

By Representative Wise

1                                   A bill to be entitled  
2           An act relating to the College Fast Start  
3           Program; creating s. 239.515, F.S.;  
4           establishing the College Fast Start Program;  
5           providing legislative intent; defining terms;  
6           providing procedures for application to  
7           participate in the program; providing  
8           guidelines for program approval; providing  
9           requirements for approved programs; requiring  
10          an advisory council to review proposals and  
11          recommend an order of priority for funding;  
12          providing membership of the advisory council;  
13          providing for funding of the program; providing  
14          methodology for competitive funding of approved  
15          programs; providing requirements for the  
16          continuation of funding for programs; requiring  
17          an interim report to the Florida Governor's  
18          Alliance for the Employment of Disabled  
19          Citizens; requiring an annual end-of-the-year  
20          report to the alliance; requiring the alliance  
21          and the Postsecondary Education Planning  
22          Commission to develop specifications and  
23          procedures for the transmission of such data;  
24          requiring the alliance to report to the  
25          Governor, the Legislature, and the Commissioner  
26          of Education annually on the effectiveness of  
27          the program; providing an effective date.

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29 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:  
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1 Section 1. Section 239.515, Florida Statutes, is  
2 created to read:

3 239.515 College Fast Start Program.--

4 (1) There is established a College Fast Start Program  
5 to increase the number of students with disabilities in grades  
6 6 through 12 who, upon high school graduation, are admitted to  
7 and successfully complete an associate in arts degree or an  
8 associate in science degree or a workforce development  
9 program. The goal of the program is the completion of a degree  
10 or occupational completion points by, and placement into  
11 competitive employment of, students with disabilities defined  
12 by the Americans With Disabilities Act who otherwise would be  
13 unlikely to seek admission to a community college, state  
14 university, or independent postsecondary vocational  
15 institution without special support and recruitment efforts.  
16 As part of the College Fast Start Program, the Florida  
17 Governor's Alliance for the Employment of Disabled Citizens,  
18 in cooperation with community colleges, independent  
19 postsecondary institutions, high schools, businesses, and  
20 agencies serving youth with disabilities, shall sponsor  
21 programs to develop leadership skills, career counseling, and  
22 motivation and shall provide grants for internships to further  
23 prepare students with disabilities for postsecondary education  
24 and employment opportunities.

25 (2) As used in this section:

26 (a) "The alliance" means the Florida Governor's  
27 Alliance for the Employment of Disabled Citizens.

28 (b) "Program participant" means a community college,  
29 public university, independent postsecondary institution, high  
30 school, agency serving youth with disabilities, or a  
31 consortium of the above.

1           (3) To apply to participate in the College Fast Start  
2 Program, a potential program participant may submit a proposal  
3 to the Florida Governor's Alliance for the Employment of  
4 Disabled Citizens. Each proposal must contain the following  
5 information:

6           (a) A statement of purpose, which includes a  
7 description of the need for, and the results expected from,  
8 the proposed program.

9           (b) An identification of the service area which names  
10 the schools to be served and provides community and school  
11 demographics on the number and types of students with  
12 disabilities and the number of high school graduates within  
13 the area with a disability.

14           (c) An identification of existing programs for  
15 providing employment training for persons with disabilities.

16           (d) A description of the proposed training and  
17 modifications needed to accommodate students who would  
18 participate in the program. At least 40 percent of the  
19 students recruited in any one year must be in grades 6 through  
20 9.

21           (e) A description of the program activities, which  
22 must support the following goals:

23           1. To motivate students to pursue a postsecondary  
24 education.

25           2. To develop students' basic learning and leadership  
26 skills.

27           3. To develop collaboration with the STARS program.

28           (f) An evaluation component that provides for the  
29 collection, maintenance, retrieval, and analysis of the data  
30 required by this section.

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1       (4) The alliance shall consider proposals to determine  
2 which proposals to implement as programs that will strengthen  
3 the educational motivation and preparation of students with  
4 disabilities to seek postsecondary education or job training.  
5 In selecting proposals for approval, the alliance shall give  
6 preference to:

7       (a) Proposals submitted by a postsecondary institution  
8 and a business partner.

