

The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Appropriations

BILL: CS/CS/SB 2

INTRODUCER: Appropriations Committee (Recommended by Appropriations Subcommittee on Higher Education); Education Committee; and Senator Galvano

SUBJECT: Higher Education

DATE: February 24, 2017 REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	<u>Bouck</u>	<u>Graf</u>	<u>ED</u>	<u>Fav/CS</u>
2.	<u>Sikes</u>	<u>Elwell</u>	<u>AHE</u>	<u>Recommend: Fav/CS</u>
3.	<u>Sikes</u>	<u>Hansen</u>	<u>AP</u>	<u>Fav/CS</u>

Please see Section IX. for Additional Information:

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE - Substantial Changes

I. Summary:

CS/CS/SB 2 establishes the “Florida Excellence in Higher Education Act of 2017” to expand financial aid provisions and modify programmatic mechanisms to assist students in accessing higher education and incentivize postsecondary institutions to emphasize on-time graduation. The bill also expands and enhances policy and funding options for state universities to recruit and retain exemplary faculty, enhance the quality of professional and graduate schools, and upgrade facilities and research infrastructure.

Specifically, the bill:

- Modifies the state university and Florida College System institution performance accountability metrics and standards to promote on-time student graduation.
- Increases student financial aid and tuition assistance by:
 - Expanding the Florida Bright Futures Academic Scholars (FAS) award to cover 100 percent of tuition and specified fees plus \$300 per fall and spring semester for textbooks and college-related expenses;
 - Expanding eligibility for the Benacquisto Scholarship Program to include eligible students graduating from out of state; and
 - Revising the state-to-private match requirements for contributions to the First Generation Matching Grant Program from 1:1 to 2:1.
 - Establishing the Florida Farmworker Student Scholarship Program for farmworkers and the children of farmworkers.

- Requires each state university board of trustees to adopt a resident and non-resident undergraduate block tuition policy.
- Strengthens “2+2” articulation by establishing the “2+2” targeted pathway program.
- Requires school districts to provide notification to students about applying acceleration mechanism credit to a postsecondary degree.
- Establishes the World Class Faculty and Scholar Program to fund and support the efforts of state universities to recruit and retain exemplary faculty and research scholars and specifies that funding for the program will be as provided in the General Appropriations Act (GAA).
- Establishes the State University Professional and Graduate Degree Excellence Program to fund and support the efforts of state universities to enhance the quality and excellence of professional schools and graduate degree programs in medicine, law, and business, and specifies that funding for the program will be as provided in the GAA.
- Authorizes the legislature to prioritize funding for certain projects under the Alec P. Courtelis University Facility Enhancement Challenge Grant Program for the 2017-2018 fiscal year, subject to the GAA.
- Links education to job opportunities by modifying requirements of the strategic plan, developed by the Board of Governors (BOG), to require state universities to use data-driven gap analyses to identify internship opportunities for students in high-demand fields.

This bill has an estimated fiscal impact of \$161.8 million. Increasing the FAS award is estimated to cost \$126.2 million from the Educational Enhancement Trust Fund (EETF) for 45,213 students to cover 100 percent of tuition and specified fees, and \$24.9 million from EETF for college-related expenses. Including out-of-state students in the Benacquisto Scholarship Program is estimated to cost \$1.1 million from the General Revenue Fund for 54 scholars. Doubling the state matching funds for the First Generation in College Matching Grant program is estimated to cost an additional \$5.3 million from the General Revenue Fund. The BOG has identified \$4.3 million for projects that have not been completed and which would be eligible for prioritized funding by the legislature under the Alec P. Courtelis University Facility Enhancement Challenge Grant Program.

The fiscal impact for the World Class Faculty and Scholar, State University Professional and Graduate Degree Excellence, and Florida Farmworker Student Scholarship programs is indeterminate. These programs are contingent upon an appropriation in the GAA.

This bill takes effect July 1, 2017.

II. Present Situation:

Under the leadership of the Legislature, the Board of Governors of the State University System (BOG), and the State Board of Education (SBE), Florida’s public universities and colleges continue to maintain focus on improving institutional and student performance outcomes. Furthermore, the ability of the state universities to recruit talented faculty and researchers, make strategic investments in research infrastructure, and connect university research to economic

development, is key to advancing Florida's research and innovation competitiveness and effectiveness.¹

Institutional Accountability

The BOG has established the following accountability mechanisms to maintain a consistent focus on state university excellence:²

- The *Annual Accountability Report*³ tracks performance trends on key metrics over five years.
- The *2025 System Strategic Plan*⁴ provides a long-range roadmap for the System.
- The *University Work Plans*⁵ provide a three-year plan of action.

Additionally, the legislature has established performance-based funding models in recent years to evaluate the performance of Florida's state universities and Florida College System (FCS) institutions based on identified metrics and standards.

State University System Performance-Based Incentive

The State University System (SUS) Performance-Based Incentive is awarded to state universities using performance-based metrics⁶ adopted by the BOG.⁷ The metrics include, but are not limited to, bachelor's degree graduates' employment and wages, average cost per bachelor's degree, a six-year graduation rate, academic progress rates, and bachelor's and graduate degrees in areas of strategic emphasis.

The BOG is required to adopt benchmarks to evaluate each state university's performance on the metrics.⁸ The evaluation measures a state university's achievement of institutional excellence or need for improvement, which determines the university's eligibility to receive performance funding.⁹

¹ Board of Governors, *Draft of Advancing Research and Innovation Legislative Budget Request*, Presentation to the Board of Governors Task Force on University Research (Sept. 22, 2016), available at [http://www.flbog.edu/documents_meetings/0201_1017_7616_10.3.2%20TF-RSRCH%2003b%20LBR%Request%20VPRs%20_2017_18%201aug2016%20Form%201%20\(002\)_JMI.pdf](http://www.flbog.edu/documents_meetings/0201_1017_7616_10.3.2%20TF-RSRCH%2003b%20LBR%Request%20VPRs%20_2017_18%201aug2016%20Form%201%20(002)_JMI.pdf).

² Board of Governors, *Focus on Excellence: Board of Governors' State University System Initiatives*, Presentation to the Committee on Education, The Florida Senate (Dec. 12, 2016), available at http://www.flsenate.gov/PublishedContent/Committees/2016-2018/ED/MeetingRecords/MeetingPacket_3540.pdf.

³ Board of Governors, *2014-15 System Accountability Report*, available at http://www.flbog.edu/about/doc/budget/ar_2014-15/2014_15_System_Accountability_Report_Summary_FINAL_2016-04-28.pdf.

