

STORAGE NAME: h0069.cu.doc
DATE: February 2, 2002

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON
COMMITTEE ON COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES
ANALYSIS**

BILL #: HB 69
RELATING TO: Student Financial Assistance
SPONSOR(S): Representative Fiorentino
TIED BILL(S): None

ORIGINATING COMMITTEE(S)/COUNCIL(S)/COMMITTEE(S) OF REFERENCE:

- (1) COMMITTEE ON COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES
 - (2) EDUCATION APPROPRIATIONS
 - (3) FISCAL POLICY & RESOURCES
 - (4) COUNCIL FOR LIFELONG LEARNING
 - (5)
-

I. SUMMARY:

THIS DOCUMENT IS NOT INTENDED TO BE USED FOR THE PURPOSE OF CONSTRUING STATUTES, OR TO BE CONSTRUED AS AFFECTING, DEFINING, LIMITING, CONTROLLING, SPECIFYING, CLARIFYING, OR MODIFYING ANY LEGISLATION OR STATUTE.

The bill creates the Jumping on the Educational Band Wagon (JEB) Scholarship Loan Program, which will be administered by the Department of Education (DOE). The scholarship loans are to be used for enrollment in a course of study leading to a degree from a state-approved teacher preparation program at a state postsecondary education institution or an independent postsecondary education institution defined by s. 240.605, F.S. The bill establishes eligibility requirements, renewal criteria, and conditions for repayment of loans.

The annual award amount is the amount required to pay the average cost of full-time tuition and fees at a state university or community college, plus an education allowance. The bill does not define "education allowance". Students must enroll for at least six credit hours per term; part-time awards are pro-rated.

A student is allowed seven years after completing a program to repay the loan through teaching service and three additional years after the initial seven, to repay any portion of the loan not paid through teaching service. The bill is silent regarding those recipients who may stop taking courses, for whatever reason, and never complete a program of study.

The Department of Education estimates increased operational costs to be \$51,800 for year one (FY 02-03). The new program costs are estimated to be \$1,710,000 for the first year of awards (FY 03-04) and \$7,728,000 by the fourth (FY 06-07) assuming a five percent annual increase in tuition and a flat education allowance. With the award amount tied to tuition and fees, the amount required to fund the program will increase with any rise in tuition and fees.

The bill requires the Legislature to annually appropriate funds for at least 500 scholarship loans. The funding requirement to develop summer institutes is not known.

SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS:

A. DOES THE BILL SUPPORT THE FOLLOWING PRINCIPLES:

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|---|
| 1. <u>Less Government</u> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | N/A <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. <u>Lower Taxes</u> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. <u>Individual Freedom</u> | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | N/A <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. <u>Personal Responsibility</u> | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | N/A <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. <u>Family Empowerment</u> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

For any principle that received a "no" above, please explain:

The bill creates a scholarship loan program that will require more administrative work of the Department of Education.

B. PRESENT SITUATION:

Demand For Teachers in Florida

Based on data available in mid-2000, the Office of Economic and Demographic Research forecasted the demand and supply of teachers in Florida through the year 2010. It is estimated that Florida school districts will need to hire approximately 162,000 teachers between 2000-2001 and 2009-2010. Seventy-two percent of the new teachers will replace teachers who will leave teaching prior to retirement for reasons such as pregnancy or career changes. An additional 21 percent of the new teachers will replace retiring teachers and the remaining seven percent will be hired to cope with projected student enrollment growth over this period. Among the 162,000 new teachers who will be needed during the next decade, approximately 39,000 of the demand will be for exceptional and special education teachers. Almost 20,000 teachers will be needed for math, science, foreign language, and computer science. The Department of Education projects Florida will need an average of 12,831 teachers per year over the next five years, or 64,155 by 2006-2007.

Supply of Teachers in Florida

According to the DOE, the pool of possible Florida teachers includes recent graduates of teacher education programs, both in-state and out-of-state; recent graduates of other programs who plan to enter teaching either by satisfying the course requirements after graduation or via the alternative certification route; certified or certifiable college graduates who are not currently teaching, including those actively seeking positions and those who are at home, have returned to school, or are employed in other fields; teachers in other states or in the private sector who are willing to relocate or transfer; former teachers who have left the profession for one reason or another and might be induced to return; and mature adults without teaching credentials--including returning women and early retirees--who might respond to the challenge of returning to school to prepare for a career change.

