

By the Committee on Education/K-12 and Representatives  
Wise, Chestnut and Eggelletion

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 are admitted to and successfully complete an  
7 associate in arts degree or an associate in science degree or  
8 a workforce development program. The goal of the program is  
9 the completion of a degree or occupational completion points  
10 by, and placement into competitive employment of, students who  
11 were identified as having a disability, in accordance with the  
12 requirements of chapter 6A-6, Florida Administrative Code,  
13 prior to their senior year in high school and who otherwise  
14 would be unlikely to seek admission to a community college,  
15 state university, or independent postsecondary vocational  
16 institution without special support and recruitment efforts.  
17 As part of the College Fast Start Program, the Florida  
18 Governor's Alliance for the Employment of Disabled Citizens,  
19 in cooperation with community colleges, independent  
20 postsecondary institutions, high schools, businesses, and  
21 agencies serving youth with disabilities, shall sponsor  
22 programs to develop leadership skills, career counseling, and  
23 motivation and shall provide grants for internships to further  
24 prepare students with disabilities for postsecondary education  
25 and employment opportunities.  
26           (2) As used in this section:  
27           (a) "The alliance" means the Florida Governor's  
28 Alliance for the Employment of Disabled Citizens.  
29           (b) "Program participant" means a community college,  
30 public university, independent postsecondary institution, high  
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1 school, agency serving youth with disabilities, or a  
2 consortium of the above.

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

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

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

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

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

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

25 1. To motivate students to pursue a postsecondary  
26 education.

27 2. To develop students' basic learning and leadership  
28 skills.

29 3. To develop collaboration with the STARS program.  
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1       (f) An evaluation component that provides for the  
2 collection, maintenance, retrieval, and analysis of the data  
3 required by this section.

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

10       (a) Proposals submitted by a postsecondary institution  
11 and a business partner that include innovative approaches,  
12 provide a great variety of activities, and interact with  
13 business and industry in the development of the learning  
14 experience.

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

17       (c) Proposals that demonstrate 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       (d) Proposals that demonstrate an interest in cultural  
21 diversity and that address the unmet regional employment needs  
22 of varying communities.

23       (e) 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       (f) A program that includes a parental involvement  
27 component.

28       (5) Program applicants that are approved to  
29 participate in the program must implement procedures which  
30 provide consistent contact with students from the point at  
31 which the student is selected to participate in the program

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

16 (6) An advisory council shall review each proposal and  
17 recommend to the alliance an order of priority for funding the  
18 proposals. The advisory council shall consist of the following  
19 10 members and shall designate a meeting facilitator from  
20 among the members:

21 (a) Three persons with disabilities, appointed by the  
22 Governor.

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

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

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

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1       (e) One representative of the Independent Colleges and  
2 Universities of Florida, appointed by the president of the  
3 Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida.

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

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

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9 Each member shall be appointed for a 3-year, staggered term of  
10 office. Members may serve no more than two consecutive terms.  
11 A vacancy must be filled with a person of the same status as  
12 the original appointee who shall serve for the remainder of  
13 the term. Members are entitled to per diem and travel expenses  
14 as provided in s. 112.061 while performing council duties.

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

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

23           1. A summer business internship program.

24           2. A minimum number of hours of academic instructional  
25 and developmental activities, career counseling, and personal  
26 counseling.

27       (b) The remaining 20 percent of funds appropriated  
28 annually may be used by the Florida Governor's Alliance for  
29 the Employment of Disabled Citizens for college preparatory  
30 leadership training programs.

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1       (c) Subject to legislative appropriations, funds for  
2 the continuation of projects that satisfy the minimum  
3 requirements shall be increased each year by the same  
4 percentage as the rate of inflation. Projects funded for 3  
5 consecutive years must have a cumulative institutional cash  
6 match of not less than 50 percent of the total cost of the  
7 project over the 3-year period. Any College Fast Start Program  
8 operating for 3 years which does not provide the minimum 50  
9 percent institutional cash match shall not be considered for  
10 continued funding.

11       (8) On or before February 15 of each year, each  
12 participant or consortium of participants shall submit to the  
13 alliance an interim report of program expenditures and  
14 participant information as requested by the alliance.

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

20           (a) An itemization of program expenditures by funding  
21 category, including: state grant funds, institutional  
22 matching contributions disaggregated by cash and in-kind  
23 services, and outside funding sources disaggregated by cash  
24 and in-kind services.

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

27           (c) The student identification number and social  
28 security number, if available, the name of the public school  
29 attended, and the gender, ethnicity, grade level, and grade  
30 point average of each student participant at the time of entry  
31 into the program.

- 1       (d) The grade point average, grade, and promotion  
2 status of each student participant at the end of the academic  
3 year and notification of suspension or expulsion of a  
4 participant, if applicable.
- 5       (e) The number and percentage of high school  
6 participants who satisfactorily complete 2 sequential years of  
7 a foreign language and Levels 2 and 3 mathematics and science  
8 courses.
- 9       (f) The number and percentage of participants eligible  
10 for high school graduation who receive a standard high school  
11 diploma or a high school equivalency diploma pursuant to s.  
12 229.814.
- 13       (g) The number and percentage of 12th grade  
14 participants who are accepted for enrollment and who enroll in  
15 a postsecondary institution and the program of study in which  
16 they are enrolled.
- 17       (h) The number of participants who receive  
18 scholarships, grant aid, and work-study awards.
- 19       (i) The number and percentage of participants who  
20 enroll in a public postsecondary institution and who fail to  
21 achieve a passing score, as defined in State Board of  
22 Education rule, on college placement tests pursuant to s.  
23 240.117.
- 24       (j) The number and percentage of participants who  
25 enroll in a postsecondary institution and have a minimum  
26 cumulative grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale, or its  
27 equivalent, by the end of the second semester.
- 28       (k) A statement of how the program addresses the three  
29 program goals identified in paragraph (3)(e).
- 30       (l) A brief description and analysis of program  
31 characteristics and activities critical to program success.



1       (m) A description of the cooperation received from  
2 other units, organizations, businesses, or agencies.

3       (n) An explanation of the program's outcomes,  
4 including data related to student performance on the measures  
5 provided for in paragraph (3)(f).

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7 The Postsecondary Education Planning Commission, in  
8 consultation with the alliance and the Department of  
9 Education, shall develop specifications and procedures for the  
10 collection and transmission of the data.

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

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