

STORAGE NAME: h0239.edk
DATE: January 31, 2000

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION K-12
ANALYSIS**

BILL #: HB 239
RELATING TO: College Fast Start Program
SPONSOR(S): Representative Wise
TIED BILL(S): None

ORIGINATING COMMITTEE(S)/COMMITTEE(S) OF REFERENCE:

- (1) EDUCATION K-12
 - (2) COMMUNITY COLLEGES AND CAREER PREP
 - (3) EDUCATION APPROPRIATIONS
 - (4)
 - (5)
-

I. SUMMARY:

HB 239 establishes the College Fast Start Program (Fast Start) to increase the number of students *with disabilities* who, upon graduation from high school, are admitted to and successfully complete an associate in arts degree, an associate in science degree, or a workforce development program. The College Fast Start Program is modeled after the College Reach-Out Program (CROP), which is a statewide competitive grant program for institutions to help economically and educationally disadvantaged students obtain a college education.

The College Fast Start Program targets students in grades 6 through 12 who have disabilities, as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act. Fast Start requires the Florida Governor's Alliance for the Employment of Disabled Citizens (Alliance), in cooperation with community colleges, independent postsecondary institutions, high schools, businesses, and agencies serving youth with disabilities to sponsor programs to develop leadership skills and provide career counseling, motivation, and grants for internships to further prepare students with disabilities for postsecondary education and employment opportunities.

HB 239 establishes a ten member advisory council to review each proposal and make recommendations to the Alliance concerning the order of priority for funding. Programs selected by the Alliance must submit interim and end-of-the-year reports, containing specific data including performance outcomes, to the Alliance. The Alliance, in turn, must submit evaluative reports to the Legislature by February 15th of each year.

Future funding for the College Fast Start Program is subject to the General Appropriations Act. The Florida Department of Education (DOE) estimates that approximately \$80,000-\$83,000 per year will be required by the program's administrating entity for recurring salary and administrative costs.

The effective date of the bill is July 1, 2000.

II. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS:

A. DOES THE BILL SUPPORT THE FOLLOWING PRINCIPLES:

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|--|---|
| 1. <u>Less Government</u> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | N/A <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. <u>Lower Taxes</u> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. <u>Individual Freedom</u> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. <u>Personal Responsibility</u> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. <u>Family Empowerment</u> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

For any principle that received a "no" above, please explain:

HB 239 creates a 10 member advisory council. The advisory council is responsible for reviewing each proposal and recommending an order of priority for funding the proposals to the Alliance.

B. PRESENT SITUATION:

The Americans with Disabilities Act defines individuals with disabilities as those "who have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities." (42 U.S.C. s. 12102(2)(A)) According to the Florida Department of Education (DOE), there were 2,331,958 public school students enrolled in fall 1998. A total of 293,966 of these students, or approximately 12.5%, were recorded as having some type of disability.

Current Programs For Students With Disabilities

There are several programs in Florida that help students with disabilities make the transition from high school to work or college. At the federal level, all school districts accepting funds under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) are required to provide students with disabilities (aged 14 and up) with *individualized* transition services, which can include a multitude of vocational education options.

The ABLE Trust / Florida Governor's Alliance for the Employment of Disabled Citizens

The Able Trust, also known as the Florida Endowment Foundation for Vocational Rehabilitation, was created by the Legislature in 1990 to fund programs that assist disabled citizens obtain training and employment and to promote planning, research, and policy development for issues related to the employment and training of disabled citizens (s. 413.615, F.S.). In 1997, the late Governor Chiles designated the Able Trust to be the Florida Governor's Alliance for the Employment of Disabled Citizens (Alliance) by Executive Order 97-57. Governor Bush, via Executive Order 99-338, renewed the Able Trust's designation as the Alliance and charged it with promoting the following initiatives:

