide, standardized
 241 assessments; has not significantly increased the percentage of
 242 students demonstrating Learning Gains, as defined in s. 1008.34
 243 and as calculated under s. 1008.34(3)(b), who passed statewide,
 244 standardized assessments; has been identified as requiring
 245 instructional supports under the Reading Achievement Initiative
 246 for Scholastic Excellence Program established in s. 1008.365; or
 247 has significantly lower graduation rates for a subgroup when
 248 compared to the state's graduation rate. The improvement plan of
 249 a school that meets the requirements of this paragraph shall
 250 include strategies for improving these results. The state board
 251 shall adopt rules establishing thresholds and for determining
 252 compliance with this paragraph.

253 Section 3. Paragraph (b) of subsection (17) of section
 254 1002.33, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

255 1002.33 Charter schools.—

256 (17) FUNDING.—Students enrolled in a charter school,
 257 regardless of the sponsorship, shall be funded as if they are in
 258 a basic program or a special program, the same as students
 259 enrolled in other public schools in the school district. Funding
 260 for a charter lab school shall be as provided in s. 1002.32.

261 (b) The basis for the agreement for funding students

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262 enrolled in a charter school shall be the sum of the school
 263 district's operating funds from the Florida Education Finance
 264 Program as provided in s. 1011.62 and the General Appropriations
 265 Act, including gross state and local funds, discretionary
 266 lottery funds, and funds from the school district's current
 267 operating discretionary millage levy; divided by total funded
 268 weighted full-time equivalent students in the school district;
 269 multiplied by the weighted full-time equivalent students for the
 270 charter school. Charter schools whose students or programs meet
 271 the eligibility criteria in law are entitled to their
 272 proportionate share of categorical program funds included in the
 273 total funds available in the Florida Education Finance Program
 274 by the Legislature, including transportation, the evidence-based
 275 ~~research-based~~ reading allocation, and the Florida digital
 276 classrooms allocation. Total funding for each charter school
 277 shall be recalculated during the year to reflect the revised
 278 calculations under the Florida Education Finance Program by the
 279 state and the actual weighted full-time equivalent students
 280 reported by the charter school during the full-time equivalent
 281 student survey periods designated by the Commissioner of
 282 Education. For charter schools operated by a not-for-profit or
 283 municipal entity, any unrestricted current and capital assets
 284 identified in the charter school's annual financial audit may be
 285 used for other charter schools operated by the not-for-profit or
 286 municipal entity within the school district. Unrestricted
 287 current assets shall be used in accordance with s. 1011.62, and
 288 any unrestricted capital assets shall be used in accordance with
 289 s. 1013.62(2).

290 Section 4. Paragraph (c) of subsection (3) and subsection

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291 (4) of section 1002.55, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

292 1002.55 School-year prekindergarten program delivered by
293 private prekindergarten providers.-

294 (3) To be eligible to deliver the prekindergarten program,
295 a private prekindergarten provider must meet each of the
296 following requirements:

297 (c) The private prekindergarten provider must have, for
298 each prekindergarten class of 11 children or fewer, at least one
299 prekindergarten instructor who meets each of the following
300 requirements:

301 1. The prekindergarten instructor must hold, at a minimum,
302 one of the following credentials:

303 a. A child development associate credential issued by the
304 National Credentialing Program of the Council for Professional
305 Recognition; or

306 b. A credential approved by the Department of Children and
307 Families as being equivalent to or greater than the credential
308 described in sub-subparagraph a.

309 The Department of Children and Families may adopt rules under
310 ss. 120.536(1) and 120.54 which provide criteria and procedures
311 for approving equivalent credentials under sub-subparagraph b.

312 2. The prekindergarten instructor must successfully
313 complete an emergent literacy training course and a student
314 performance standards training course approved by the office as
315 meeting or exceeding the minimum standards adopted under s.
316 1002.59. The emergent literacy training course must be completed
317 at least once every 5 years after the prekindergarten instructor
318 initially completes the course. ~~The requirement for completion~~
319

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320 ~~of the standards training course shall take effect July 1, 2014,~~
321 ~~and~~ The ~~courses~~ course shall be made available online.

322 (4) A prekindergarten instructor, in lieu of the minimum
323 credentials ~~and courses~~ required under paragraph (3) (c) 1.

324 ~~(3) (c)~~, may hold one of the following educational credentials:

325 (a) A bachelor's or higher degree in early childhood
326 education, prekindergarten or primary education, preschool
327 education, or family and consumer science;

328 (b) A bachelor's or higher degree in elementary education,
329 if the prekindergarten instructor has been certified to teach
330 children any age from birth through 6th grade, regardless of
331 whether the instructor's educator certificate is current, and if
332 the instructor is not ineligible to teach in a public school
333 because his or her educator certificate is suspended or revoked;

334 (c) An associate's or higher degree in child development;

335 (d) An associate's or higher degree in an unrelated field,
336 at least 6 credit hours in early childhood education or child
337 development, and at least 480 hours of experience in teaching or
338 providing child care services for children any age from birth
339 through 8 years of age; or

340 (e) An educational credential approved by the department as
341 being equivalent to or greater than an educational credential
342 described in this subsection. The department may adopt criteria
343 and procedures for approving equivalent educational credentials
344 under this paragraph.

345 Section 5. Subsection (1) of section 1002.59, Florida
346 Statutes, is amended to read:

347 1002.59 Emergent literacy and performance standards
348 training courses.-

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349 (1) The office, in collaboration with the Just Read,
 350 Florida! Office, shall adopt minimum standards for one or more
 351 training courses in emergent literacy for prekindergarten
 352 instructors. Each course must comprise 5 clock hours and provide
 353 instruction in strategies and techniques to address the age-
 354 appropriate progress of prekindergarten students in developing
 355 emergent literacy skills, including oral communication,
 356 knowledge of print and letters, phonemic and phonological
 357 awareness, and vocabulary and comprehension development,
 358 consistent with the evidence-based content and strategies
 359 identified pursuant to s. 1001.215(8). Each course must also
 360 provide resources containing strategies that allow students with
 361 disabilities and other special needs to derive maximum benefit
 362 from the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program. Successful
 363 completion of an emergent literacy training course approved
 364 under this section satisfies requirements for approved training
 365 in early literacy and language development under ss.
 366 402.305(2)(e)5., 402.313(6), and 402.3131(5).