⁴ Board of Governors, *2025 System Strategic Plan*, available at http://www.flbog.edu/board/doc/strategicplan/2025_System_Strategic_Plan_Amended_FINAL.pdf.

⁵ Board of Governors, *2016 Work Plan Reports*, <http://www.flbog.edu/resources/publications/workplan.php> (last visited Jan. 20, 2017).

⁶ Board of Governors, *Performance Funding Model Overview*, available at http://www.flbog.edu/about/budget/docs/performance_funding/Overview-Doc-Performance-Funding-10-Metric-Model-Condensed-Version.pdf.

⁷ Section 1001.92(1), F.S.

⁸ Section 1001.92(1), F.S.

⁹ *Id.*

Preeminent State Research Universities Program

The Preeminent State Research Universities Program is a collaborative partnership between the BOG and the legislature to raise the academic and research preeminence of the highest performing state research universities in Florida.¹⁰ A state university that meets 11 of the 12 academic and research excellent standards specified in law¹¹ is designated a “preeminent state research university.”¹² Currently, the University of Florida and the Florida State University are designated as preeminent state research universities.¹³

A state research university that meets at least 6 of the 12 standards is designated as an “emerging preeminent state research university.”¹⁴ Currently, the University of Central Florida and the University of South Florida-Tampa are designated as emerging preeminent state research universities.¹⁵ Each designated emerging preeminent state research university receives an amount of funding that is equal to one-half of the total increased amount awarded to each designated preeminent state research university.

Unique Courses

A university that is designated a preeminent state research university may require its incoming first-time-in-college (FTIC) students to take a six-credit set of unique courses.¹⁶ The university may stipulate that credit for such courses may not be earned through any acceleration mechanism¹⁷ or any other transfer credit specifically determined by the university.¹⁸

Programs of National Excellence

The BOG is encouraged to establish standards and measures to identify individual programs in state universities that objectively reflect national excellence and make recommendations to the Legislature for ways to enhance and promote such programs.¹⁹

¹⁰ Section 1001.7065(1), F.S.

¹¹ Section 1001.7065(2), F.S. The standards include: incoming freshman academic characteristics (average weighted GPA and average SAT score); institutional ranking nationally; freshman retention rate; six-year graduation rate; national academy membership of institution faculty; research expenditures (2 measures); research expenditure national ranking; patents awarded annually; doctoral degrees awarded annually; postdoctoral appointees annually; and institutional endowment.

¹² Section 1001.7065(3)(a), F.S.

¹³ Board of Governors, State University System of Florida, *System Summary of University Work Plans 2016*, at 10, available at

http://www.flbog.edu/about/doc/budget/workplan_2016/2016_SYSTEM_WORK_PLAN_2016-09-09.pdf

¹⁴ Section 1001.7065(3)(b), F.S.

¹⁵ Board of Governors, *Focus on Excellence: Board of Governors' State University System Initiatives*, Presentation to the Committee on Education, The Florida Senate (Dec. 12, 2016), available at

http://www.flsenate.gov/PublishedContent/Committees/2016-2018/ED/MeetingRecords/MeetingPacket_3540.pdf.

¹⁶ Section 1001.7065(6), F.S.

¹⁷ Acceleration mechanisms include Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE), credit by examination, and dual enrollment.

¹⁸ Section 1001.7065(6), F.S.

¹⁹ Section 1001.7065(8), F.S.

Florida College System Performance-Based Incentive

The FCS Performance-Based Incentive is awarded to FCS institutions using metrics adopted by the SBE. The metrics must include retention rates; program completion and graduation rates; postgraduation employment, salaries, and continuing education for workforce education and baccalaureate programs, with wage thresholds that reflect the added value of the certificate or degree; and outcome measures appropriate for associate of arts degree recipients.²⁰ The SBE is required to adopt benchmarks to evaluate each institution's performance on the metrics for eligibility to receive performance funding.²¹

Distinguished Florida College System Institution Program

The Distinguished FCS Institution Program is a collaborative partnership between the SBE and the Legislature to recognize the excellence of Florida's highest-performing FCS institutions.²²

The excellence standards include:

- A 150 percent-of-normal-time completion rate²³ of 50 percent or higher, as calculated by the Division of Florida Colleges.
- A 150 percent-of-normal-time completion rate for Pell Grant recipients of 40 percent or higher, as calculated by the Division of Florida Colleges.
- A retention rate of 70 percent or higher, as calculated by the Division of Florida Colleges.
- A continuing education, or transfer, rate of 72 percent or higher for students graduating with an associate of arts degree, as reported by the Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program (FETPIP).
- A licensure passage rate on the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN) of 90 percent or higher for first-time exam takers, as reported by the Board of Nursing.
- A job placement or continuing education rate of 88 percent or higher for workforce programs, as reported by FETPIP.
- A time-to-degree for students graduating with an associate of arts degree of 2.25 years or less for first-time-in-college students with accelerated college credits, as reported by the Southern Regional Education Board.

An FCS institution that meets 5 of the 7 excellence standards is designated as a distinguished college.²⁴

Developmental Education

Developmental education is instruction through which a high school graduate who applies for any college credit program may attain the communication and computation skills necessary to

²⁰ Section 1001.66(1), F.S.

²¹ *Id.* Rule 6A-14.07621, F.A.C., provides a description of the metrics and benchmarks, and calculations for performance funding.

²² Section 1001.67, F.S.

²³ Rule 6A-14.07621(3)(b), F.A.C. The normal-time-completion rate captures the outcomes of a cohort of full-time, FTIC students who graduate within the amount of time is dependent on the catalogue time for the academic program.

²⁴ Section 1001.67(1)-(2), F.S.

successfully complete college credit instruction.²⁵ Developmental education may be delivered through a variety of delivery strategies described in law.²⁶

Each FCS institution board of trustees is required to develop a plan to implement the developmental education strategies defined in law²⁷ and rules²⁸ of the SBE.²⁹ A university board of trustees may contract with an FCS institution to provide developmental education services for their students in need of developmental education.³⁰ Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU) is also authorized to offer developmental education.³¹

Student Financial Aid and Tuition Assistance

Various student financial aid and tuition assistance programs have been created statutorily to assist students in accessing and pursuing higher education in Florida.

Residency Requirements for State Financial Aid Awards and Tuition Assistance

Student eligibility requirements for most state financial aid awards and tuition assistance grants³² include, but are not limited to, residency in this state for no less than one year preceding the award of aid or a tuition assistance grant for specific programs established in law.³³ Residency in this state must be for purposes other than to obtain an education.³⁴ The residency status for financial aid awards and tuition assistance must be determined in the same manner as resident status for tuition purposes.³⁵

To qualify as a Florida resident for tuition purposes, a person or, if that person is a dependent child³⁶ his or her parent or parents³⁷ must have established legal residence in this state and must have maintained legal residence³⁸ in this state for at least 12 consecutive months immediately

²⁵ Section 1008.02(1), F.S.