The Office of Economic and Demographic Research projects that Florida will supply approximately 60 percent of the teachers it will need through graduates of in-state colleges and universities (public and private). During most of the 1990s, for example, in-state colleges and universities (public and private) supplied approximately 64 percent of Florida's new teachers with the remainder coming from other states and nations. Florida will need to find another 2,000 to 3,000 teachers annually to meet projected demand.

The Department of Education reports 5,499 students graduated from the 30 approved teacher education preparation programs in 1999-2000.

Approved Teacher Preparation Programs in Florida

There are 30 approved teacher preparation programs in Florida – 20 private colleges and universities and the 10 universities in the State University System (SUS). There are no state-approved teacher preparation programs at community colleges. The total capacity within these programs is not known.

With eight of the ten SUS institutions reporting, there is available capacity for 1,550 additional undergraduate education majors and 1,533 additional Master's level education majors at these state universities. Data was not yet available for Florida A&M University and Florida Atlantic University.

According to DOE, the University of South Florida and the University of Central Florida have the largest enrollments among the state universities. Barry University, Nova-Southeastern University, and the University of Miami have the largest enrollment among the private institutions.

Existing Financial Assistance Programs to Encourage Teaching in Florida

Current law provides four financial assistance programs designed to increase production of teachers. These include the "Chappie" James Most Promising Teacher Scholarship (s. 240.4063(2), F.S.); the Florida Critical Teacher Shortage Forgivable Loan Program (s. 240.4063(3), F.S.); the Critical Teacher Shortage Tuition Reimbursement Program (s. 240.4064, F.S.); and the Minority Teacher Education Scholars Program (s. 240.4128, F.S.).

Section 240.4063(1), F.S., creates the Florida Teacher Scholarship and Forgivable Loan Program. The program consists of two major components: the "Chappie" James Most Promising Teacher Scholarship (s. 240.4063(2), F.S.) and the Florida Critical Teacher Shortage Forgivable Loan Program (s. 240.4063(3), F.S.). The primary purpose of the program is to attract capable and promising students into the teaching profession, particularly to areas currently or projected to be critical teacher shortage areas. The State Board of Education has adopted rules, and the Department of Education annually identifies critical teacher shortage areas and administers the program.

"Chappie" James Most Promising Teacher Scholarship

The "Chappie" James Most Promising Teacher Scholarship is awarded to a top graduating senior from each public secondary school in the state and additional awards are offered annually to graduating seniors from nonpublic secondary schools that are listed with the DOE, meet accreditation standards, and comply with regulations of the Office of Civil Rights. The number of awards given to nonpublic students is proportional to the number of awards available to public secondary students.

The amount of the scholarship is statutorily set at \$1,500 and may be renewed for one year if the student earns a 2.5 cumulative grade point average (GPA), 12 credit hours per term, and meets eligibility requirements for renewal of the award. A student may use the scholarship award at a state university, a community college, or an independent institution as defined in s. 240.605, F.S.

The eligibility requirements for the "Chappie" James Most Promising Teacher Scholarship are as follows:

- Meet the general eligibility requirements in s. 240.404, F.S.
- Be nominated by the student's Florida high school principal.
- Hold a 3.0 unweighted high school cumulative GPA.

- Rank in the top 25 percent of the student's high school graduating class.
- Have an SAT or ACT score (no minimum required).
- Provide written intent in the application to teach in Florida.
- Be an active member of a high school future teacher association if one exists in the student's school.
- Plan to enroll in a degree program at an approved postsecondary institution.

According to the Department of Education no statistics are available on how many students receiving the scholarship eventually complete a degree and teach in Florida.

Florida Critical Teacher Shortage Forgivable Loan Program

The Florida Critical Teacher Shortage Forgivable Loan Program makes available forgivable loans to eligible undergraduate and graduate students entering programs of study that lead to a degree in a teaching program in a critical teacher shortage area. Undergraduate loans are for a maximum of \$4,000 per year for two years, except when a program requires three years of instruction to obtain initial certification. For graduate students, the maximum loan amount is \$8,000 per year for a maximum of two years.