367 Section 6. Paragraph (a) of subsection (3) of section
 368 1002.67, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

369 1002.67 Performance standards; curricula and
 370 accountability.—

371 (3)(a) Contingent upon legislative appropriation, each
 372 private prekindergarten provider and public school in the
 373 Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program must implement an
 374 evidence-based pre- and post-assessment that has been approved
 375 by rule of the State Board of Education. However, beginning with
 376 the 2022-2023 school year, such providers and public schools
 377 shall use a coordinated screening and progress monitoring system

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378 pursuant to s. 1008.25(8) to meet the requirements of this
 379 subsection.

380 Section 7. Subsections (1) and (5) of section 1002.69,
 381 Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

382 1002.69 Statewide kindergarten screening; kindergarten
 383 readiness rates; state-approved prekindergarten enrollment
 384 screening; good cause exemption.—

385 (1) The department shall adopt a statewide kindergarten
 386 screening that assesses the readiness of each student for
 387 kindergarten based upon the performance standards adopted by the
 388 department under s. 1002.67(1) for the Voluntary Prekindergarten
 389 Education Program. However, beginning with the 2022-2023 school
 390 year, the department, in consultation with the Office of Early
 391 Learning, shall implement a coordinated screening and progress
 392 monitoring system for the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education
 393 Program through grade 8 pursuant to s. 1008.25(8), which must be
 394 used to assess kindergarten readiness consistent with this
 395 subsection. The department shall require that each school
 396 district administer the statewide kindergarten screening to each
 397 kindergarten student in the school district within the first 30
 398 school days of each school year. Nonpublic schools may
 399 administer the statewide kindergarten screening to each
 400 kindergarten student in a nonpublic school who was enrolled in
 401 the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program.

402 (5) The office shall adopt procedures to annually calculate
 403 each private prekindergarten provider's and public school's
 404 kindergarten readiness rate, which must be expressed as the
 405 percentage of the provider's or school's students who are
 406 assessed as ready for kindergarten. The methodology for

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 407 calculating each provider's kindergarten readiness rate must
 408 include student learning gains when available and the percentage
 409 of students who meet all state readiness measures. The rates
 410 must not include students who are not administered the statewide
 411 kindergarten screening. The office shall determine learning
 412 gains using a value-added measure based on growth demonstrated
 413 by the results of the preassessment and postassessment from at
 414 least 2 successive years of administration of the preassessment
 415 and postassessment. However, beginning with the 2022-2023 school
 416 year, a coordinated screening and progress monitoring system
 417 implemented pursuant to s. 1008.25(8) must be used to determine
 418 such learning gains consistent with this subsection.

Section 8. Present subsection (14) of section 1002.83,
 Florida Statutes, is redesignated as subsection (15), and a new
 subsection (14) is added to that section, to read:

1002.83 Early learning coalitions.—

(14) Each early learning coalition shall adopt a best-
practices plan for transitioning prekindergarten students into
kindergarten. The plan must provide for:

(a) Opportunities for prekindergarten students and their
parents to visit schools in which they may be enrolled in
kindergarten.

(b) Written information for parents on school registration
and academic and social expectations for kindergarten.

(c) Meetings at least annually with school districts and
charter schools in the coalition's service area to identify and
address areas for improvement in transitioning prekindergarten
students into kindergarten.

(d) Transferring prekindergarten student information for

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 436 continuity in progress monitoring and the provision of supports.

437
 438 The office shall provide guidelines for successful kindergarten
 439 transitions to early learning coalitions, school districts,
 440 charter schools, and parents to assist with the implementation
 441 of this subsection.

Section 9. Subsection (2) of section 1002.995, Florida
 Statutes, is amended to read:

1002.995 Early learning professional development standards
 and career pathways.—

(2) To the greatest extent possible, the credentials and
 certifications established pursuant to this section shall align
 with the training for K-12 teachers, reading coaches, and school
 administrators ~~principals~~ in s. 1001.215(3).

Section 10. Paragraph (g) of subsection (2) of section
 1003.621, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1003.621 Academically high-performing school districts.—It
 is the intent of the Legislature to recognize and reward school
 districts that demonstrate the ability to consistently maintain
 or improve their high-performing status. The purpose of this
 section is to provide high-performing school districts with
 flexibility in meeting the specific requirements in statute and
 rules of the State Board of Education.

(2) COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTES AND RULES.—Each academically
 high-performing school district shall comply with all of the
 provisions in chapters 1000-1013, and rules of the State Board
 of Education which implement these provisions, pertaining to the
 following:

(g) Those statutes pertaining to planning and budgeting,

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 465 including chapter 1011, except s. 1011.62(9)(d), relating to the
 466 requirement for a comprehensive reading plan. A district that is
 467 exempt from submitting this plan shall be deemed approved to
 468 receive the evidence-based ~~research-based~~ reading instruction
 469 allocation.

470 Section 11. Paragraph (b) of subsection (3) and paragraph
 471 (b) of subsection (5) of section 1004.04, Florida Statutes, are
 472 amended to read:

473 1004.04 Public accountability and state approval for
 474 teacher preparation programs.—

475 (3) INITIAL STATE PROGRAM APPROVAL.—

476 (b) Each teacher preparation program approved by the
 477 Department of Education, as provided for by this section, shall
 478 require students, at a minimum, to meet, ~~at a minimum~~, the
 479 ~~following as prerequisites for admission into the program:~~

480 1. Have a grade point average of at least 2.5 on a 4.0
 481 scale for the general education component of undergraduate
 482 studies or have completed the requirements for a baccalaureate
 483 degree with a minimum grade point average of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale
 484 from any college or university accredited by a regional
 485 accrediting association as defined by State Board of Education
 486 rule or any college or university otherwise approved pursuant to
 487 State Board of Education rule.

488 2. Demonstrate mastery of general knowledge ~~sufficient for~~
 489 ~~entry into the program~~, including the ability to read, write,
 490 and perform in mathematics, by passing the General Knowledge
 491 Test of the Florida Teacher Certification Examination or, for a
 492 graduate level program, obtain a baccalaureate degree from an
 493 institution that is accredited or approved pursuant to the rules

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 494 of the State Board of Education.