²⁶ *Id.* Strategies include modularized instruction that is customized and targeted to address specific skills gaps, compressed course structures that accelerate student progression from developmental instruction to college level coursework, contextualized developmental instruction that is related to meta-majors, and corequisite developmental instruction or tutoring that supplements credit instruction while a student is concurrently enrolled in a credit-bearing course.

²⁷ *Id.*

²⁸ Rule 6A-14.030(12), F.A.C.

²⁹ Section 1008.30(5)(a), F.S.

³⁰ Section 1008.30(5)(c), F.S.

³¹ Board of Governors Regulation 6.008(1).

³² See section 1009.40, F.S.

³³ *Id.* at (1)(a)2., F.S. The residency requirement applies to programs under ss. 1009.50, 1009.505, 1009.51, 1009.52, 1009.53, 1009.60, 1009.62, 1009.72, 1009.73, 1009.77, 1009.89, and 1009.89, F.S.

³⁴ *Id.*

³⁵ *Id.*

³⁶ “Dependent child” means any person, whether or not living with his or her parent, who is eligible to be claimed by his or her parent as a dependent under the federal income tax code. Section 1009.21(1)(a), F.S.

³⁷ “Parent” means either or both parents of a student, any guardian of a student, or any person in a parental relationship to a student. Section 1009.21(1)(f), F.S.

³⁸ “Legal resident” or “resident” means a person who has maintained his or her residence in this state for the preceding year, has purchased a home which is occupied by him or her as his or her residence, or has established a domicile in this state pursuant to s. 222.17, F.S. Section 1009.21(1)(d), F.S.

prior to his or her initial enrollment³⁹ in an institution of higher education.⁴⁰ Each institution of higher education determines a student's residency status based on documentation established in law.⁴¹

A dependent child who is a United States citizen may not be denied classification as a resident for tuition purposes based solely upon the immigration status of his or her parent.⁴²

Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program

The Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program (Bright Futures) was established in 1997⁴³ as a lottery-funded scholarship program to reward a Florida high school graduate who merits recognition for high academic achievement. The student must enroll in a degree program, certificate program, or applied technology program at an eligible public or private postsecondary education institution⁴⁴ in Florida after graduating from high school.⁴⁵ Bright Futures consists of three types of awards:⁴⁶

- Florida Academic Scholars (FAS);⁴⁷
- Florida Medallion Scholars (FMS);⁴⁸ and
- Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholars (FGSV) and Florida Gold Seal CAPE Scholars.⁴⁹

Bright Futures award amounts are specified annually in the General Appropriations Act (GAA).^{50,51} A student may use a Bright Futures award for summer term enrollment if funds are available.⁵² However, funds have not been appropriated for Bright Futures summer term awards since the 2000-2001 fiscal year.⁵³

³⁹ Defined as the first day of class at an institution of higher education. Section 1009.21, F.S.

⁴⁰ Section 1009.21(2)(a), F.S.

⁴¹ Section 1009.21(3)(c), F.S.

⁴² Section 1009.21(2)(d), F.S.

⁴³ Section 2, ch. 1997-77, L.O.F.

⁴⁴ A student who receives any award under the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program, who is enrolled in a nonpublic postsecondary education institution, and who is assessed tuition and fees that are the same as those of a full-time student at that institution, receives a fixed award calculated by using the average tuition and fee calculation as prescribed by the Department of Education for full-time attendance at a public postsecondary education institution at the comparable level. Section 1009.538, F.S.

⁴⁵ Sections 1009.53(1) and 1009.531(2)(a)-(c), F.S. Starting with 2012-2013 graduates, a student graduating from high school is able to accept an initial award for 2 years following high school and to accept a renewal award for 5 years following high school graduation.

⁴⁶ Section 1009.53(2), F.S.

⁴⁷ Section 1009.534, F.S.

⁴⁸ Section 1009.535, F.S.

⁴⁹ Section 1009.536, F.S.

⁵⁰ Specific Appropriation 4, 2016-066, L.O.F.

⁵¹ Sections 1009.534 (2), 1009.535 (2), and 1009.536(3), F.S.

⁵² Section 1009.53 (9), F.S.

⁵³ Florida Office of Economic and Demographic Research, Student Financial Aid Impact Conference (March 2015), *available at*

<http://edr.state.fl.us/Content/conferences/financialaidimpact/archives/150303financialaidimpact.pdf>.

Benacquisto Scholarship Program

The Benacquisto Scholarship Program, created in 2014,⁵⁴ rewards any Florida high school graduate who receives recognition as a National Merit Scholar (NMS) or National Achievement Scholar (NAS) and who enrolls in a baccalaureate degree program at an eligible Florida public or independent postsecondary education institution.⁵⁵ Among other statutory eligibility requirements,⁵⁶ the student must earn a standard Florida high school diploma or equivalent⁵⁷ and be a state resident.⁵⁸

The award amounts are as follows:

- At a Florida public postsecondary education institution the award is equal to the institutional cost of attendance less the sum of the student's Bright Futures Scholarship and NMS or NAS award.^{59,60}
- At a Florida independent postsecondary education institution the award is equal to the highest cost of attendance at a Florida public university, as reported by the BOG, less the sum of the student's Bright Futures Scholarship and NMS or NAS award.⁶¹

First Generation Matching Grant Program

The First Generation Matching Grant Program was established in 2006⁶² to enable each state university to provide donors with a matching grant incentive for contributions to create grant-based student financial aid for undergraduate students who demonstrate financial need and whose parents have not earned a baccalaureate degree.⁶³ Funds appropriated for the program must be allocated by the Office of Student Financial Assistance (within the Florida Department of Education) to match private contributions on a dollar-for-dollar basis.⁶⁴

William L. Boyd, IV, Florida Resident Access Grant (FRAG)

The William L. Boyd, IV, FRAG is a tuition assistance program that is available to full-time degree-seeking undergraduate students registered at an independent nonprofit college or

⁵⁴ The Benacquisto Scholarship Program was formerly titled the Florida National Merit Scholar Incentive Program. Section 26, ch. 2016-237, L.O.F.

⁵⁵ Section 1009.893, F.S.

⁵⁶ Section 1009.893(4), F.S.