In order to be eligible a student must:

- Meet the general eligibility requirements in s. 240.404, F.S.
- Be enrolled in a state approved teacher preparation program leading to certification in a critical teacher shortage area.
- Provide written intent in the application to teach in a publicly funded school in Florida in a critical shortage area.
- Have scored in the top 40 percent on the SAT or ACT (undergraduate only).
- Not previously earned a bachelor's degree (undergraduate only).
- Have earned a cumulative undergraduate GPA of 2.5 (undergraduate only).
- Hold a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution (graduate only).
- Have a cumulative undergraduate GPA of 3.0 or a 1000 on the Graduate Records Exam (GRE) (graduate only).
- Not hold a bachelor's degree in a critical teacher shortage area (graduate only).

Section 240.4063(3)(e), F.S., provides that the State Board of Education adopt by rule repayment schedules and applicable interest rates. A loan must be repaid within ten years of completion of the program of studies. Any funds paid will be deposited into the State Student Financial Assistance Trust Fund.

The following subject fields were recommended to the State Board of Education for adoption as the critical teaching areas for 2001-2002:

- middle and high school level mathematics;
- middle and high school level science;
- exceptional student education programs (ESE) serving students with disabilities including emotionally handicapped (EH), mentally handicapped (MH), physically handicapped, speech and language impaired (speech), hearing impaired, visually impaired, specific learning disabled (SLD), and varying exceptionalities (VE);
- English for speakers of other languages (ESOL);
- foreign languages;
- technology education; and,
- for the Tuition Reimbursement Program, endorsement areas in profoundly handicapped, orientation/mobility, prekindergarten handicapped, and gifted.

DOE reports an estimated 2,815 graduates from state-approved Florida teacher education programs in the above critical areas in 2001-2002. DOE projects that there will be 6,343 vacancies in those critical areas for the year 2003-2004.

Critical Teacher Shortage Tuition Reimbursement Program

The Critical Teacher Shortage Tuition Reimbursement Program provides tuition reimbursement payments for certain courses to any full-time employee of a public school or a developmental research school who is certified to teach. Participants are limited to nine semester hours, or the equivalent, per year for a total maximum of 36 semester hours. Participants are reimbursed at a maximum rate of \$78 per semester hour. The participant must pass a course with a minimum grade of 3.0 to qualify for a reimbursement. Tuition reimbursement is limited to courses in critical teacher shortage areas as defined by the State Board of Education. Additionally, courses must be: graduate-level courses leading to a master's, specialist, or doctoral degree; graduate-level courses leading to a new certification area; or state-approved undergraduate courses leading to an advanced degree or a new certification area.

Minority Teacher Education Scholars Program

The Minority Teacher Education Scholars Program is a performance-based scholarship program for African-American, Hispanic-American, Asian-American, and Native American students. The program provides an annual scholarship of \$4,000 for each approved minority teacher education scholar who is enrolled in one of Florida's public or private universities in the junior year and is admitted into a teacher education program. The Florida Fund for Minority Teachers, Inc. provides systemwide training to help participating institutions in the recruitment and retention of Minority Teacher Scholars. The training must also include a conference or a series of conferences for high school and community college students identified as Minority Teacher Scholars candidates.

To determine the number of awards available, the amount appropriated for the program is divided by the \$4,000 award amount and then by the number of participating institutions. Each institution is entitled to the same number of awards. If an institution does not award all of its scholarships by a set date, the remaining scholarships may be transferred to another institution with eligible students.

A recipient may receive the award for three consecutive years if the student remains enrolled full-time and is making satisfactory progress towards a baccalaureate degree with a major in education. If the scholar graduates and teaches in a Florida public school, the scholar is not required to monetarily repay the scholarship. The scholarship is repaid on the basis of one year of teaching in a Florida public school for every year the scholarship is received. If, however, the scholar does not graduate or fails to teach in a Florida public school, the scholar must repay the scholarship plus eight percent annual interest. Repayment begins the 13th month after the scholar either graduates from an approved teacher education program or the 13th month after full-time enrollment is terminated. Repayment must be completed within ten years and according to the terms and conditions set forth in a promissory note and repayment schedule. Deferments are available for students under three conditions - the student: is unable to obtain teaching employment in a Florida public school; becomes disabled; or experiences other hardships. Deferments are limited to 24 months. If a student defaults, the recipient is responsible for paying all reasonable attorneys fees and costs incurred in the collection process.

Since 1996, the program has served 1,922 scholars. In 2000-2001, 711 students received minority teacher education scholars program awards. The program reports that about 11 new slots are estimated for each participating institution per year, but the true number of new slots is ultimately dependent on the appropriation provided and the number of eligible scholars requiring a subsequent year award. For administrative purposes the program is housed at the University of Florida.