9       (b) A program that will use institutional, federal, or  
10 private resources to supplement state appropriations.

11       (c) An applicant that demonstrates an understanding of  
12 the need to accommodate students with disabilities.

13       (d) A program that includes innovative approaches,  
14 provides a great variety of activities, and interacts with  
15 business and industry in the development of the learning  
16 experience.

17       (e) An applicant that demonstrates commitment to the  
18 program by proposing to match the grant funds equally in cash  
19 or services, with cash being the preferred contribution.

20       (f) An applicant that demonstrates an interest in  
21 cultural diversity and that addresses the unmet regional  
22 employment needs of varying communities.

23       (g) A program that identifies potential student  
24 participants from among students who are not already enrolled  
25 in similar programs that assist students with disabilities.

26       (5) Program applicants that are approved to  
27 participate in the program must implement procedures which  
28 provide consistent contact with students from the point at  
29 which the student is selected to participate in the program  
30 until he or she enrolls in a postsecondary education  
31 institution. These procedures must assist students in

1 selecting courses required for graduation from high school and  
2 must include occupational forecasting for future job  
3 availability and requirements for those positions.  
4 Institutions that participate must provide on-campus academic  
5 or job training activities, job profiling and career  
6 counseling activities during summer vacation, and  
7 opportunities for interacting with business leaders and  
8 employers, mentors, tutors, or role models. Each program  
9 participant is encouraged to use its resources to meet program  
10 objectives. Each program participant must establish an  
11 advisory committee composed of high school and junior high  
12 school personnel and business leaders to provide advice and  
13 assistance in implementing the program.

14 (6) An advisory council shall review each proposal and  
15 recommend to the alliance an order of priority for funding the  
16 proposals. The advisory council shall consist of the following  
17 10 members and shall designate a meeting facilitator from  
18 among the members:

19 (a) Three persons with disabilities, appointed by the  
20 Governor.

21 (b) Two representatives of private or community-based  
22 organizations, one each appointed by the President of the  
23 Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

24 (c) One representative of the State University System,  
25 appointed by the chair of the Board of Regents.

26 (d) One representative of the Community College  
27 System, appointed by the chair of the State Board of Community  
28 Colleges.

29 (e) One representative of the Independent Colleges and  
30 Universities of Florida, appointed by the president of the  
31 Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida.

1       (f) One representative of a public school district,  
2 appointed by the Commissioner of Education.

3       (g) One representative of the Postsecondary Education  
4 Planning Commission, appointed by the chair of the commission.

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6 Each member shall be appointed for a 3-year term of office.

7 Members may serve no more than two consecutive terms. A  
8 vacancy must be filled with a person of the same status as the  
9 original appointee who shall serve for the remainder of the  
10 term. Members are entitled to per diem and travel expenses as  
11 provided in s. 112.061 while performing council duties.

12       (7) Funding for the College Fast Start Program shall  
13 be provided annually in the General Appropriations Act. From  
14 these funds, an annual allocation shall be provided to the  
15 alliance to conduct the program. Approved programs must be  
16 funded competitively according to the following methodology:

17       (a) Eighty percent of funds appropriated annually to  
18 the College Fast Start Program must be distributed as grants  
19 to projects that include, at the minimum:

20           1. A summer business internship program.

21           2. A minimum number of hours of academic instructional  
22 and developmental activities, career counseling, and personal  
23 counseling.

24       (b) Subject to legislative appropriations, funds for  
25 the continuation of projects that satisfy the minimum  
26 requirements shall be increased each year by the same  
27 percentage as the rate of inflation. Projects funded for 3  
28 consecutive years must have a cumulative institutional cash  
29 match of not less than 50 percent of the total cost of the  
30 project over the 3-year period. Any College Fast Start Program  
31 operating for 3 years which does not provide the minimum 50

1 percent institutional cash match shall not be considered for  
2 continued funding.