⁵⁷ Other graduation options include Academically Challenging Curriculum to Enhance Learning (ACCEL) options (s. 1002.3105, F.S.), early high school graduation (s. 1003.4281, F.S.), a high school equivalency diploma (s. 1003.435, F.S.), completion of a home education program (s. 1002.41, F.S.), or earning a high school diploma from a school outside Florida while living with a parent or guardian who is on military or public service assignment outside Florida.

⁵⁸ Section 1009.893(4)(a), F.S. Under section 1009.40(1)(a)2., F.S., the student must meet the requirements of Florida residency for tuition purposes under s. 1009.21, F.S.; see also Rule 6A-10.044, F.A.C.

⁵⁹ The National Merit Scholarship Corporation discontinued the National Achievement Scholarship Program with the conclusion of the 2015 program,

<http://www.nationalmerit.org/s/1758/interior.aspx?sid=1758&gid=2&pgid=433> (last visited Jan. 20, 2017).

⁶⁰ Section 1009.893(5)(a), F.S.

⁶¹ *Id.* at (5)(b)

⁶² Section 1, ch. 2006-73, L.O.F.

⁶³ Section 1009.701(1), F.S.

⁶⁴ *Id.* at (2)

university which is located in and chartered by the state; which is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools; which grants baccalaureate degrees; which is not a state university or FCS institution; and which has a secular purpose.⁶⁵

Stanley G. Tate Florida Prepaid College Program

The Florida Prepaid College Program (Prepaid Program) provides families an affordable and secure way to save for tuition and specified fees at Florida's postsecondary institutions.⁶⁶ The Prepaid Program allows a family to pay for tuition and specified fees in advance of enrollment in a state postsecondary institution at a rate lower than the projected corresponding cost at the time of actual enrollment.⁶⁷ These payments are invested in a manner that yields sufficient interest to generate the difference between the prepaid amount and the cost of tuition and specified fees at the time of actual enrollment. For the Fall 2014 semester, 57,945 students used a Florida Prepaid College Plan at a state university.⁶⁸

Tuition Incentives

State universities are authorized to implement flexible tuition policies to further assist students in accessing and pursuing higher education in our state.

Block Tuition

The BOG is authorized to approve a proposal from a university board of trustees to implement flexible tuition⁶⁹ policies including, but not limited to, block tuition.⁷⁰ The block tuition policy for resident undergraduate students or undergraduate-level courses must be based on the established per-credit-hour undergraduate tuition.⁷¹ The block tuition policy for nonresident undergraduate students must be based on the established per-credit-hour undergraduate tuition and out-of-state fee.⁷² The BOG has not received a block tuition policy proposal for approval from any state university.⁷³

2+2 Articulation and Academic Notification

It is the intent of the Legislature to facilitate articulation and seamless integration of the K-20 education system by building, sustaining, and strengthening relationships among the various education sectors and delivery systems within the state.⁷⁴

⁶⁵ Section 1009.89(1) and (3), F.S.

⁶⁶ Florida Prepaid College Board 2015 Annual Report, *available at* http://www.itppv.com/documents/pdf/fpcb_2015_annual_report_web.pdf.

⁶⁷ Section 1009.98, F.S.

⁶⁸ ⁶⁸ Florida Prepaid College Board 2015 Annual Report, *available at* http://www.itppv.com/documents/pdf/fpcb_2015_annual_report_web.pdf.

⁶⁹ Section 1009.01, F.S., defines tuition as the basic fee charged to a student for instruction provided by a public postsecondary education institution in this state.

⁷⁰ Section 1009.24(15)(a), F.S.

⁷¹ Section 1009.24(15)(a)3., F.S.

⁷² Section 1009.24(15)(a)3., F.S.

⁷³ Board of Governors, *2017 Legislative Bill Analysis for SB 2* (Jan. 18, 2017), at 4.

⁷⁴ Section 1007.01(1), F.S.

Additionally, it is also the intent of the Legislature that a variety of articulated acceleration mechanisms be available for secondary and postsecondary students attending public education institutions.⁷⁵ These mechanisms should shorten the time necessary for students to fulfill high school and postsecondary education requirements, broaden the scope of curricular options available to students, and increase the depth of study in a particular subject.⁷⁶

2+2 Articulation

The SBE and the BOG are required to enter into a statewide articulation agreement to preserve Florida's "2+2" system of articulation, facilitate the seamless articulation of student credit across and among Florida's education entities, and reinforce the articulation and admission policies specified in law.⁷⁷

The articulation agreement must provide that every associate in arts graduate of an FCS institution has met all general education requirements, has indicated a baccalaureate institution and program of interest by the time the student earns 30 semester hours, and must be granted admission to the upper division, with certain exceptions,⁷⁸ of a state university or an FCS institution that offers a baccalaureate degree.⁷⁹ However, eligibility for admission to a state university does not provide to a transfer student guaranteed admission to the specific university or degree program that the student chooses.⁸⁰

Academic Notification

Articulated acceleration mechanisms include, but are not limited, to Advanced Placement (AP), Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE), International Baccalaureate (IB), credit by examination, and dual enrollment.⁸¹ The Department of Education is required to annually identify and publish the minimum scores, maximum credit, and course or courses for which credit must be awarded for specified examinations.⁸² The Articulation Coordinating Committee (ACC)⁸³ has established passing scores and course and credit equivalents for examinations specified in law.^{84,85} The credit-by-exam equivalencies have been adopted in rule by the SBE.⁸⁶

⁷⁵ Section 1007.27(1), F.S.

⁷⁶ Section 1007.27(1), F.S.

⁷⁷ Section 1007.23(1), F.S.

⁷⁸ Section 1007.23(2)(a), F.S., exceptions include limited access programs, teacher certification programs, and those requiring an audition.

⁷⁹ Section 1007.23(2)(a), F.S.

⁸⁰ Board of Governors Regulation 6.004(2)(b)

⁸¹ Section 1007.27(1), F.S.

⁸² Section 1007.27(2), F.S.

⁸³ The Articulation Coordinating Committee (ACC) is established by the Commissioner of Education in consultation with the Chancellor of the SUS, to make recommendations related to statewide articulation policies regarding access, quality, and data reporting. The ACC serves as an advisory body to the Higher Education Coordinating Council, the SBE, and BOG.

⁸⁴ Section 1007.27(2), F.S.

⁸⁵ Florida Department of Education, *Articulation Coordinating Committee Credit by Exam Equivalencies* (Initially adopted Nov. 14, 2001), available at <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/5421/urlt/0078391-acc-cbe.pdf>.

⁸⁶ Rule 6A-10.024, F.A.C.