Admission into a State-Approved Teacher Preparation Program

There are common prerequisites for all state-approved teacher education programs. Some institutions require the completion of all prerequisites prior to admission to such programs; some do not. A student may earn an associate in arts degree but not necessarily have completed all the specific prerequisites for a teacher preparation program, and therefore not be admitted to the program without first completing the prerequisites. Some institutions officially admit students to the program and then allow them to fulfill the prerequisite requirements. Some of the teacher preparation programs within the SUS are "limited access" programs, which may require a student to have completed all prerequisites prior to admission into the program. The Division of Community Colleges reports that the Community College System currently offers three common prerequisite teacher preparation courses as a part of the statewide teacher preparation curriculum.

All state-approved teacher preparation programs are held to certain admissions criteria. Rule 6A-5.066, FAC, requires that all state-approved teacher preparation programs demonstrate that at least 90 percent of students admitted to a teacher preparation program have a minimum grade point average of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale for the general education courses of the undergraduate studies or have completed a baccalaureate degree with a 2.5 GPA and have passed the College Level Academic Skills Test (CLAST) or the Praxis I: Academic Skills Test.

C. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

The bill creates the Jumping on the Educational Bandwagon Scholarship Loan Program which will be administered by the Department of Education. The purpose of the program is to attract capable and promising high school and college students to the teaching profession by offering scholarship loans and providing an academically and culturally enriched program that extends beyond the regular college program.

The Program

- The JEB Scholarship Loan Program participants must use the scholarship loans for enrollment in a course of study leading to a degree from a state-approved teacher preparation program at a state postsecondary education institution or an independent postsecondary education institution defined by s. 240.605, F.S.¹
- A participant who enrolls in an eligible program of study at a state university or an eligible independent postsecondary education institution is eligible for an annual award equal to the average cost of full-time tuition and fees at a state university, plus an education allowance. A participant who enrolls in an associate in arts degree program at a community college that is transferable to a state-approved teacher preparation program is eligible for an annual award equal to the average cost of full-time tuition and fees at a community college per year, plus an education allowance. The bill does not define "education allowance", nor does it define community college for eligible institution purposes. It appears that a student attending any community college in the state would be eligible as long as the program of study is transferable to an approved teacher preparation program.
- The bill does not specify how eligible associate in arts programs will be identified. In general, all A.A. programs are transferable to approved teacher preparation programs. A community college representative has reported that Florida public community colleges do not typically award A.A. degrees in a particular major, such as English, Biology, or Teacher Education, although there are an estimated ten that do. The Division of Community

¹ Section 240.605, F.S., provides definition for eligible independent nonprofit colleges and universities that are eligible to participate in the William L. Boyd, IV, Florida Resident Access Grant Program.

Colleges (DCC) of the Department of Education reports that the Community College System currently offers three common prerequisite teacher preparation courses as a part of the statewide teacher preparation curriculum.

- Scholarship loan awards may be used for summer-term enrollment if funds are available.
- Students must enroll for at least six credit hours per semester; part-time awards are pro-rated.
- DOE must conduct various summer institutes for rising sophomores, juniors, and seniors.
- DOE may compensate school district staff who serve as staff in summer institute programs.
- A student may participate in the program for up to 110 percent of the number of college credit hours required for completion of the teacher preparation program. It is unclear how the number of credit college hours will be computed. The number of hours to complete a state-approved teacher preparation program may vary from program to program and from institution to institution. Additionally, it is unclear how the calculation will be handled for students who may change majors or schools, consequently changing the number of hours of eligibility.
- A student whose GPA falls below the required level for renewal may restore the scholarship loan if the GPA is brought back up to the renewal level. Restoration may be made only once. The bill does not provide a timeframe for restoration.

Eligibility Requirements

The bill establishes eligibility requirements. To receive a JEB Scholarship Loan Program, the student must meet the general eligibility requirements for financial aid, pursuant to s. 240.404, F.S., except as otherwise provided for in the bill.

A student must be enrolled in an associate in arts degree program at a community college that is transferable to a state-approved teacher preparation program or be enrolled in a state-approved teacher preparation program for a minimum of six semester hours per term or the equivalent. The bill does not specify how eligible associate in arts programs will be identified. In general, all A.A. programs are transferable to approved teacher preparation programs. A community college representative has reported that Florida public community colleges do not typically award A.A. degrees in a particular major, such as English, Biology, or Teacher Education, although there are an estimated ten that do. The Division of Community Colleges of the Department of Education reports that the Community College System currently offers three common prerequisite teacher preparation courses as a part of the statewide teacher preparation curriculum.

