

By Representatives Hart, Miller, Bense, Wilson, Greenstein
and Henriquez

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to the Career Fast Start
3 Program; creating s. 239.515, F.S.;
4 establishing the Career Fast Start Program;
5 providing definitions; providing procedures for
6 application to participate in the program;
7 providing guidelines for program approval;
8 providing requirements for approved programs;
9 providing for funding of the program; providing
10 methodology for competitive funding of approved
11 programs; providing requirements for the
12 continuation of funding for programs; requiring
13 an interim report to the Florida Governor's
14 Alliance for the Employment of Disabled
15 Citizens; requiring an annual end-of-the-year
16 report to the alliance; requiring the alliance
17 to report annually to the Governor, the
18 Legislature, and the Agency for Workforce
19 Innovation on the effectiveness of the program;
20 requiring the alliance to provide for annual
21 audits of the program and to include audit
22 results in the report; providing an effective
23 date.

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25 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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27 Section 1. Section 239.515, Florida Statutes, is
28 created to read:

29 239.515 Career Fast Start Program.--

30 (1) There is established a Career Fast Start Program
31 to increase the number of students with disabilities in grades

1 10 through 12 who successfully complete an associate in arts
2 degree, an associate in science degree, a vocational license
3 or certificate, or a workforce development program. The goal
4 of the program is the completion of a degree or occupational
5 completion points by, and placement into competitive
6 employment of, students who were identified as having a
7 disability, in accordance with the requirements of chapter
8 6A-6, Florida Administrative Code, prior to their senior year
9 in high school and who otherwise would be unlikely to seek
10 admission to a community college, state university, or
11 independent postsecondary vocational institution without
12 special support and recruitment efforts. As part of the Career
13 Fast Start Program, the Florida Governor's Alliance for the
14 Employment of Disabled Citizens, in cooperation with community
15 colleges, independent postsecondary institutions, high
16 schools, businesses, and agencies serving youth with
17 disabilities, shall sponsor programs to develop leadership
18 skills, career counseling, and motivation and shall provide
19 grants for internships to further prepare students with
20 disabilities for postsecondary education and employment
21 opportunities.

22 (2) As used in this section:

23 (a) "The alliance" means the Florida Governor's
24 Alliance for the Employment of Disabled Citizens, which is
25 also known as the "Able Trust."

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

30 (3) To apply to participate in the Career Fast Start
31 Program, a potential program participant must submit a

1 proposal to the Florida Governor's Alliance for the Employment
2 of Disabled Citizens. Each proposal must contain the following
3 information:

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

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

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

14 (d) A description of the proposed training and
15 modifications needed to accommodate students who would
16 participate in the program.

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

19 1. To motivate students to pursue a postsecondary
20 education.

21 2. To develop students' basic learning and leadership
22 skills.

23 (f) An evaluation component that provides for the
24 collection, maintenance, retrieval, and analysis of the data
25 required by this section.

26 (4) The alliance shall consider proposals and
27 determine which proposals to implement as programs that will
28 strengthen the educational motivation and preparation of
29 students with disabilities to seek postsecondary education or
30 job training. In selecting proposals for approval, the
31 alliance shall give preference to:

1 (a) Proposals submitted by a postsecondary institution
2 and a business partner which include innovative approaches,
3 provide a great variety of activities, and interact with
4 business and industry in the development of the learning
5 experience.

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

8 (c) Proposals that demonstrate commitment to the
9 program by proposing to match the grant funds equally in cash
10 or services, with cash being the preferred contribution.

11 (d) Proposals that demonstrate an interest in cultural
12 diversity and that address the unmet regional employment needs
13 of varying communities.

14 (e) A program that identifies potential student
15 participants from among students who are not already enrolled
16 in similar programs that assist students with disabilities.

17 (f) A program that includes a parental involvement
18 component.

19 (5) Program applicants that are approved to
20 participate in the program must implement procedures that
21 provide consistent contact with students from the point at
22 which the student is selected to participate in the program
23 until he or she enrolls in a postsecondary educational
24 institution. These procedures must assist students in
25 selecting courses required for graduation from high school and
26 must include occupational forecasting for future job
27 availability and requirements for those positions.
28 Institutions that participate must provide on-campus academic
29 or job training activities, job profiling and career
30 counseling activities during summer vacation, and
31 opportunities for interacting with business leaders and

1 employers, mentors, tutors, or role models. Each program
2 participant is encouraged to use its resources to meet program
3 objectives. Each program participant must establish an
4 advisory committee composed of high school personnel and
5 business leaders to provide advice and assistance in
6 implementing the program.