Each FCS institution and state university must award credit for specific courses for which competency has been demonstrated by successful passage of one of the examinations associated with the identified acceleration mechanisms.⁸⁷

The law also requires the Commissioner of Education to appoint faculty committees representing secondary and public postsecondary education institutions to identify postsecondary courses that meet high school graduation requirements and equivalent high school credits earned through dual enrollment.⁸⁸ Additionally, the commissioner must recommend such courses to the SBE.⁸⁹ The dual enrollment course-to-high school subject area equivalency list specifies postsecondary courses that when completed earn both high school and college credit.⁹⁰ All high schools must accept these dual enrollment courses toward meeting the standard high school diploma requirements.⁹¹

Faculty Recruitment and Infrastructure Investments

State University Research and Development

According to the Board of Governors of the State University System of Florida (BOG), for Florida to “secure its place as a national leader in the 21st century, it must prove competitive in discovery and innovation.”⁹² The stronger the universities and the State of Florida are in research and development (R&D) performance and reputation, the more competitive Florida becomes in attracting and retaining the best and most promising faculty, students, staff, and companies.⁹³

In a 2014-15 National Science Foundation survey of R&D spending across the United States, the State of Florida ranked 4th on total research and development expenditures among public universities, behind California, Texas, and Michigan.⁹⁴ States with strong and competitive research enterprises support the research infrastructure within their state with a wide range of statewide grant programs to make their state universities more competitive for federal grant opportunities.⁹⁵

In Florida, the state universities have identified the need for funding to support university efforts to:⁹⁶

- Increase research capacity, output, and impact through targeted cluster hiring of talented faculty and strategic investments in research infrastructure.

⁸⁷ *Id.*

⁸⁸ Section 1007.271(9), F.S.

⁸⁹ *Id.*

⁹⁰ Florida Department of Education, *2016-2017 Dual Enrollment Course—High School Subject Area Equivalency List*, available at <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/5421/urlt/0078394-delist.pdf>.

⁹¹ *Id.*

⁹² *Id.*

⁹³ *Id.*

⁹⁴ Email. Board of Governors (Jan. 12, 2017)

⁹⁵ Board of Governors, *Draft of Advancing Research and Innovation Legislative Budget Request*, Presentation to the Board of Governors Task Force on University Research (Sept. 22, 2016), available at [http://www.flbog.edu/documents_meetings/0201_1017_7616_10.3.2%20TF-RSRCH%2003b%20LBR%20Request%20VPRs%20_2017_18%201aug2016%20Form%201%20\(002\)_JMI.pdf](http://www.flbog.edu/documents_meetings/0201_1017_7616_10.3.2%20TF-RSRCH%2003b%20LBR%20Request%20VPRs%20_2017_18%201aug2016%20Form%201%20(002)_JMI.pdf).

⁹⁶ *Id.*

- Increase and enhance undergraduate student participation in research through undergraduate research programs.
- Connect university research to Florida's industry and economic development through industry-sponsored research at state universities and research commercialization activities.

State University Facilities

In 2002, the legislature established the Alec P. Courtelis University Facility Enhancement Challenge Grant Program (Courtelis Program)⁹⁷ to assist the universities in building high priority instructional and research-related capital facilities, including common areas connecting such facilities.⁹⁸

To be eligible to participate in the Courtelis Program, a university must raise a contribution equal to one-half the total cost of a "facilities construction project" from private nongovernmental sources. The private contributions must be matched by an equal amount of state funds for the "facilities construction project," subject to the General Appropriations Act.⁹⁹

In 2011, the legislature suspended the Courtelis Program state match for donations received on or after June 30, 2011.¹⁰⁰ Existing eligible donations received before July 1, 2011, remain eligible for future matching funds.¹⁰¹ The program may be restarted after \$200 million of the backlog for the Courtelis Program, the Florida College System Institution Facility Enhancement Challenge Grant Program,¹⁰² the Dr. Philip Benjamin Matching Grant Program for Florida College System Institutions,¹⁰³ and the University Major Gifts Program¹⁰⁴ have been matched.¹⁰⁵

As part of the implementation of the Courtelis Program, the Alec P. Courtelis Capital Facilities Matching Trust Fund was created. In 2009, the trust fund was terminated, and all private funds and associated interest earnings were directed to be deposited into the originating university's individual program account.¹⁰⁶

Experiential Learning Opportunities

The BOG is required to develop a strategic plan specifying goals and objectives for the State University System and each constituent university, including each university's contribution to overall system goals and objectives.¹⁰⁷

⁹⁷ Section 875, ch. 2002-387, L.O.F.

⁹⁸ Section 1013.79 (2), F.S.

⁹⁹ Section 1013.79(6), F.S.

¹⁰⁰ Section 1013.79(12), F.S.

¹⁰¹ *Id.*

¹⁰² Section 1011.32, F.S.

¹⁰³ Section 1011.85, F.S.

¹⁰⁴ Section 1011.94, F.S.

¹⁰⁵ Section 1013.79(12), F.S.

¹⁰⁶ Section 1013.79(3), F.S.

¹⁰⁷ Section 1001.706(5)(b), F.S.

The strategic plan must include criteria for designating baccalaureate degree and master's degree programs at specified universities as high-demand programs of emphasis.¹⁰⁸ Fifty percent of the criteria for designation as high-demand programs of emphasis must be based on achievement of performance outcome thresholds determined by the BOG, and 50 percent of the criteria must be based on achievement of performance outcome thresholds specifically linked to:¹⁰⁹

- Job placement in employment of 36 hours or more per week and average full-time wages of graduates of the degree programs 1 year and 5 years after graduation.
- Data-driven gap analyses, conducted by the BOG, of the state's job market demands and the outlook for jobs that require a baccalaureate or higher degree.

In May 2012, the Chair of the BOG issued a call to action to education, business and workforce, and legislative leaders to address Florida's need for future baccalaureate degree attainment.¹¹⁰ In response to the call, the Commission on Higher Education Access and Educational Attainment (Commission), composed of seven members, was established. Among the major products from the Commission's work was a sustainable method for conducting a gap analysis of baccalaureate level workforce demand.¹¹¹

In 2013, the BOG received \$15 million in appropriated funds to provide competitive awards to address high demand program areas identified in the Commission's gap analysis.¹¹² The gap analysis identified computer information and technology, and accounting and finance as high demand programs, requiring at least a bachelor's degree, with more than 1,000 unfilled annual openings in Florida.¹¹³ In March 2014, the BOG approved four partnerships of universities and Florida College System institutions to receive \$15 million in funding for the Targeted Educational Attainment Grant Program, also known as the TEAm Grant Initiative.¹¹⁴

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

This bill establishes the "Florida Excellence in Higher Education Act of 2017" to expand financial aid provisions and modify programmatic mechanisms to assist students in accessing higher education and incentivizing postsecondary institutions to emphasize on-time graduation. The bill also expands and enhances policy and funding options for state universities to recruit and retain the very best faculty, enrich professional and graduate school strength and viability, and upgrade aging facilities and research infrastructure. Specifically, the bill:

¹⁰⁸ Section 1001.706(5)(b)4., F.S.