It is unclear how students enrolled in an A.A. program that is transferable to a state-approved teacher preparation program at a state university or eligible independent institution will be identified. According to the State University System, most students who have been admitted to and are enrolled in a teacher preparation program are juniors or seniors. It appears that a freshman or sophomore attending a community college would be eligible for an award but not one attending a state university or an eligible private postsecondary institution.

JEB recipients must enroll for at least six semester hours or the equivalent per term. If applying as a high school senior, the applicant must have earned a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale, or the equivalent, in high school courses that are recommended by the State

Board of Community Colleges and adopted by the Board of Regents² as being college-preparatory academic courses. A high school student applicant must also have an SAT score of at least 970, or an equivalent ACT score. If applying as a college student, the applicant must have earned a grade point average of 2.75 for all postsecondary work attempted.

Additionally, to be eligible the student must declare the intent to complete one-half year of teaching service in a publicly funded school for each semester for which a scholarship loan award is received and declare the intent to repay the scholarship loan with teaching service within seven years after completion of an approved teacher preparation program. The bill does not specify procedures for a student to "declare intent".

The bill defines "publicly funded school" as a school that receives at least 75 percent of its operating costs from governmental agencies, including schools that operate educational programs under contracts with a public school district or DOE.

Award Renewal Requirements

The bill provides for renewal awards if the recipient has earned the equivalent of a grade point average of 2.75 for all postsecondary work attempted and has completed at least 6 or 12 credit hours per term, whichever is appropriate for the level of award received. A student may have eligibility restored only once if the student is able to restore his or her grade point average to the required renewal level. The bill does not prescribe how long a student has to raise his or her grade point average for restoration.

Repayment of Loan

A scholarship loan recipient may receive credit towards the fulfillment of the teaching requirement for teaching service rendered at any time during the scheduled repayment period. Teaching credit will only be applicable to the current balance of principal and accrued interest at the time the repayment credit is earned. A scholarship loan recipient may not be reimbursed for any cash payments regardless of subsequent teaching service.

Any recipient who fails to teach in a Florida publicly funded school is responsible for repaying the loan plus accrued interest. A student is allowed seven years after completing a program to repay the loan through teaching service and three additional years after the initial seven, to repay any portion of the loan not paid through teaching service. Repayment must be completed within ten years after completion of an approved teacher preparation program. The bill is silent regarding those recipients who may stop taking courses, for whatever reason, and never complete a program of studies leading to a degree in an approved teacher preparation program. While the bill provides that any scholarship recipient who fails to teach is responsible for repaying the loan plus interest, the bill is silent as to the conditions and timeframe for repayment for students who receive awards but fail to complete the required teacher preparation program.

The State Board of Education is required to adopt rules regarding payment schedules and applicable interest rates, pursuant to ss. 240.451 and 240.465, F.S. The Department of Education is authorized to adopt rules pursuant to ss. 120.536(1) and 120.54, F.S., to administer the provisions of the bill.

Repayment of funds is not required if the recipient dies or becomes permanently disabled.

Funds repaid are to be deposited into the State Student Financial Assistance Trust Fund.

² Chapter 2001-170, L.O.F., abolished the Board of Regents and the State Board of Community Colleges effective July 1, 2001. All powers and duties of those boards were transferred, by Type II transfer, to the Florida Board of Education.

D. SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS:

This section need be completed only in the discretion of the Committee.

II. FISCAL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT:

A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE GOVERNMENT:

1. Revenues:

Funds repaid by students who do not repay the scholarship loan through teaching service in a Florida publicly funded school are to be deposited into the State Student Financial Assistance Trust Fund. The amount over time that will be paid pursuant to this provision is not known.

2. Expenditures:

From General Revenue:

DOE anticipates annual recurring expenditures for maintenance of the State Student Financial Aid Database, additional staffing needs, procurement of loan services, and overhead costs. These increased operational costs are estimated as follows:

- \$ 51,800 - FY 02-03
- \$ 53,353 - FY 03-04
- \$ 54,954 - FY 04-05
- \$ 56,602 - FY 05-06
- \$ 58,300 - FY 06-07

* DOE assumed a three percent annual increase in the cost of living for the above estimates.