1. National promotion of the State of Florida as an innovative leader in the employment of citizens with disabilities;

2. Promotion of the employability of citizens with disabilities in Florida, and by that promotion, the achievement of results in employing persons with disabilities;
3. Represent the Governor of Florida with the President's Committee on the Employment of People with Disabilities and other entities;
4. The maintenance of positive liaisons with the President's Committee and statewide agencies serving citizens with disabilities;
5. Initiate business and corporate support for hiring citizens with disabilities and the provision of information and referrals to the business and corporate communities;
6. Initiate and support linkages with the corporate and business communities and young persons with disabilities to provide employment opportunities for young persons with disabilities;
7. Provision of information and referrals to the disability community and to the general public to educate and facilitate the employment and related needs of citizens with disabilities; [and]
8. Policy review and recommendation to the Governor.

The Alliance designation of the Able Trust expires December 31, 2000.

The Alliance administers High School/High Tech Centers (HS/HT) throughout Florida. HS/HT is a national program developed in conjunction with public high schools, community colleges and local businesses to educate and train high school students with various types of disabilities in computer technology, biology, marine biology, and other programs. Participating HS/HT businesses may offer internships, on-the-job-training, and other outreach opportunities to students with disabilities.

The Alliance also annually sponsors a Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) for high school students with disabilities. The Alliance pays all expenses to bring 30-50 students with disabilities to Tallahassee for the week-long YLF which may include: college preparation and informational seminars, speakers, meetings with Legislators, career training, independence training, social activities, and other vocational enrichment programs.

Scholarship Tuition for At-Risk Students (STARS)

The Florida Prepaid Tuition Scholarship Program, created in s. 240.552, F.S., was established to provide economically disadvantaged youth with prepaid post-secondary tuition scholarships. The Florida Prepaid College Foundation, Inc., a quasi-public foundation, has designated the tuition scholarship program as the Scholarship Tuition for At-Risk Students (STARS). The STARS program attempts to reach students at an impressionable age and awards students a prepaid college tuition scholarship for meeting certain school-related requirements and remaining drug and crime free. According to the STARS guidelines, eligible students must be economically disadvantaged and at-risk at the time of selection. If a student is eligible for free or reduced lunch, he or she is considered to be economically disadvantaged. At-risk students include those enrolled in a drop-out prevention program, or with a history of low test scores, high absenteeism, or maintaining a grade point average less than that required to graduate high school and receive a diploma.

The STARS program does not require benefactors to keep data regarding the characteristics of recipients. Therefore, it is unknown how many of the 7,400 students who received a scholarship from 1989 to the present were disabled.

College Reach-Out Program (CROP)

The College Reach-Out Program (CROP), created in s. 240.61, F.S., is a statewide competitive grant program that encourages businesses, public schools, colleges, and/or universities to collaborate on programs which provide incentives, constant personal contact, and support for economically disadvantaged students in grades 6 through 12 to pursue a college education and obtain a postsecondary degree. Students qualifying for free or reduced lunch are eligible to participate in CROP. The Florida Department of Education (DOE) indicates that there were 6,972 participant students in CROP during the 1996-97 school year, and 263 of those participants (nearly 4%) were students with disabilities.

C. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

HB 239 creates the College Fast Start Program (Fast Start) to increase the number of students with disabilities in grades 6 through 12 who, upon high school graduation, are admitted to and complete an associate degree in arts or science, or a workforce development program. The College Fast Start Program is modeled after the College Reach Out Program (CROP), and targets students with disabilities as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act. Program participants, defined as a community college, public university, independent postsecondary institution, high school, agency serving youth with disabilities, or a consortium of these, must provide students with disabilities consistent contact, from the time of selection for participation until enrollment in a postsecondary education institution, to assist in required course selection, occupational forecasting for future job availability, and requirements for those positions. Participating institutions must also provide on-campus academic or job training activities, job profiling and career counseling activities, as well as opportunities for the students to interact with business leaders, employers, mentors, tutors, or role models. An advisory committee of high school and junior high school personnel and business leaders must be established to assist each participant with implementation of the program.