¹⁰⁹ *Id.*

¹¹⁰ Board of Governors, *Aligning Workforce and Higher Education for Florida's Future* (Nov. 21, 2013), available at http://www.flbog.edu/about/doc/commission-materials/Access-and-Attainment-Comm-FINAL-REPORT-10_29_13_rev.docx.

¹¹¹ *Id.*

¹¹² Board of Governors, *TEAm Grant Initiative Update* (Sept. 21, 2016), available at http://www.flbog.edu/documents_meetings/0201_1005_7558_2.10.1%20ASA%2010a_TEA%20Grant%20Initiative%20Update%20ai_JMI.pdf.

¹¹³ Board of Governors, *Aligning Workforce and Higher Education for Florida's Future* (Nov. 21, 2013), available at http://www.flbog.edu/about/doc/commission-materials/Access-and-Attainment-Comm-FINAL-REPORT-10_29_13_rev.docx.

¹¹⁴ *Id.*

- Modifies the state university and Florida College System institution performance accountability metrics and standards to promote on-time student graduation.
- Increases student financial aid and tuition assistance by:
 - Expanding the Florida Bright Futures Academic Scholars (FAS) award to cover 100 percent of tuition and specified fees plus \$300 per fall and spring semester for textbooks and college-related expenses;
 - Expanding eligibility for the Benacquisto Scholarship Program to include eligible students graduating from out of state; and
 - Revising the state-to-private match requirements for contributions to the First Generation Matching Grant Program from 1:1 to 2:1.
- Requires each state university board of trustees to adopt a resident and non-resident undergraduate block tuition policy for implementation by the fall 2018 semester.
- Strengthens “2+2” articulation by establishing the “2+2” targeted pathway program.
- Requires school districts to provide notification to students about applying acceleration mechanism credit to a postsecondary degree.
- Renames the William L. Boyd, IV, Florida Resident Access Grant (FRAG) Program as the William L. Boyd, IV, Effective Access to Student Education (EASE) Program.
- Establishes the World Class Faculty and Scholar Program to fund and support the efforts of state universities to recruit and retain exemplary faculty and research scholars, and specifies that funding for the program will be as provided in the General Appropriations Act (GAA).
- Establishes the State University Professional and Graduate Degree Excellence Program to fund and support the efforts of state universities to enhance the quality and excellence of professional schools and graduate degree programs in high-impact fields of medicine, law, and business, and specifies that funding for the program will be as provided in the GAA.
- Authorizes the legislature to prioritize funding for certain projects under the Alec P. Courtelis University Facility Enhancement Challenge Grant Program (Courtelis Program) for the 2017-2018 fiscal year, subject to the GAA.
- Links education to job opportunities by modifying requirements of the strategic plan, developed by the Board of Governors of the State University System (BOG) to require state universities to use data-driven gap analyses to identify internship opportunities for students in high-demand fields.
- Conforms a cross reference to s. 1013.79(10), F.S., regarding naming a facility after a living person.

Institutional Accountability (Sections 2, 3, 5, 6, and 11)

The bill strengthens institution accountability by modifying state university and FCS institution performance and accountability metrics and standards to promote on-time student graduation.

State University System Performance-Based Incentive (Section 5)

Section 5 of the bill specifies that the State University System (SUS) performance-based metric for graduation rate must be a 4-year graduation rate.

Currently, the 6-year and 4-year graduation rates for first-time-in-college (FTIC) students within the SUS are approximately 71 percent¹¹⁵ and 44 percent,¹¹⁶ respectively. During the 2015-16 academic year, the 6-year graduation rate ranged from approximately 39 percent at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU) to 87 percent at the University of Florida (UF).¹¹⁷ The 4-year graduation rate during the same period ranged from approximately 14 percent at FAMU to 68 percent at UF.¹¹⁸ In comparison, the 4-year graduation rates for peer universities in other states are 87 percent at the University of Virginia, 81 percent at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill and 75 percent at the University of Michigan.¹¹⁹ The shift in focus from a 6-year to 4-year graduation rate will likely prompt a modification to the State University System (SUS) strategic plan, as well as state university accountability mechanisms, which may assist with elevating the prominence and national competitiveness of the state universities in Florida.

Graduation rates are one of the key accountability measures that demonstrate an institution's effectiveness in serving its FTIC students.¹²⁰ On-time graduation in 4 years with a baccalaureate degree may result in savings related to cost-of-attendance for students and their families. For example, nationally, every extra year beyond 4 years to graduate with a baccalaureate degree costs a student \$22,826¹²¹ at a public 4-year college. This additional time to complete a baccalaureate degree may also result in lost wages owing to delayed entrance into the workforce. The median wage of 2013-14 baccalaureate degree graduates employed full-time one year after graduation is \$35,600.¹²²

Preeminent State Research Universities Program (Section 5)

Consistent with the emphasis on a 4-year graduation rate metric for the SUS Performance-Based Incentive program, section 5 of the bill revises the full-time FTIC student graduation rate metric for the preeminent state research university program from a 6-year to a 4-year rate, and modifies the benchmark for the graduation rate metric from 70 percent to 50 percent. Additionally, this section requires the Board of Governors of the State University System (BOG) to calculate the graduation rate. Currently, the graduation rate is based on data reported annually to the

¹¹⁵ State University System of Florida, *2014-2015 System Accountability Report*, p.7, available at http://www.flbog.edu/about/doc/budget/ar_2014-15/2014_15_System_Accountability_Report_Summary_FINAL_2016-04-28.pdf.

¹¹⁶ Email, Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (Sept. 6, 2016).

¹¹⁷ State University System of Florida, *2014-2015 System Accountability Report*, p.7, available at http://www.flbog.edu/about/doc/budget/ar_2014-15/2014_15_System_Accountability_Report_Summary_FINAL_2016-04-28.pdf.

¹¹⁸ Email, Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (Sept. 6, 2016).

¹¹⁹ *Id.*

¹²⁰ Board of Governors, *2025 System Strategic Plan*, March 2016, p. 26, available at http://www.flbog.edu/board/doc/strategicplan/2025_System_Strategic_Plan_Amended_FINAL.pdf.

¹²¹ Complete College America, *Four-Year Myth: Make College More Affordable. Restore the Promise of Graduating on Time* (2014), p.5, available at <http://completecollege.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/4-Year-Myth.pdf>.

