

By the Committee on Education; and Senators Wise and Baker

581-2064-05

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A bill to be entitled
An act relating to student financial
assistance; providing legislative intent;
creating the Florida Independent Collegiate
Assistance (FICA) Grant Program, for the
purpose of providing grants to certain students
who attend certain nonpublic institutions of
higher education and are enrolled in programs
leading to specified occupations; requiring the
Department of Education to administer the
program; providing for eligibility; defining
the term "eligible nonpublic institution of
higher education"; providing for rulemaking by
the State Board of Education; providing an
effective date.

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

Section 1. Florida Independent Collegiate Assistance
Grant Program; legislative intent; creation; administration;
eligibility; definitions; rulemaking.--

(1) INTENT.--The Legislature finds and declares that
residents of this state who seek higher education in the state
through nonpublic institutions licensed by the Commission for
Independent Education are an integral part of the higher
education system in this state. The Legislature finds that a
significant number of state residents choose to pursue higher
education at these institutions and that these institutions
and the students they educate and train make a substantial
contribution to the development of the state's economy. The
Legislature intends to create a grant program that is not

CODING: Words ~~stricken~~ are deletions; words underlined are additions.

1 based upon a student's financial need or other criteria upon
2 which most financial-aid programs are based, but to create a
3 tuition-assistance program for state residents.

4 (2) CREATION.--There is created the Florida
5 Independent Collegiate Assistance Grant Program, or FICA Grant
6 Program.

7 (3) ADMINISTRATION.--The Department of Education shall
8 administer the FICA Grant Program.

9 (4) ELIGIBILITY.--The Department of Education shall
10 issue an access grant under the FICA Grant Program to any
11 full-time student who:

12 (a) Meets the requirements for residency for student
13 eligibility as provided in section 1009.40(1)(a)2., Florida
14 Statutes, except as otherwise provided in this section;

15 (b) Is enrolled as a full-time undergraduate student
16 at an eligible nonpublic institution of higher education as
17 defined in this section and is seeking an associate's degree
18 or higher;

19 (c) Is making satisfactory academic progress as
20 defined by the nonpublic institution of higher education in
21 which the student is enrolled; and

22 (d) Is enrolled in an undergraduate degree program
23 that leads to employment in one of the top fifteen
24 occupations, in numbers of annual openings, as listed on the
25 Florida Statewide Targeted Occupations List of the Agency for
26 Workforce Innovation, at the time of initial enrollment. The
27 Commission for Independent Education shall develop the
28 criteria and priorities by rule for the list of top 15
29 occupations and eligibility requirements and shall match
30 standard occupational classification titles on the lists of
31

1 the Agency for Workforce Innovation with Classification of
2 Instructional Programs codes for licensed training programs.

3 (5) DEFINITION.--As used in this section, the term
4 "eligible nonpublic institution of higher education" means an
5 institution:

6 (a) That is licensed by the Commission for Independent
7 Education under chapter 1005, Florida Statutes, is accredited
8 by an accrediting agency that is recognized by the United
9 States Secretary of Education as a reliable authority as to
10 the quality of education or training offered at its accredited
11 institutions, and has established performance requirements for
12 student achievement, which shall include minimum objective
13 quantitative standards, including completion rates and
14 placement rates; and

15 (b) Whose students are ineligible to participate in
16 the Access to Better Learning and Education Grant Program
17 (ABLE) or the Florida Resident Access Grant Program (FRAG).

18 (6) RULEMAKING.--The State Board of Education shall
19 adopt rules to administer the Florida Independent Collegiate
20 Assistance Grant Program.

21 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2005.

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23 STATEMENT OF SUBSTANTIAL CHANGES CONTAINED IN
24 COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR
25 Senate Bill 1256

26 The Committee Substitute amends the student eligibility
27 criteria for participation in the Florida Independent
28 Collegiate Assistance Grant Program. The change is intended to
29 reduce the number of students who may potentially be eligible
30 to participate in the tuition assistance program. At the time
31 of initial enrollment, a student must be enrolled in a program
that would lead to employment in one of the top 15 occupations
listed on the Statewide Targeted Occupations List of the
Agency for Workforce Innovation.