495
 496 ~~Each teacher preparation program may waive these admissions~~
 497 ~~requirements for up to 10 percent of the students admitted.~~
 498 ~~Programs shall implement strategies to ensure that students~~
 499 ~~admitted under a waiver receive assistance to demonstrate~~
 500 ~~competencies to successfully meet requirements for certification~~
 501 ~~and shall annually report to the Department of Education the~~
 502 ~~status of each candidate admitted under such a waiver.~~

503 (5) PRESERVICE FIELD EXPERIENCE.—All postsecondary
 504 instructors, school district personnel and instructional
 505 personnel, and school sites preparing instructional personnel
 506 through preservice field experience courses and internships
 507 shall meet special requirements. District school boards may pay
 508 student teachers during their internships.

509 (b)1. All school district personnel and instructional
 510 personnel who supervise or direct teacher preparation students
 511 during field experience courses or internships taking place in
 512 this state in which candidates demonstrate an impact on student
 513 learning growth must have:

514 a. Evidence of "clinical educator" training;~~;~~

515 b. A valid professional certificate issued pursuant to s.
 516 1012.56;~~;~~ ~~and~~

517 c. At least 3 years of teaching experience in
 518 prekindergarten through grade 12; ~~and must have~~

519 d. Earned an effective or highly effective rating on the
 520 prior year's performance evaluation under s. 1012.34 or be a
 521 peer evaluator under the district's evaluation system approved
 522 under s. 1012.34; and

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523 e. Beginning with the 2022-2023 school year, for all such
 524 personnel who supervise or direct teacher preparation students
 525 during internships in kindergarten through grade 3 or who are
 526 enrolled in a teacher preparation program for a certificate area
 527 identified pursuant to s. 1012.585(3)(f), evidence of being
 528 certified or endorsed in reading.

529
 530 The State Board of Education shall approve the training
 531 requirements.

532 2. All instructional personnel who supervise or direct
 533 teacher preparation students during field experience courses or
 534 internships in another state, in which a candidate demonstrates
 535 his or her impact on student learning growth, through a Florida
 536 online or distance program must have received "clinical
 537 educator" training or its equivalent in that state, hold a valid
 538 professional certificate issued by the state in which the field
 539 experience takes place, and have at least 3 years of teaching
 540 experience in prekindergarten through grade 12.

541 3. All instructional personnel who supervise or direct
 542 teacher preparation students during field experience courses or
 543 internships, in which a candidate demonstrates his or her impact
 544 on student learning growth, on a United States military base in
 545 another country through a Florida online or distance program
 546 must have received "clinical educator" training or its
 547 equivalent, hold a valid professional certificate issued by the
 548 United States Department of Defense or a state or territory of
 549 the United States, and have at least 3 years teaching experience
 550 in prekindergarten through grade 12.

551 Section 12. Present subsections (8) and (9) of section

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552 1008.25, Florida Statutes, are redesignated as subsections (9)
 553 and (10), respectively, and paragraph (d) of subsection (5) and
 554 a new subsection (8) are added to that section, and paragraph
 555 (a) of subsection (4), paragraph (c) of subsection (5),
 556 paragraph (a) of subsection (7), and present subsection (8) are
 557 amended, to read:

558 1008.25 Public school student progression; student support;
 559 screening and progress monitoring; reporting requirements.—

560 (4) ASSESSMENT AND SUPPORT.—

561 (a) Each student must participate in the statewide,
 562 standardized assessment program required under ~~by~~ s. 1008.22 and
 563 the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program through grade 8
 564 coordinated screening and progress monitoring system required
 565 under subsection (8). Each student who does not achieve a Level
 566 3 or above on the statewide, standardized English Language Arts
 567 assessment, the statewide, standardized Mathematics assessment,
 568 or the Algebra I EOC assessment must be evaluated to determine
 569 the nature of the student's difficulty, the areas of academic
 570 need, and strategies for providing academic supports to improve
 571 the student's performance.

572 (5) READING DEFICIENCY AND PARENTAL NOTIFICATION.—

573 (c) The parent of any student who exhibits a substantial
 574 deficiency in reading, as described in paragraph (a), must be
 575 notified in writing of the following:

576 1. That his or her child has been identified as having a
 577 substantial deficiency in reading, including a description and
 578 explanation, in terms understandable to the parent, of the exact
 579 nature of the student's difficulty in learning and lack of
 580 achievement in reading.

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581 2. A description of the current services that are provided
582 to the child.

583 3. A description of the proposed intensive interventions
584 and supports that will be provided to the child that are
585 designed to remediate the identified area of reading deficiency.

586 4. That if the child's reading deficiency is not remediated
587 by the end of grade 3, the child must be retained unless he or
588 she is exempt from mandatory retention for good cause.

589 5. Strategies, including multisensory strategies, through a
590 read-at-home plan the parent can use in helping his or her child
591 succeed in reading.

592 6. That the statewide, standardized English Language Arts
593 assessment is not the sole determiner of promotion and that
594 additional evaluations, portfolio reviews, and assessments are
595 available to the child to assist parents and the school district
596 in knowing when a child is reading at or above grade level and
597 ready for grade promotion.

598 7. The district's specific criteria and policies for a
599 portfolio as provided in subparagraph (6)(b)4. and the evidence
600 required for a student to demonstrate mastery of Florida's
601 academic standards for English Language Arts. A parent of a
602 student in grade 3 who is identified anytime during the year as
603 being at risk of retention may request that the school
604 immediately begin collecting evidence for a portfolio.

605 8. The district's specific criteria and policies for
606 midyear promotion. Midyear promotion means promotion of a
607 retained student at any time during the year of retention once
608 the student has demonstrated ability to read at grade level.
609

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610 After initial notification, the school shall apprise the parent
611 at least monthly of the student's progress in response to the
612 intensive interventions and supports. Such communications must
613 be in writing and must explain any additional interventions or
614 supports that will be implemented to accelerate the student's
615 progress if the interventions and supports already being
616 implemented have not resulted in improvement.

617 (d) The Department of Education shall develop a handbook
618 that schools must provide to the parent of a student who is
619 identified as having a substantial reading deficiency. The
620 handbook must be made available in an electronic format that is
621 accessible online and must include the following information:

622 1. An overview of the types of assessments used to identify
623 reading deficiencies and what those assessments measure or do
624 not measure, the frequency with which the assessments are
625 administered, and the requirements for interventions and
626 supports that districts must provide to students who do not make
627 adequate academic progress.

628 2. An overview of the process for initiating and conducting
629 evaluations for exceptional education eligibility. The overview
630 must include an explanation that a diagnosis of a medical
631 condition alone is not sufficient to establish exceptional
632 education eligibility but may be used to document how that
633 condition relates to the student's eligibility determination and
634 may be disclosed in an eligible student's individual education
635 plan when necessary to inform school personnel responsible for
636 implementing the plan.