7 (6) Funding for the Career Fast Start Program in the
8 amount of \$5 million shall be provided annually in the General
9 Appropriations Act. From these funds, an annual allocation
10 shall be provided to the alliance to conduct the program.

11 Approved programs must be funded competitively according to
12 the following methodology:

13 (a) Eighty percent of funds appropriated annually to
14 the Career Fast Start Program must be distributed as grants to
15 projects that include, at a minimum:

16 1. A summer business internship program.

17 2. A minimum number of hours of academic instructional
18 and developmental activities, career counseling, and personal
19 counseling.

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

24 (c) Projects funded for 3 consecutive years must have
25 a cumulative institutional cash match of not less than 50
26 percent of the total cost of the project over the 3-year
27 period. Any Career Fast Start Program operating for 3 years
28 which does not provide the minimum 50 percent institutional
29 cash match shall not be considered for continued funding.

30 (7) On or before February 15 of each year, each
31 participant or consortium of participants shall submit to the

1 alliance an interim report of program expenditures and
2 participant information as requested by the alliance.
3 (8) On or before October 15 of each year, each program
4 participant shall submit to the alliance an end-of-the-year
5 report on the effectiveness of its participation in the
6 program during the preceding fiscal year. The end-of-the-year
7 report must include, without limitation:
8 (a) An itemization of program expenditures by funding
9 category, including: state grant funds, institutional
10 matching contributions disaggregated by cash and in-kind
11 services, and outside funding sources disaggregated by cash
12 and in-kind services.
13 (b) The number of students participating by grade
14 level, gender, race, and disability.
15 (c) The student identification number and social
16 security number, if available, the name of the public school
17 attended, and the gender, ethnicity, grade level, and grade
18 point average of each student participant at the time of entry
19 into the program.
20 (d) The grade point average, grade level, and
21 promotion status of each student participant at the end of the
22 academic year and notification of suspension or expulsion of a
23 participant, if applicable.
24 (e) The number and percentage of participants eligible
25 for high school graduation who receive a standard high school
26 diploma or a high school equivalency diploma pursuant to s.
27 229.814.
28 (f) The number and percentage of 12th grade
29 participants who are accepted for enrollment and who enroll in
30 a postsecondary institution and the programs of study in which
31 they are enrolled.

1 (g) The number of participants who receive
2 scholarships, grant aid, and work-study awards.

3 (h) The number and percentage of participants who
4 enroll in a public postsecondary institution and who fail to
5 achieve a passing score, as defined in State Board of
6 Education rule, on college placement tests pursuant to s.
7 240.117.

8 (i) The number and percentage of participants who
9 enroll in a postsecondary institution and have a minimum
10 cumulative grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale, or its
11 equivalent, by the end of the second semester.

12 (j) A statement of how the program addresses the two
13 program goals identified in paragraph (3)(e).

14 (k) A brief description and analysis of program
15 characteristics and activities critical to program success.

16 (l) A description of the cooperation received from
17 other units, organizations, businesses, or agencies.

18 (m) An explanation of the program's outcomes,
19 including data related to student performance on the measures
20 provided for in paragraph (3)(f).

21 (9)(a) By February 15 of each year, the alliance shall
22 submit to the Governor, the President of the Senate, the
23 Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the Agency for
24 Workforce Innovation a report that evaluates the effectiveness
25 of the Career Fast Start Program.

26 (b) The alliance shall provide for an annual audit of
27 the program by an independent certified accounting firm and
28 shall include the results of the audit in the report.

29 (10) The head of the Agency for Workforce Innovation
30 shall be invited to attend all board meetings of the alliance.

31 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2001.

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HOUSE SUMMARY

Establishes the Career Fast Start Program. Defines terms. Provides procedures for applying to participate in the program. Provides guidelines for program approval. Provides requirements for approved programs. Provides for funding the program. Provides methodology for competitive 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 end-of-the-year report to the alliance. Requires the alliance to report to the Governor, the Legislature, and the Agency for Workforce Innovation annually on the effectiveness of the program. Requires the alliance to provide for annual audits of the program.