Proposal Requirements

Program participants may submit a proposal to the Florida Governor's Alliance for the Employment of Disabled Citizens (Alliance). Each proposal must contain the following information:

- ▶ A statement of purpose, including a description of need and expected results of the program.
- ▶ Identification of the service area, including names of the schools to be served, community and school demographics of students with disabilities, and the number of high school graduates with disabilities.
- ▶ Identification of existing programs for providing employment training for persons with disabilities.
- ▶ A description of the proposed training and modifications needed to accommodate students who would participate in the program. At least 40 percent of the students recruited in any one year must be in grades 6 through 9.
- ▶ A description of program activities, which must support the following goals:
 - motivate students to pursue a postsecondary education;
 - develop students' basic learning and leadership skills; and

- develop collaboration with the STARS program.
- ▶ An evaluation component that provides for the collection, maintenance, retrieval, and analysis of data from the program.

Criteria for priority proposals

The Alliance must give priority to proposals that:

- ▶ are submitted by a postsecondary institution and a business,
- ▶ supplement state funds with other resources,
- ▶ demonstrate an understanding of the need to accommodate students with disabilities,
- ▶ are innovative and diverse in activities,
- ▶ provide matching contributions,
- ▶ demonstrate interest in cultural diversity and address unmet regional employment needs, and
- ▶ identify students not already enrolled in similar programs.

Advisory Council

The bill creates a 10 member advisory council to review program participant proposal applications. The council must include:

- ▶ three members with disabilities, appointed by the Governor;
- ▶ two representatives of private or community organizations, one each appointed by the Speaker of the House and President of the Senate;
- ▶ one representative of the State University System, appointed by the chair of the Board of Regents;
- ▶ one representative of the Community College System, appointed by the chair of the State Board of Community Colleges;
- ▶ one representative of the Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida, appointed by the president of the Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida;
- ▶ one representative from a public school district, appointed by the Commissioner of Education; and
- ▶ one representative from the Postsecondary Education Planning Commission, appointed by the chair of the commission.

Members will serve three-year terms and may serve for no more than two consecutive terms. Members of the council are entitled to per diem and travel expenses while performing council duties.

Funding

Future funding for the College Fast Start Program is subject to the General Appropriations Act. Approved programs must be funded competitively according to the following methodology:

- ▶ Eighty percent of the funds appropriated must be distributed as grants to projects that include summer business internships and a minimum number of hours of academic instructional and developmental activities, career counseling, and personal counseling.
- ▶ Subject to legislative appropriations, funds for the continuation of projects that satisfy the minimum requirements must increase each year by the same percentage as the rate of inflation. Projects that have been funded for three consecutive years must have an institutional cash match of at least 50 percent of

the total cost of the project over the three year period; otherwise, there shall be no consideration for continued funding.

Reporting Requirements

HB 239 requires interim reports to be submitted by each program participant to the Alliance on or before February 15 of each year. The bill requires end-of-the-year reports to be submitted by each program participant to the Alliance on or before October 15 of each year.

End-of-the-year reports must include:

- ▶ An itemization of program expenditures by funding category;
- ▶ The number of students participating by grade level, gender, race, and disability;
- ▶ The student identification number, social security number, the name of the school attended, the gender, ethnicity, grade level, and GPA of each student participant at the time of entry into the program;
- ▶ The grade point average, grade, and promotion status of each student participant at the end of the academic year and notification of any suspension or expulsion;
- ▶ The number and percentage of high school participants who satisfactorily complete 2 sequential years of foreign language and Levels 2 and 3 of mathematics and science courses;
- ▶ The number and percentage of participants eligible for high school graduation who receive a standard high school diploma or a high school equivalency diploma;
- ▶ The number and percentage of 12th grade participants who are accepted for enrollment and who enroll in a postsecondary institution and the program in which they are enrolled;
- ▶ The number of student participants who receive scholarships, grant aid, and work-study awards;
- ▶ The number and percentage of participants who enroll in a postsecondary institution and fail to achieve a passing score on college placement tests;
- ▶ The number and percentage of participants who enroll in a postsecondary institution and have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale, or its equivalent, by the end of the second semester;
- ▶ The number of students with disabilities participating in the project and the nature of their disability;
- ▶ A statement of how the program met the three goals of: motivating students to pursue a postsecondary education, developing students' basic learning and leadership skills, and developing collaboration with the STARS program;
- ▶ A brief description and analysis of program characteristics and activities critical to program success;
- ▶ A description of the cooperation received from other units, organizations, businesses, or agencies; and
- ▶ An explanation of the program's outcomes.