637 3. Characteristics of conditions associated with learning
638 disorders, including dyslexia, dysgraphia, dyscalculia, and

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639 developmental aphasia.

640 4. A list of resources that support informed parent
 641 involvement in decisionmaking processes for students who have
 642 difficulty in learning.

643 (7) SUCCESSFUL PROGRESSION FOR RETAINED THIRD GRADE
 644 STUDENTS.—

645 (a) Students retained under paragraph (5) (b) must be
 646 provided intensive interventions in reading to ameliorate the
 647 student's specific reading deficiency and prepare the student
 648 for promotion to the next grade. These interventions must
 649 include:

650 1. Evidence-based, explicit, systematic, and multisensory
 651 reading instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency,
 652 vocabulary, and comprehension and other strategies prescribed by
 653 the school district.

654 2. Participation in the school district's summer reading
 655 camp, which must incorporate the instructional and intervention
 656 strategies under subparagraph 1.

657 3. A minimum of 90 minutes of daily, uninterrupted reading
 658 instruction incorporating the instructional and intervention
 659 strategies under subparagraph 1. This instruction may include:

- 660 a. Coordinated integration of content-rich texts in science
 661 and civic literacy ~~social studies~~ within the 90-minute block.
 662 b. Small group instruction.
 663 c. Reduced teacher-student ratios.
 664 d. More frequent progress monitoring.
 665 e. Tutoring or mentoring.
 666 f. Transition classes containing 3rd and 4th grade
 667 students.

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668 g. Extended school day, week, or year.

669 (8) COORDINATED SCREENING AND PROGRESS MONITORING SYSTEM.—

670 (a) The Department of Education, in collaboration with the
 671 Office of Early Learning, shall procure and require the use of a
 672 statewide, standardized coordinated screening and progress
 673 monitoring system for the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education
 674 Program and public schools serving kindergarten through grade 8
 675 students. The system must:

676 1. Measure student progress in the Voluntary
 677 Prekindergarten Education Program through grade 8 in meeting the
 678 appropriate expectations in early literacy and mathematics
 679 skills and in English Language Arts and mathematics standards as
 680 required by ss. 1002.67(1) (a) and 1003.41.

681 2. Measure student performance in oral language
 682 development, phonemic and phonological awareness, knowledge of
 683 print and letters, decoding, fluency, vocabulary, and
 684 comprehension, as applicable by grade level.

685 3. Be a valid, reliable, and developmentally appropriate
 686 computer-adaptive direct instrument that provides screening and
 687 diagnostic capabilities for monitoring student progress and
 688 identifies students who have a substantial deficiency in
 689 reading, including identifying students with characteristics of
 690 dyslexia.

691 4. Provide data for Voluntary Prekindergarten Education
 692 Program accountability as required under s. 1002.67.

693 5. Provide Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program
 694 providers, school districts, schools, and teachers with data and
 695 resources that enhance differentiated instruction and parent
 696 communication.

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697 6. Provide information to the department to aid in the
 698 development of educational programs, policies, and supports for
 699 providers, districts, and schools.

700 (b) Beginning with the 2022-2023 school year, private
 701 Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program providers and public
 702 schools must participate in the screening and progress
 703 monitoring system. The screening and progress monitoring system
 704 must be administered at least three times within a program year
 705 or school year, as applicable, with the first administration
 706 occurring no later than the first 30 instructional days after
 707 the start of the program year or school year pursuant to state
 708 board rule.

709 (c) A Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program student
 710 who exhibits a substantial deficiency in early literacy skills
 711 based upon results under this subsection must be referred to the
 712 school district in which he or she resides and may be eligible
 713 to receive intensive reading interventions after program
 714 completion and before participating in kindergarten. Such
 715 interventions may be paid for using funds from the school
 716 district's evidence-based reading instruction allocation in
 717 accordance with s. 1011.62(9).

718 (d) Screening and progress monitoring system results shall
 719 be reported to the department pursuant to state board rule and
 720 maintained in the department's K-20 data warehouse. Results must
 721 be provided to a student's teacher and parent in a timely manner
 722 as required in paragraph (2) (a).

723 (e) The department, in collaboration with the Office of
 724 Early Learning, shall provide training and support for effective
 725 implementation of the screening and progress monitoring system.

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726 (9)(8) ANNUAL REPORT.-

727 (a) In addition to the requirements in paragraph (5) (b),
 728 each district school board must annually report to the parent of
 729 each student the progress of the student toward achieving state
 730 and district expectations for proficiency in English Language
 731 Arts, science, social studies, and mathematics. The district
 732 school board must report to the parent the student's results on
 733 each statewide, standardized assessment and the screening and
 734 progress monitoring system under subsection (8). The evaluation
 735 of each student's progress must be based upon the student's
 736 classroom work, observations, tests, district and state
 737 assessments, response to intensive interventions provided under
 738 paragraph (5) (a), and other relevant information. Progress
 739 reporting must be provided to the parent in writing in a format
 740 adopted by the district school board.

741 (b) Each district school board must annually publish on the
 742 district website and in the local newspaper the following
 743 information on the prior school year:

744 1. The provisions of this section relating to public school
 745 student progression and the district school board's policies and
 746 procedures on student retention and promotion.

747 2. By grade, the number and percentage of all students in
 748 grades 3 through 10 performing at Levels 1 and 2 on the
 749 statewide, standardized English Language Arts assessment.

750 3. By grade, the number and percentage of all students
 751 retained in kindergarten through grade 10.

752 4. Information on the total number of students who were
 753 promoted for good cause, by each category of good cause as
 754 specified in paragraph (6) (b).

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755 5. Any revisions to the district school board's policies
756 and procedures on student retention and promotion from the prior
757 year.

758 Section 13. Paragraph (a) of subsection (5) of section
759 1008.345, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

760 1008.345 Implementation of state system of school
761 improvement and education accountability.—

762 (5) The commissioner shall annually report to the State
763 Board of Education and the Legislature and recommend changes in
764 state policy necessary to foster school improvement and
765 education accountability. The report shall include:

766 (a) For each school district:

767 1. The percentage of students, by school and grade level,
768 demonstrating learning growth in English Language Arts and
769 mathematics.

770 2. The percentage of students, by school and grade level,
771 in both the highest and lowest quartiles demonstrating learning
772 growth in English Language Arts and mathematics.