¹²² Board of Governors, *2014-15 System Accountability Report*, p. 6, available at http://www.flbog.edu/about/doc/budget/ar_2014-15/2014_15_System_Accountability_Report_Summary_FINAL_2016-04-28.pdf.

Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System.¹²³ The amount of funding provided to emerging preeminent state research universities is revised from one-half to one-quarter of the total additional funding awarded to preeminent state research universities.

Unique Courses

Section 5 of the bill eliminates the authority for the preeminent state research universities to require FTIC students to take a six-credit unique set of courses. Currently, UF lists two such courses and Florida State University lists 123 such courses.¹²⁴ Students are not able to apply acceleration mechanism or transfer credits toward the unique course requirements.¹²⁵ By deleting the authority for unique courses, the bill provides students more flexibility in applying earned college credits purposefully toward degree requirements.

Programs of Excellence

Consistent with efforts to strengthen institutional accountability to elevate the prominence of state universities, section 5 of the bill changes from a recommendation to a requirement that the BOG establish standards and measures for programs of excellence throughout the SUS and specifies that the programs include undergraduate, graduate, and professional degrees. Additionally, this section requires the BOG to make recommendations to the Legislature for enhancing and promoting such programs by September 1, 2017.

Florida College System Performance-Based Incentive (Section 2)

Section 2 of the bill revises the existing FCS performance metrics for awarding performance-based incentives to FCS institutions, and adds new metrics that emphasize on-time program completion. These revised and new metrics, which must be adopted by the State Board of Education, are:

- A student retention rate, as calculated by the Division of Florida Colleges;
- A 100 percent-of-normal-time program completion and graduation rate for full-time, first-time-in-college students, as calculated by the Division of Florida Colleges, using a cohort definition of “full-time” based on a student’s majority enrollment in full-time terms;
- A continuing education or postgraduation job placement rate for workforce education programs, including workforce baccalaureate degree programs, with wage thresholds that reflect the added value of the applicable degree;
- A new graduation rate metric for FTIC students in associate in arts (AA) programs who graduate with a baccalaureate degree in 4 years after initially enrolling in the AA programs; and
- A new college affordability metric, adopted by the State Board of Education (SBE).

The statewide 4-year graduation rate for a 2009 cohort of students who started at an FCS institution and earned a bachelor’s degree from the FCS or SUS was approximately 4 percent.¹²⁶

¹²³ The Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) calculates the graduation rate as the total number of completers within 150% of normal time divided by the revised adjusted cohort. *2016-17 Glossary*, available at <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/ipeds/VisGlossaryAll.aspx>.

¹²⁴ The Florida Senate staff analysis of the Florida Statewide Course Numbering System (<http://scns.fldoe.org>).

¹²⁵ Section 1001.7065(6), F.S.

¹²⁶ Email, Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (Dec. 29, 2016).

The 4-year graduation rate ranged from zero percent at Florida Keys Community College to approximately 13 percent at Santa Fe College.

The revisions to the FCS institution performance metrics are likely to prompt a modification to the SBE strategic plan for the FCS, as well as changes in the FCS accountability mechanisms, which may direct FCS institutional efforts toward on-time graduation.

Distinguished Florida College System Institution Program (Section 3)

Section 3 of the bill emphasizes on-time graduation by revising the excellence standards for the Distinguished FCS Institution Program. Specifically, section 3 of the bill:

- Changes the normal-time completion rate metric from 150 percent to 100 percent for full-time, first-time-in-college students;
- Changes the normal-time completion rate metric for full-time, first-time-in-college Pell Grant recipients from 150 percent to 100 percent;
- Specifies that the job placement metric must be based on the wage thresholds that reflect the added value of the applicable certificate or degree; and specifying that the continuing education and job placement metric does not apply to AA degrees; and
- Replaces the time-to-degree metric with an excess-hours rate metric of 40 percent or lower of AA degree recipients who graduate with 72 or more credit hours.

The modifications to the excellence standards may guide institutional efforts toward helping students graduate timely.

Developmental Education (Section 11)

Section 11 of the bill strengthens developmental education instruction by emphasizing the focus on instructional strategies specified in law¹²⁷ in the delivery of developmental education instruction by a state university. FAMU is the only state university within the SUS that provides developmental education.¹²⁸ In accordance with the bill modifications, FAMU may need to revise its developmental education program to incorporate the developmental education strategies specified in law. Currently, each FCS institution board of trustees is required to develop a plan to implement the developmental education strategies defined in law.¹²⁹

Student Financial Aid and Tuition Assistance (Sections 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, and 21)

Sections 15 through 21 of the bill expand student financial aid and tuition assistance programs, which may help to address financial insecurity concerns of students, and their families, as they consider higher education options in Florida. These sections may assist students with paying for higher education, graduating on time, and incurring less education-related debt. Additionally, these sections may assist Florida's postsecondary education institutions in recruiting and retaining talented and qualified students.

¹²⁷ Section 1008.02, F.S.

¹²⁸ BOG Regulation 6.008(1).

¹²⁹ Section 1008.30(5)(a), F.S.

Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program – Summer Funding (Section 15)

Section 15 of the bill expresses the intent to provide summer term funding for Florida Bright Futures Scholarship awards which, at a minimum, supports enrollment for Florida Academic Scholars (FAS).

Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program – Florida Academic Scholars (Section 16)

Section 16 of the bill increases the FAS award amount to cover 100 percent of public postsecondary education institution tuition and certain tuition-indexed fees¹³⁰ plus \$300 for textbooks and college-related expenses during fall and spring terms, beginning in the fall 2017 semester.

The table below shows the current and projected FAS award per credit hour:

Current 2016-17 FAS Per-Credit-Hour Award¹³¹	Projected 2017-18 FAS Average Per-Credit-Hour Award
\$103 at 4-year institutions	\$198.11 at 4-year institutions ¹³²
\$63 at two-year institutions	\$106.74 at two-year institutions ¹³³

The 2016-17 GAA provided \$217.3 million for the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program. From that appropriation, \$104.2 million¹³⁴ is the estimated cost for FAS awards. The change in the FAS award to 100 percent of tuition and specified fees is estimated to cost an additional \$126.2 million for 45,213 students¹³⁵ in the 2017-18 fiscal year.¹³⁶ The bill also includes \$300 per semester for textbooks and other education-related expenses, which is estimated to cost \$24.9

¹³⁰ The tuition-indexed fees specified in SB 2 include financial aid, capital improvements, technology enhancements, equipping buildings, or the acquisition of improved real property, and technology (s. 1009.22, F.S.); activity and service, financial aid, technology, capital improvements, technology enhancements, and equipping student buildings or the acquisition of improved real property (s. 1009.23, F.S.); financial aid, Capital Improvement Trust Fund, activity and service, health, athletic, technology, transportation access, and includes the tuition differential (s. 1009.24, F.S.).