DOE reports that the JEB Scholarship Loan Program could be ready to award its first recipients beginning in FY 03-04.

The estimated Program costs for awards for four years is as follows:

	YR 1 (FY 03-04)	YR 2 (FY 04-05)	YR 3 (FY 05-06)	YR 4 (FY 06-07)
Avg. Award for Tuition & Fees *	\$ 2,820	\$ 2,961	\$ 3,109	\$ 3,264
Annual Education Allowance **	\$ 600	\$ 600	\$ 600	\$ 600
Total Per Student Award Amt.	\$ 3,420	\$ 3,561	\$ 3,709	\$ 3,864
No. of students receiving awards	500	500	500	500
Total	\$ 1,710,000	\$ 3,561,000	\$ 5,563,500	\$ 7,728,000

* According to the SUS, the average SUS matriculation & fees per year (30 semester hours) for a Florida resident for 2001-2002 is \$2,559. A five percent increase in tuition is assumed for every year.

** The annual education allowance used for this estimate is the same amount of annual education allowance awarded to Bright Futures Academic Scholars.

B. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

None.

C. **DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:**

The private sector would directly benefit from this legislation providing the availability of 500 scholarship loan awards. Currently, there are 30 institutions with state-approved teacher preparation programs. Twenty of those eligible institutions are private.

D. **FISCAL COMMENTS:**

With the award amount tied to tuition and fees, the amount required to fund the program will rise with any increase in the amount required for tuition and fees. Additionally, it is unclear which fees are to be included in the calculation of the award amount. The bill does not specify "required" fees.

The bill requires the Legislature to annually appropriate an amount sufficient to carry out the provisions of this bill, which must include funding for the participation of at least 500 students annually.

III. CONSEQUENCES OF ARTICLE VII, SECTION 18 OF THE FLORIDA CONSTITUTION:

A. **APPLICABILITY OF THE MANDATES PROVISION:**

HB 69 does not require counties or municipalities to spend funds or take an action requiring the expenditure of funds.

B. **REDUCTION OF REVENUE RAISING AUTHORITY:**

HB 69 does not reduce the authority that municipalities or counties have to raise revenues in the aggregate.

C. **REDUCTION OF STATE TAX SHARED WITH COUNTIES AND MUNICIPALITIES:**

HB 69 does not reduce the percentage of a state tax shared with counties or municipalities.

IV. COMMENTS:

A. **CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES:**

HB 69 does not appear to violate any constitutional provisions.

B. **RULE-MAKING AUTHORITY:**

The State Board of Education is required to adopt rules regarding payment schedules and applicable interest rates, pursuant to sections 240.451 and 240.465, F.S. DOE is authorized to adopt rules pursuant to sections 120.536(1) and 120.54, F.S., to administer the provisions of the bill.

C. OTHER COMMENTS:

The bill is silent regarding those recipients who may stop taking courses, for whatever reason, and never complete a program of study leading to a degree in an approved teacher preparation program. While the bill provides that any scholarship recipient who fails to teach is responsible for repaying the loan plus interest, the bill is silent as to the conditions and timeframe for repayment for students who receive awards but fail to complete the required program. Repayment of the scholarship loan, either monetarily or through teaching service, is not triggered until a program has been completed. The bill stipulates that the repayment of the scholarship loan must be completed ten years after the completion of a program of study. It is unclear when the repayment period will begin and end for a recipient who never completes a program of study.

The bill does not specify how eligible associate in arts programs will be identified. In general, all A.A. programs are transferable to approved teacher preparation programs. A community college representative has reported that Florida public community colleges do not typically award A.A. degrees in a particular major, such as English, Biology, or Teacher Education, although there are an estimated ten that do. The Division of Community Colleges of the Department of Education reports that the Community College System currently offers three common prerequisite teacher preparation courses as a part of the statewide teacher preparation curriculum.

It is unclear how students enrolled in an A.A. program that is transferable to a state approved teacher preparation program at a state university or eligible independent institution will be identified. According to the State University System, most students who have been admitted to and are enrolled in a teacher preparation program are juniors or seniors. It appears that a freshman or sophomore attending a community college would be eligible for an award but not one attending a state university or an eligible private postsecondary institution.

V. AMENDMENTS OR COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE CHANGES:

N/A

VI. SIGNATURES:

COMMITTEE ON COMMITTEE ON COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES:

Prepared by:

Staff Director:

Maria L. Eckard

Betty H. Tilton, Ph.D.