773 3. The information contained in the school district's
774 annual report required pursuant to s. 1008.25(9) ~~s. 1008.25(8)~~.

775
776 School reports shall be distributed pursuant to this subsection
777 and s. 1001.42(18)(c) and according to rules adopted by the
778 State Board of Education.

779 Section 14. Section 1008.365, Florida Statutes, is created
780 to read:

781 1008.365 Reading Achievement Initiative for Scholastic
782 Excellence Act.—

783 (1) This section may be cited as the "Reading Achievement

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784 Initiative for Scholastic Excellence Act."

785 (2) The Reading Achievement Initiative for Scholastic
786 Excellence (RAISE) Program is established within the Department
787 of Education to provide instructional supports to school
788 districts, school administrators, and instructional personnel in
789 implementing evidence-based reading instruction and
790 interventions in order to improve student reading achievement.

791 (3) The department shall establish at least 20 literacy
792 support regions and regional support teams, at the direction of
793 a regional literacy support director appointed by the
794 Commissioner of Education, to assist schools with improving low
795 reading scores as provided in this section.

796 (a) A regional literacy support director must be an
797 employee of a school district, successfully demonstrate
798 competence on the evidence-based strategies identified pursuant
799 to s. 1001.215(8) through a statewide, competency-based reading
800 endorsement pathway under s. 1012.586(2), and have the
801 experience and credentials necessary, as determined by the
802 department, to:

803 1. Effectively monitor student reading growth and
804 achievement data;

805 2. Oversee districtwide and schoolwide professional
806 development and planning to establish evidence-based practices
807 among school administrators and instructional personnel;

808 3. Evaluate implementation of evidence-based practices; and
809 4. Manage a regional support team.

810 (b) A regional support team shall report to its regional
811 literacy support director and must consist of individuals who:

812 1. Successfully demonstrate competence on the evidence-

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813 based strategies identified pursuant to s. 1001.215(8) through a
 814 statewide, competency-based reading endorsement pathway under s.
 815 1012.586(2);

816 2. Have substantial experience in teaching and monitoring
 817 student progress data in reading; and

818 3. Have received training necessary to assist with the
 819 delivery of professional development and site-based supports,
 820 including modeling evidence-based practices and providing
 821 feedback to instructional personnel.

822 (4) The department may establish criteria to identify
 823 schools that must receive supports from a regional support team.
 824 However, regardless of its school grade designated pursuant to
 825 s. 1008.34, a school must be identified for supports if 50
 826 percent of its students who take the statewide, standardized
 827 English Language Arts assessment score below a Level 3 for any
 828 grade level, or, for students in kindergarten through grade 3,
 829 if progress monitoring data collected pursuant to s. 1008.25(8)
 830 shows that 50 percent or more of the students are not on track
 831 to pass the statewide, standardized grade 3 English Language
 832 Arts assessment. A school identified for supports under this
 833 section must implement a school improvement plan pursuant to s.
 834 1001.42(18).

835 (5) The department shall provide progress monitoring data
 836 to regional support teams regarding the implementation of
 837 supports. Such supports must include:

838 (a) Professional development, aligned to evidence-based
 839 strategies identified pursuant to s. 1001.215(8), for
 840 appropriate instructional personnel and school administrators
 841 identified by the regional support team.

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842 (b) Assistance with implementing:

843 1. Data-informed instructional decisionmaking using
 844 progress monitoring and other appropriate data.

845 2. Selection and consistent, coordinated use of high-
 846 quality instructional materials and supplemental materials.

847 3. Reading instruction in other core subject area
 848 curricula, with an emphasis on civic literacy.

849 4. A multitiered system of supports in order to provide
 850 students effective interventions and identify students who may
 851 require an evaluation for special educational services,
 852 including identifying characteristics of conditions that affect
 853 phonological processing, such as dyslexia.

854 (c) Evaluating a school's improvement plan for alignment
 855 with the school district's K-12 comprehensive reading plan under
 856 s. 1011.62(9)(d). If the regional support team determines that
 857 the school district's reading plan does not address the school's
 858 need to improve student outcomes, the regional literacy support
 859 director, the district school superintendent, or his or her
 860 designee, and the director of the Just Read, Florida! Office
 861 shall convene a meeting to rectify the deficiencies of the
 862 reading plan.

863 (6) Identification of a school for supports under this
 864 section does not require a school to implement a turnaround
 865 option or take other corrective actions under s. 1008.33.
 866 However, a regional support team may be used to assist with
 867 providing the differentiated matrix of intervention and support
 868 strategies under s. 1008.33, as appropriate. The department may
 869 direct a regional support team to make other forms of assistance
 870 available to school districts and schools.

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871 (7) Once a school's data shows that it no longer meets the
 872 criteria under subsection (4), the school may discontinue
 873 receiving supports and implementing a school improvement plan.
 874 Such supports may continue subject to available resources.

875 (8) As part of the RAISE Program, the department shall
 876 establish a tutoring program and develop training in effective
 877 reading tutoring practices and content, based on evidence-based
 878 practices and aligned to the English Language Arts standards
 879 under s. 1003.41, which prepares eligible high school students
 880 to tutor students in kindergarten through grade 3 in schools
 881 identified under this section, instilling in those students a
 882 love of reading and improving their literacy skills.

883 (a) To be eligible to participate in the tutoring program,
 884 a high school student must be a rising junior or senior who has
 885 a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or higher, has no
 886 history of out-of-school suspensions or expulsions, is on track
 887 to complete all core course requirements to graduate, and has
 888 written recommendations from at least two of his or her present
 889 or former high school teachers of record or extracurricular
 890 activity sponsors.

891 (b) School districts that wish to participate in the
 892 tutoring program must recruit, train, and deploy eligible high
 893 school students using the materials developed under this
 894 section. Tutoring must occur during the school day on school
 895 district property in the presence and under the supervision of
 896 instructional personnel who are school district employees. A
 897 parent must give written permission for his or her child to
 898 receive tutoring through the program.