HB 239 requires the Alliance to submit a report to the Governor, President of the Senate, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Commissioner of Education that evaluates the effectiveness of the College Fast Start Program by February 15 of each year. The report must be based upon information provided by program participants, the Board of Regents, the State Board of Community Colleges, and the Division of Workforce Development. To the extent feasible, the performance of Fast Start participants must be compared to the performance of non-participating students in public schools and postsecondary institutions.

D. SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS:

Section 1: Creates section 239.515, F.S., to establish the College Fast Start Program, provides legislative intent, defines terms used in the bill, provides application procedures for participation in the program, provides requirements that programs must meet in order to be approved, creates a ten member advisory council to review proposals and recommend an order of priority funding, establishes requirements for advisory council membership, provides for funding of the program, provides the methodology for competitive funding of approved programs, provides the requirements for the continuation of funding for programs, requires an interim report to the Governor's Alliance for the Employment of Disabled Citizens, requires an end-of-year report to the Alliance, requires the Alliance and the Postsecondary Education Planning Commission to develop planning specifications and procedures for the transmission of such data, and requires the Alliance to report to the Governor, the Legislature, and the Commissioner of Education annually on the effectiveness of the program.

Section 2: Provides the effective date of July 1, 2000.

III. FISCAL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT:

A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE GOVERNMENT:

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

The Florida Department of Education (DOE) estimates that the state will need to provide the administrating entity with the following recurring cost amounts for salaries and administration during the first three years of the program:

2000-2001
\$80,524

2001-2002
\$80,940

2002-2003
\$83,368

B. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:

1. Revenues:

Competitive grants, if received, will provide additional revenue to participants that may incur additional expenditures from implementation of the College Fast Start program.

2. Expenditures:

In order to be given preference for approval, the potential program participant must match the grant funds equally in cash or services. In addition, projects funded for three consecutive years must have a cumulative cash match of not less than 50 percent of the total three year cost; otherwise, there shall be no consideration for continued funding.

C. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:

None.

D. FISCAL COMMENTS:

The bill *requires* the 2000 Legislature to appropriate an unspecified amount for the Fast Start program in the 2000-2001 budget.

IV. CONSEQUENCES OF ARTICLE VII, SECTION 18 OF THE FLORIDA CONSTITUTION:

A. APPLICABILITY OF THE MANDATES PROVISION:

This bill does not require counties or municipalities to spend funds or to take an action requiring the expenditure of funds.

B. REDUCTION OF REVENUE RAISING AUTHORITY:

The bill does not reduce the authority that municipalities or counties have to raise revenues in the aggregate.

C. REDUCTION OF STATE TAX SHARED WITH COUNTIES AND MUNICIPALITIES:

This bill does not reduce the percentage of a state tax shared with counties or municipalities.

V. COMMENTS:

A. CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES:

None.

B. RULE-MAKING AUTHORITY:

None.

C. OTHER COMMENTS:

The Americans with Disabilities Act defines an individual with a disability more broadly than the current Florida Department of Education classifications, which are derived from the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. The bill sponsor is proposing a strike all amendment to provide consistency with current educational disability classifications, and to make technical modifications.

VI. AMENDMENTS OR COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE CHANGES:

None.

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VII. SIGNATURES:

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION K-12:

Prepared by:

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