

By Senator Sullivan

22-70-01

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, a
30 public university, an independent postsecondary institution, a
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1 high school, an agency serving youth having a disability, 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 and
5 determine which proposals to implement as programs that will
6 strengthen the educational motivation and preparation of
7 students with disabilities to seek postsecondary education or
8 job training. In selecting proposals for approval, the
9 alliance shall give preference to:

10 (a) Proposals submitted by a postsecondary institution
11 and a business partner which 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 that
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 educational
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 appointed by the President of the Senate
25 and one appointed by the Speaker of the House of
26 Representatives.

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

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

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 Members shall be appointed for 3-year, staggered terms 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 a 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 must 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, 2001.
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SENATE SUMMARY

Establishes the College Fast Start Program. Provides legislative intent. Defines terms. Provides procedures for applying to participate in the program. Provides guidelines for program approval. Provides requirements for approved programs. Requires an advisory council to review proposals and recommend an order of priority for funding. Provides membership of the advisory council. 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 and the Postsecondary Education Planning Commission to develop specifications and procedures for the transmission of such data. Requires the alliance to report to the Governor, the Legislature, and the Commissioner of Education annually on the effectiveness of the program.