899 (c) Tutoring may be part of a service-learning course

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900 adopted pursuant to s. 1003.497. Students may earn up to 3
 901 elective credits for high school graduation based on the
 902 verified number of hours the student spends tutoring under the
 903 program. The hours of volunteer service must be documented in
 904 writing, and the document must be signed by the student, the
 905 student's parent or guardian, and an administrator or designee
 906 of the school in which the tutoring occurred. The hours that a
 907 high school student devotes to tutoring may be counted toward
 908 meeting community service requirements for high school
 909 graduation and community service requirements for participation
 910 in the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program as provided in
 911 s. 1003.497(3)(b). The department shall designate a high school
 912 student who provides at least 500 verified hours of tutoring
 913 under the program as a New Worlds Scholar and award the student
 914 with a pin indicating such designation.

915 (9) The State Board of Education shall adopt rules to
 916 administer this section.

917 Section 15. Paragraphs (b) and (d) of subsection (6) and
 918 subsections (9) and (11) of section 1011.62, Florida Statutes,
 919 are amended to read:

920 1011.62 Funds for operation of schools.—If the annual
 921 allocation from the Florida Education Finance Program to each
 922 district for operation of schools is not determined in the
 923 annual appropriations act or the substantive bill implementing
 924 the annual appropriations act, it shall be determined as
 925 follows:

926 (6) CATEGORICAL FUNDS.—

927 (b) If a district school board finds and declares in a
 928 resolution adopted at a regular meeting of the school board that

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929 the funds received for any of the following categorical
 930 appropriations are urgently needed to maintain school board
 931 specified academic classroom instruction or improve school
 932 safety, the school board may consider and approve an amendment
 933 to the school district operating budget transferring the
 934 identified amount of the categorical funds to the appropriate
 935 account for expenditure:

- 936 1. Funds for student transportation.
- 937 2. Funds for evidence-based ~~research-based~~ reading
 938 instruction if the required additional hour of instruction
 939 beyond the normal school day for each day of the entire school
 940 year has been provided for the students in each low-performing
 941 elementary school in the district pursuant to paragraph (9) (a).
- 942 3. Funds for instructional materials if all instructional
 943 material purchases necessary to provide updated materials that
 944 are aligned with applicable state standards and course
 945 descriptions and that meet statutory requirements of content and
 946 learning have been completed for that fiscal year, but no sooner
 947 than March 1. Funds available after March 1 may be used to
 948 purchase hardware for student instruction.
- 949 4. Funds for the guaranteed allocation as provided in
 950 subparagraph (1) (e)2.
- 951 5. Funds for the supplemental academic instruction
 952 allocation as provided in paragraph (1) (f).
- 953 6. Funds for the Florida digital classrooms allocation as
 954 provided in subsection (12).
- 955 7. Funds for the federally connected student supplement as
 956 provided in subsection (13).
- 957 8. Funds for class size reduction as provided in s.

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958 1011.685.

959 (d) If a district school board transfers funds from its
 960 ~~evidence-based research-based~~ reading instruction allocation,
 961 the board must also submit to the Department of Education an
 962 amendment describing the changes that the district is making to
 963 its reading plan approved pursuant to paragraph (9) (d).

964 (9) EVIDENCE-BASED ~~RESEARCH-BASED~~ READING INSTRUCTION
 965 ALLOCATION.—

966 (a) The evidence-based ~~research-based~~ reading instruction
 967 allocation is created to provide comprehensive reading
 968 instruction to students in kindergarten through grade 12,
 969 including certain students who have completed the Voluntary
 970 Prekindergarten Education Program and who exhibit a substantial
 971 deficiency in early literacy skills under s. 1008.25(8)(c). Each
 972 school district that has one or more of the 300 lowest-
 973 performing elementary schools based on a 3-year average of the
 974 state reading assessment data must use the school's portion of
 975 the allocation to provide an additional hour per day of
 976 intensive reading instruction for the students in each school.
 977 The additional hour may be provided within the school day.
 978 Students enrolled in these schools who earned a level 4 or level
 979 5 score on the statewide, standardized English Language Arts
 980 assessment for the previous school year may participate in the
 981 additional hour of instruction. Exceptional student education
 982 centers may not be included in the 300 schools. The intensive
 983 reading instruction delivered in this additional hour shall
 984 include: evidence-based ~~research-based~~ reading instruction that
 985 has been proven to accelerate progress of students exhibiting a
 986 reading deficiency; differentiated instruction based on

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987 screening, diagnostic, progress monitoring, or student
 988 assessment data to meet students' specific reading needs;
 989 explicit and systematic reading strategies to develop phonemic
 990 awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension, with
 991 more extensive opportunities for guided practice, error
 992 correction, and feedback; and the coordinated integration of
 993 civic literacy ~~social studies~~, science, and mathematics-text
 994 reading, text discussion, and writing in response to reading.

995 (b) Funds for comprehensive, evidence-based ~~research-based~~
 996 reading instruction shall be allocated annually to each school
 997 district in the amount provided in the General Appropriations
 998 Act. Each eligible school district shall receive the same
 999 minimum amount as specified in the General Appropriations Act,
 1000 and any remaining funds shall be distributed to eligible school
 1001 districts based on each school district's proportionate share of
 1002 K-12 base funding.

1003 (c) Funds allocated under this subsection must be used to
 1004 provide a system of comprehensive reading instruction to
 1005 students enrolled in the K-12 programs, which may include the
 1006 following:

1007 1. An additional hour per day of evidence-based intensive
 1008 reading instruction to students in the 300 lowest-performing
 1009 elementary schools by teachers and reading specialists who have
 1010 demonstrated effectiveness in teaching reading as required in
 1011 paragraph (a).

1012 2. Kindergarten through grade 5 evidence-based reading
 1013 ~~intervention teachers to provide~~ intensive reading interventions
 1014 provided by reading intervention teachers ~~intervention~~ during
 1015 the school day and in the required extra hour for students

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1016 identified as having a substantial reading deficiency.

1017 3. Highly qualified reading coaches to specifically support
 1018 teachers in making instructional decisions based on student
 1019 data, and improve teacher delivery of effective reading
 1020 instruction, intervention, and reading in the content areas
 1021 based on student need.

1022 4. Professional development for school district teachers in
 1023 scientifically researched and evidence-based ~~based~~ reading
 1024 instruction, including strategies to teach reading in content
 1025 areas and with an emphasis on technical and informational text,
 1026 to help school district teachers earn a certification or an
 1027 endorsement in reading.

1028 5. Summer reading camps, using only teachers or other
 1029 district personnel who are certified or endorsed in reading
 1030 consistent with s. 1008.25(7)(b)3., for all students in
 1031 kindergarten through grade 2 who demonstrate a reading
 1032 deficiency as determined by district and state assessments, and
 1033 students in grades 3 through 5 who score at Level 1 on the
 1034 statewide, standardized English Language Arts assessment.

