

By the Committee on General Education and Representatives
Fiorentino, Meadows, Justice, Bilirakis and Rich

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to Florida Academic Improvement
3 Trust Fund matching grants; creating s.
4 236.1226, F.S.; creating the Florida Academic
5 Improvement Trust Fund matching grant program;
6 providing legislative intent; requiring the
7 Commissioner of Education to specify certain
8 procedures; specifying uses of funds; providing
9 for disbursement of funds; providing for
10 administration of funds; providing an effective
11 date.

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

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15 Section 1. Section 236.1226, Florida Statutes, is
16 created to read:

17 236.1226 Florida Academic Improvement Trust Fund
18 matching grants.--

19 (1) LEGISLATIVE INTENT.--The Legislature recognizes
20 that private contributions can play a significant role in
21 enhancing, enriching, and improving academic programs for all
22 K-12 students in Florida's school districts and the Florida
23 School for the Deaf and the Blind. It is, therefore, the
24 intent of the Legislature to provide each school district and
25 the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind the opportunity
26 to strengthen private/public partnerships by offering private
27 donors the incentive of state matching funds for contributions
28 that support the improvement of academic programs within
29 public school districts and the Florida School for the Deaf
30 and the Blind.

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1 (2) MATCHING GRANTS.--The Florida Academic Improvement
2 Trust Fund shall be utilized to provide matching grants to the
3 Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind Endowment Fund and
4 to any public school district education foundation that meets
5 the requirements of this section and is recognized by the
6 local school district as its designated K-12 education
7 foundation.

8 (a) The Commissioner of Education shall specify
9 procedures for the administration, submission, documentation,
10 evaluation, and approval of requests for matching funds and
11 for maintaining accountability for endowments and the proceeds
12 of endowments.

13 (b) Donations, state matching funds, or proceeds from
14 endowments established pursuant to this section shall be used
15 at the discretion of the public school district education
16 foundation or the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind
17 for academic achievement within the school district or school,
18 and shall not be expended for the construction of facilities
19 or for the support of interscholastic athletics. No public
20 school district education foundation or the Florida School for
21 the Deaf and the Blind shall accept or purchase facilities for
22 which the state will be asked for operating funds unless the
23 Legislature has granted prior approval for such acquisition.

24 (3) ALLOCATION OF THE TRUST FUND.--Funds appropriated
25 to the Florida Academic Improvement Trust Fund shall be
26 allocated by the Department of Education in the following
27 manner:

28 (a) For every year in which there is a legislative
29 appropriation to the trust fund, an equal amount of the annual
30 appropriation, to be determined by dividing the total
31 legislative appropriation by the number of local education

1 foundations, as well as the Florida School for the Deaf and
2 the Blind, must be reserved for each public school district
3 education foundation and the Florida School for the Deaf and
4 the Blind Endowment Fund to provide each foundation and the
5 Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind with an opportunity
6 to receive and match appropriated funds. Trust funds that
7 remain unmatched by contribution on April 1 of any year shall
8 be made available for matching by any public school district
9 education foundation and by the Florida School for the Deaf
10 and the Blind, with an opportunity to apply for excess trust
11 funds prior to awarding such funds.

12 (b) Challenge grants shall be proportionately
13 allocated from the trust fund on the basis of matching each \$4
14 of state funds with \$6 of private funds. To be eligible for
15 matching, a minimum of \$4,500 must be raised from private
16 sources.

17 (c) Funds sufficient to provide the match shall be
18 transferred from the state trust fund to the public school
19 education foundation or to the Florida School for the Deaf and
20 the Blind Endowment Fund upon notification that a
21 proportionate amount has been received and deposited by the
22 foundation or school into its own trust fund.

23 (d) If the total of the amounts to be distributed in
24 any quarter pursuant to this subsection exceeds the amount of
25 funds remaining from specific appropriations made for the
26 implementation of this section, all grants shall be
27 proportionately reduced so that the total of matching grants
28 distributed does not exceed available appropriations.

29 (4) GRANT ADMINISTRATION.--

30 (a) Each public school district education foundation
31 and the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind

1 participating in the Florida Academic Improvement Trust Fund
2 shall separately account for all funds received pursuant to
3 this section, and may establish its own academic improvement
4 trust fund as a depository for the private contributions,
5 state matching funds, and earnings on investments of such
6 funds. State matching funds shall be transferred to the public
7 school district education foundation or to the Florida School
8 for the Deaf and the Blind Endowment Fund upon notification
9 that the foundation or school has received and deposited
10 private contributions that meet the criteria for matching as
11 provided in this section. The public school district education
12 foundations and the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind
13 are responsible for the maintenance, investment, and
14 administration of their academic improvement trust funds.

15 (b) The public school district education foundations
16 and the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind shall be
17 responsible for soliciting and receiving contributions to be
18 deposited and matched with challenge grants for establishing
19 endowments for academic achievement within the school district
20 or school.

21 (c) Each public school district education foundation
22 and the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind shall be
23 responsible for proper expenditure of the funds received
24 pursuant to this section.

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