3 (8) On or before February 15 of each year, each  
4 participant or consortium of participants shall submit to the  
5 alliance an interim report of program expenditures and  
6 participant information as requested by the alliance.

7 (9) On or before October 15 of each year, each program  
8 participant shall submit to the alliance an end-of-the-year  
9 report on the effectiveness of its participation in the  
10 program during the preceding fiscal year. The end-of-the-year  
11 report must include, without limitation:

12 (a) An itemization of program expenditures by funding  
13 category, including: state grant funds, institutional  
14 matching contributions disaggregated by cash and in-kind  
15 services, and outside funding sources disaggregated by cash  
16 and in-kind services.

17 (b) The number of students participating by grade  
18 level, gender, race, and disability.

19 (c) The student identification number and social  
20 security number, if available, the name of the public school  
21 attended, and the gender, ethnicity, grade level, and grade  
22 point average of each student participant at the time of entry  
23 into the program.

24 (d) The grade point average, grade, and promotion  
25 status of each student participant at the end of the academic  
26 year and notification of suspension or expulsion of a  
27 participant, if applicable.

28 (e) The number and percentage of high school  
29 participants who satisfactorily complete 2 sequential years of  
30 a foreign language and Levels 2 and 3 mathematics and science  
31 courses.

1       (f) The number and percentage of participants eligible  
2 for high school graduation who receive a standard high school  
3 diploma or a high school equivalency diploma pursuant to s.  
4 229.814.

5       (g) The number and percentage of 12th grade  
6 participants who are accepted for enrollment and who enroll in  
7 a postsecondary institution and the program of study in which  
8 they are enrolled.

9       (h) The number of participants who receive  
10 scholarships, grant aid, and work-study awards.

11       (i) The number and percentage of participants who  
12 enroll in a public postsecondary institution and who fail to  
13 achieve a passing score, as defined in State Board of  
14 Education rule, on college placement tests pursuant to s.  
15 240.117.

16       (j) The number and percentage of participants who  
17 enroll in a postsecondary institution and have a minimum  
18 cumulative grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale, or its  
19 equivalent, by the end of the second semester.

20       (k) The number of students with disabilities  
21 participating in the project and the nature of their  
22 disability.

23       (l) A statement of how the program addresses the three  
24 program goals identified in paragraph (3)(e).

25       (m) A brief description and analysis of program  
26 characteristics and activities critical to program success.

27       (n) A description of the cooperation received from  
28 other units, organizations, businesses, or agencies.

29       (o) An explanation of the program's outcomes,  
30 including data related to student performance on the measures  
31 provided for in paragraph (3)(f).



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2 The Postsecondary Education Planning Commission, in  
3 consultation with the alliance and the Department of  
4 Education, shall develop specifications and procedures for the  
5 collection and transmission of the data.

6 (10) By February 15 of each year, the alliance shall  
7 submit to the Governor, the President of the Senate, the  
8 Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the Commissioner  
9 of Education a report that evaluates the effectiveness of the  
10 College Fast Start Program. The report must be based upon  
11 information provided by program participants, the Board of  
12 Regents, the State Board of Community Colleges, and the  
13 Division of Workforce Development pursuant to subsections (1)  
14 and (7). To the extent feasible, the performance of College  
15 Fast Start Program participants must be compared to the  
16 performance of comparable cohorts of students in public school  
17 and postsecondary education.

18 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2000.

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21 HOUSE SUMMARY

22  
23 Establishes the College Fast Start Program. Provides  
24 legislative intent and defines terms. Provides procedures  
25 for application to participate in the program. Provides  
26 guidelines for program approval. Provides requirements  
27 for approved programs. Requires an advisory council to  
28 review proposals and recommend an order of priority for  
29 funding. Provides for membership and duties of the  
30 advisory council. Provides methodology for competitive  
31 funding of approved programs. Provides requirements for  
the continuation of funding for programs. Requires an  
interim report to the Florida Governor's Alliance for the  
Employment of Disabled Citizens. Requires an annual  
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Commission to develop specifications and procedures for  
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of the program.