1035 6. Scientifically researched and evidence-based
 1036 supplemental instructional materials ~~that are grounded in~~
 1037 ~~scientifically based reading research~~ as identified by the Just
 1038 Read, Florida! Office pursuant to s. 1001.215(8).

1039 7. Evidence-based intensive reading interventions for
 1040 students in kindergarten through grade 12 who have been
 1041 identified as having a substantial reading deficiency or who are
 1042 reading below grade level as determined by the statewide,
 1043 standardized English Language Arts assessment.

1044 (d)1. Annually, by a date determined by the Department of

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 1045 Education but before May 1, school districts shall submit a K-12
 1046 comprehensive reading plan for the specific use of the evidence-
 1047 ~~based research-based~~ reading instruction allocation in the
 1048 format prescribed by the department for review and approval by
 1049 the Just Read, Florida! Office created pursuant to s. 1001.215.
 1050 The plan format shall be developed with input from school
 1051 district personnel, including teachers and principals, and shall
 1052 provide for intensive reading interventions identified through a
 1053 root-cause analysis of student performance data and reflection
 1054 tool developed by the department to evaluate the effectiveness
 1055 of interventions implemented in the prior year. Intensive
 1056 reading interventions must be delivered by instructional
 1057 personnel who are certified or endorsed in reading and must
 1058 incorporate evidence-based strategies identified by the Just
 1059 Read, Florida! Office pursuant to s. 1001.215(8).

1060 2. By July 1 of each year, the department shall release to
 1061 each school district with an approved plan its allocation of
 1062 appropriated funds ~~The plan annually submitted by school~~
 1063 ~~districts shall be deemed approved unless the department rejects~~
 1064 ~~the plan on or before June 1.~~ If a school district and the Just
 1065 Read, Florida! Office cannot reach agreement on the contents of
 1066 the plan, the school district may appeal to the State Board of
 1067 Education for resolution. School districts shall be allowed
 1068 reasonable flexibility in designing their plans and shall be
 1069 encouraged to offer reading intervention through innovative
 1070 methods, including career academies. ~~The plan format shall be~~
 1071 ~~developed with input from school district personnel, including~~
 1072 ~~teachers and principals, and shall provide for intensive reading~~
 1073 ~~interventions through integrated curricula, provided that,~~

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 1074 ~~beginning with the 2020-2021 school year, the interventions are~~
 1075 ~~delivered by a teacher who is certified or endorsed in reading.~~
 1076 ~~Such interventions must incorporate strategies identified by the~~
 1077 ~~Just Read, Florida! Office pursuant to s. 1001.215(8). No later~~
 1078 ~~than July 1 annually, the department shall release the school~~
 1079 ~~district's allocation of appropriated funds to those districts~~
 1080 ~~having approved plans. A school district that spends 100 percent~~
 1081 ~~of this allocation on its approved plan shall be deemed to have~~
 1082 ~~been in compliance with the plan.~~ The department shall ~~may~~
 1083 withhold funds upon a determination that reading instruction
 1084 allocation funds are not being used to implement the approved
 1085 plan. The department shall evaluate ~~monitor and track~~ the
 1086 implementation of each district plan, including conducting site
 1087 visits and collecting specific data on expenditures and reading
 1088 improvement results. By February 1 of each year, the department
 1089 shall report its findings to the Legislature and the State Board
 1090 of Education, including any recommendations for improving
 1091 implementation of evidence-based reading and intervention
 1092 strategies in classrooms.

1093 3.2- Each school district that has a school designated as
 1094 one of the 300 lowest-performing elementary schools as specified
 1095 in paragraph (a) shall specifically delineate in the
 1096 comprehensive reading plan, or in an addendum to the
 1097 comprehensive reading plan, the implementation design and
 1098 reading intervention strategies that will be used for the
 1099 required additional hour of reading instruction. The term
 1100 "reading intervention" includes evidence-based strategies
 1101 frequently used to remediate reading deficiencies and also
 1102 includes individual instruction, tutoring, mentoring, or the use

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1103 of technology that targets specific reading skills and
1104 abilities.

1105
1106 For purposes of this subsection, the term "evidence-based" means
1107 demonstrating a statistically significant effect on improving
1108 student outcomes or other relevant outcomes as provided in 20
1109 U.S.C. s. 8101(21)(A)(i).

1110 (11) VIRTUAL EDUCATION CONTRIBUTION.—The Legislature may
1111 annually provide in the Florida Education Finance Program a
1112 virtual education contribution. The amount of the virtual
1113 education contribution shall be the difference between the
1114 amount per FTE established in the General Appropriations Act for
1115 virtual education and the amount per FTE for each district and
1116 the Florida Virtual School, which may be calculated by taking
1117 the sum of the base FEEP allocation, the discretionary local
1118 effort, the state-funded discretionary contribution, the
1119 discretionary millage compression supplement, the evidence-based
1120 ~~research-based~~ reading instruction allocation, the teacher
1121 salary increase allocation, and the instructional materials
1122 allocation, and then dividing by the total unweighted FTE. This
1123 difference shall be multiplied by the virtual education
1124 unweighted FTE for programs and options identified in s.
1125 1002.455 and the Florida Virtual School and its franchises to
1126 equal the virtual education contribution and shall be included
1127 as a separate allocation in the funding formula.

1128 Section 16. Subsection (2) of section 1011.67, Florida
1129 Statutes, is amended to read:

1130 1011.67 Funds for instructional materials.—

1131 (2) Annually by July 1 and before the release of

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1132 instructional materials funds, each district school
1133 superintendent shall certify to the Commissioner of Education
1134 that the district school board has approved a comprehensive
1135 staff development plan that supports fidelity of implementation
1136 of instructional materials programs, including verification that
1137 training was provided; that the materials are being implemented
1138 as designed; and, beginning July 1, 2021, for core reading
1139 materials and reading intervention materials used in
1140 kindergarten through grade 5, that the materials meet the
1141 requirements of s. 1001.215(8). Such instructional materials, as
1142 evaluated and identified pursuant to s. 1001.215(4), may be
1143 purchased by the school district with funds under this section
1144 without undergoing the adoption procedures under s.
1145 1006.40(4)(b). This subsection does not preclude school
1146 districts from purchasing or using other materials to supplement
1147 reading instruction and provide additional skills practice.

