

By Senator Clary

7-178-02

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A bill to be entitled

An act relating to Florida School Improvement Academic Trust Fund matching grants; creating s. 236.1226, F.S.; creating the Florida School Improvement Academic Trust Fund matching grant program; providing legislative intent; requiring the Commissioner of Education to specify certain procedures; specifying uses of funds; providing for disbursement of funds; providing for district-level and school-level administration of funds; providing an effective date.

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

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

236.1226 Florida School Improvement Academic Trust Fund matching grants.--

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

1 (2) MATCHING GRANTS.--The Florida School Improvement
2 Academic Trust Fund shall be used to provide matching grants
3 to the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind Endowment
4 Fund and to any public school district education foundation
5 that meets the requirements of this section and is recognized
6 by the 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 the improvement of schools and academic achievement within
18 the school district or school, and shall not be expended for
19 the construction of facilities or for the support of
20 interscholastic athletics. Neither a public school district
21 education foundation nor the Florida School for the Deaf and
22 the Blind may accept or purchase facilities for which the
23 state will be asked for operating funds unless the Legislature
24 has granted prior approval for such acquisition.

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

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

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

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

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

24 (d) Matching dollars shall be distributed at the end
25 of the fourth quarter of each school district calendar year.
26 If the total of the amounts to be distributed in any quarter
27 pursuant to this subsection exceeds the amount of funds
28 remaining from specific appropriations made for the
29 implementation of this section, all grants shall be
30 proportionately reduced so that the total of matching grants
31 distributed does not exceed available appropriations.

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

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

25 (c) Each public school district education foundation
26 and the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind shall be
27 responsible for proper expenditure of the funds received
28 pursuant to this section.

29 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2002.
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SENATE SUMMARY

Creates the Florida School Improvement Academic Trust
Fund matching grant program. Provides legislative intent.
Requires the Commissioner of Education to specify certain
procedures. Specifies uses of funds. Provides for
disbursement of funds. Provides for district-level and
school-level administration of funds.