1148 Section 17. Paragraph (g) is added to subsection (3) of
1149 section 1012.585, Florida Statutes, to read:

1150 1012.585 Process for renewal of professional certificates.—

1151 (3) For the renewal of a professional certificate, the
1152 following requirements must be met:

1153 (g) A teacher may earn inservice points only once during
1154 each 5-year validity period for any mandatory training topic
1155 that is not linked to student learning or professional growth.

1156 Section 18. Section 1012.586, Florida Statutes, is amended
1157 to read:

1158 1012.586 Additions or changes to certificates; duplicate
1159 certificates; reading endorsement pathways.—

1160 (1) A school district may process via a Department of

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1161 Education website certificates for the following applications of
1162 public school employees:

1163 ~~(a)(1)~~ Addition of a subject coverage or endorsement to a
1164 valid Florida certificate on the basis of the completion of the
1165 appropriate subject area testing requirements of s.
1166 1012.56(5) (a) or the completion of the requirements of an
1167 approved school district program or the inservice components for
1168 an endorsement.

1169 ~~1.(a)~~ To reduce duplication, the department may recommend
1170 the consolidation of endorsement areas and requirements to the
1171 State Board of Education.

1172 ~~2.(b)~~ By July 1, 2018, and At least once every 5 years
1173 thereafter, the department shall conduct a review of existing
1174 subject coverage or endorsement requirements in the elementary,
1175 reading, and exceptional student educational areas. The review
1176 must include reciprocity requirements for out-of-state
1177 certificates and requirements for demonstrating competency in
1178 the reading instruction professional development topics listed
1179 in s. 1012.98(4) (b)11. The review must also consider the award
1180 of an endorsement to an individual who holds a certificate
1181 issued by an internationally recognized organization that
1182 establishes standards for providing evidence-based interventions
1183 to struggling readers or who completes a postsecondary program
1184 that is accredited by such organization. Any such certificate or
1185 program must require an individual who completes the certificate
1186 or program to demonstrate competence in reading intervention
1187 strategies through clinical experience. At the conclusion of
1188 each review, the department shall recommend to the state board
1189 changes to the subject coverage or endorsement requirements

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1190 based upon any identified instruction or intervention strategies
1191 proven to improve student reading performance. This subparagraph
1192 ~~paragraph~~ does not authorize the state board to establish any
1193 new certification subject coverage.

1194 ~~(b)(2)~~ A reissued certificate to reflect a name change.

1195 ~~(c)(3)~~ A duplicate certificate to replace a lost or damaged
1196 certificate.

1197

1198 The employing school district shall charge the employee a fee
1199 not to exceed the amount charged by the Department of Education
1200 for such services. Each district school board shall retain a
1201 portion of the fee as defined in the rules of the State Board of
1202 Education. The portion sent to the department shall be used for
1203 maintenance of the technology system, the web application, and
1204 posting and mailing of the certificate.

1205 (2) (a) By the beginning of the 2022-2023 school year, the
1206 department shall adopt one or more statewide, competency-based
1207 pathways by which instructional personnel may earn a reading
1208 endorsement. A pathway adopted by the department must allow a
1209 candidate to complete coursework online and demonstrate mastery
1210 of each endorsement competency either in person or remotely. The
1211 department shall place on each participant's educator
1212 certificate a microcredential for each competency module the
1213 candidate successfully completes.

1214 (b) As part of adopting a pathway pursuant to paragraph
1215 (a), the department shall review the competencies for the
1216 reading endorsement for alignment with evidence-based
1217 instructional and intervention practices rooted in the science
1218 of reading, consistent with s. 1001.215(3), and recommend

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1219 changes to the State Board of Education. Recommended changes
 1220 must address identification of the characteristics of conditions
 1221 such as dyslexia, implementation of evidence-based classroom
 1222 instruction and interventions, and effective progress
 1223 monitoring. By July 1, 2023, each school district reading
 1224 endorsement add-on program must be resubmitted for approval by
 1225 the department consistent with this paragraph.

1226 (c) Beginning July 1, 2024, instructional personnel may not
 1227 earn a reading endorsement solely by achieving a passing score
 1228 on the K-12 reading certification subject area assessment.

1229 Section 19. Subsection (5) of section 1012.98, Florida
 1230 Statutes, is amended to read:

1231 1012.98 School Community Professional Development Act.—

1232 (5) Each district school board shall provide funding for
 1233 the professional development system as required by s. 1011.62
 1234 and the General Appropriations Act, and shall direct
 1235 expenditures from other funding sources to continuously
 1236 strengthen the system in order to increase student achievement
 1237 and support instructional staff in enhancing rigor and relevance
 1238 in the classroom. The department shall identify professional
 1239 development opportunities that require the teacher to
 1240 demonstrate proficiency in a specific classroom practice, with
 1241 priority given to implementing evidence-based reading
 1242 instructional and intervention strategies identified pursuant to
 1243 s. 1001.215(8). A school district may coordinate its
 1244 professional development program with that of another district,
 1245 with an educational consortium, or with a Florida College System
 1246 institution or university, especially in preparing and educating
 1247 personnel. Each district school board shall make available

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1248 inservice activities to instructional personnel of nonpublic
 1249 schools in the district and the state certified teachers who are
 1250 not employed by the district school board on a fee basis not to
 1251 exceed the cost of the activity per all participants.

1252 Section 20. Paragraph (e) is added to subsection (1) of
 1253 section 1012.986, Florida Statutes, to read:

1254 1012.986 William Cecil Golden Professional Development
 1255 Program for School Leaders.—

1256 (1) There is established the William Cecil Golden
 1257 Professional Development Program for School Leaders to provide
 1258 high standards and sustained support for principals as
 1259 instructional leaders. The program shall consist of a
 1260 collaborative network of state and national professional
 1261 leadership organizations to respond to instructional leadership
 1262 needs throughout the state. The network shall support the human-
 1263 resource development needs of principals, principal leadership
 1264 teams, and candidates for principal leadership positions using
 1265 the framework of leadership standards adopted by the State Board
 1266 of Education, the Southern Regional Education Board, and the
 1267 National Staff Development Council. The goal of the network
 1268 leadership program is to:

1269 (e) Support, through training on observation and evaluation
 1270 practices aligned to the science of reading, the professional
 1271 growth of instructional personnel who provide reading
 1272 instruction and interventions.

1273 Section 21. This act shall take effect July 1, 2021.