¹³¹ Specific Appropriation 4, Ch. 2016-66, L.O.F.

¹³² State University System of Florida, *Tuition and Required Fees, 2016-17*, available at http://www.flbog.edu/about/doc/budget/tuition/Tuition_Fees_%202016-17.pdf.

¹³³ Florida Department of Education, Florida College System, *2016 Fact Book*, Table 7.8T, available at <http://fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/15267/urlt/FactBook2016.pdf>.

¹³⁴ Office of Economic & Demographic Research, *Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program* (Nov. 16, 2016) <http://edr.state.fl.us/Content/conferences/financialaid/ConsensusDetail.pdf>.

¹³⁵ *Id.*

¹³⁶ The Florida Senate staff analysis based on data from the Student Financial Aid Education Estimating Conference (November 16, 216) available at <http://edr.state.fl.us/Content/conferences/financialaid/ConsensusDetail.pdf>, State University System of Florida, *Tuition and Required Fees, 2016-17*, available at http://www.flbog.edu/about/doc/budget/tuition/Tuition_Fees_%202016-17.pdf, and Florida Department of Education, Florida College System, *2016 Fact Book*, Table 7.8T, available at <http://fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/15267/urlt/FactBook2016.pdf>.

million.¹³⁷ The total additional cost for FAS awards is estimated to be \$151.1 million in the 2017-18 fiscal year.¹³⁸

Increasing the FAS award should make postsecondary education more affordable for eligible students. The bill may also help with retaining Florida's talented students in the state since these students have a greater financial incentive to attend a Florida institution.

Benacquisto Scholarship Program (Section 19)

Section 19 of the bill modifies eligibility requirements for the Benacquisto Scholarship Program to attract qualified students from out-of-state and assist these students in paying for higher education in Florida, graduate on time, and incur less education-related debt. Specifically, this section:

- Establishes student eligibility criteria, which only apply to students who are not residents of the state and who initially enroll in a baccalaureate degree program in the 2017-2018 academic year or thereafter, requiring such students to:
 - Physically reside in Florida on or near the campus of the postsecondary education institution in which they enroll;
 - Earn a high school diploma or equivalent or complete a home education program, comparable to Florida; and
 - Be accepted by and enroll full-time in a baccalaureate degree program at an eligible regionally accredited public or private postsecondary education institution.
- Provides that for an eligible student who is not a resident of the state and who attends:
 - A public postsecondary education institution, the award amount must be equal to the institutional cost of attendance¹³⁹ for a resident of the state less the student's National Merit Scholarship. Such student is exempt from out-of-state fees.
 - A private postsecondary education institution, the award amount must be equal to the highest cost of attendance¹⁴⁰ for a resident of the state enrolled at a state university, less the student's National Merit Scholarship.

¹³⁷ Florida Senate staff analysis based on data from the Student Financial Aid Education Estimating Conference (November 16, 216) available at <http://edr.state.fl.us/Content/conferences/financialaid/ConsensusDetail.pdf>.

¹³⁸ The Florida Senate staff analysis based on data from the Student Financial Aid Education Estimating Conference (November 16, 216) available at <http://edr.state.fl.us/Content/conferences/financialaid/ConsensusDetail.pdf>, State University System of Florida, *Tuition and Required Fees, 2016-17*, available at http://www.flbog.edu/about/_doc/budget/tuition/Tuition_Fees_%202016-17.pdf, and Florida Department of Education, Florida College System, *2016 Fact Book*, Table 7.8T, available at <http://fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/15267/urlt/FactBook2016.pdf...>

¹³⁹ The 2016-17 cost of attendance on campus for full time undergraduate Florida resident students includes tuition and fees, books and supplies, room and board, transportation, and other expenses; the average annual cost of attendance for the State University System is \$21,534.98. Board of Governors, *Fall/Spring Cost of Attendance On-Campus for Full-Time Undergraduate Florida Residents 2016-17*, available at http://www.flbog.edu/about/_doc/budget/attendance/CostAttendance2016_17_FINAL.xlsx.

¹⁴⁰ The highest State University System cost of attendance in 2016-17 is \$23,463 at Florida International University.

Of the 320 National Merit Scholars (NMS) and National Achievement Scholars (NAS) who initially enrolled in a Florida college or university in the 2015-16 academic year,¹⁴¹ 266 received an initial award as a Benacquisto Scholar.¹⁴² The other 54 NMS who enrolled in a Florida university during the 2015-16 academic year most likely graduated from out-of-state high schools, and thus were not eligible for the Benacquisto Scholarship. Assuming this number of students remains constant for the 2017-18 academic year, and these out-of-state students otherwise meet the eligibility requirements, the cost to fund the additional out-of-state students is estimated to be \$1.1 million. The modifications to student eligibility requirements may assist the state universities in recruiting and retaining talented and qualified students from other states.

Florida Farmworker Student Scholarship Program (Section 20)

Section 20 of the bill creates the Florida Farmworker Scholarship Program (Farmworker Scholarship), to be administered by the Department of Education (DOE). The DOE may award up to 50 scholarships annually to farmworkers, as defined in s. 420.503, and the children of such farmworkers, who meet the scholarship eligibility criteria. To be eligible for an initial scholarship, a student must:

- Have resident status as required by s. 1009.40 and rules of the State Board of Education;
- Earn a minimum cumulative 3.5 weighted grade point average (GPA) for all high school courses creditable towards a diploma;
- Complete a minimum of 30 hours of community service;
- Have at least a 90 percent attendance rate and not have had any disciplinary action brought against him or her, as documented on the student's high school transcript.

A Farmworker Scholarship recipient, who is enrolled full-time, is eligible for an award equal to 100 percent of tuition and specified fees at a public postsecondary institution. A scholarship recipient must maintain a cumulative 2.5 college GPA to renew the award, and may receive funding for a maximum of 100 percent of the number of credit hours required to complete his or her degree program. The bill specifies that funding for the Farmworker Scholarship is contingent upon an appropriation in the GAA

First Generation Matching Grant Program (Section 17)

Section 17 of the bill expands need-based financial aid by revising the state to private match requirements from a 1:1 match to a 2:1 match. In Fiscal Year 2015-16, 8,234 initial and renewal students received an average award of \$1,289.45, with 13,700 unfunded eligible students reported by postsecondary education institutions.¹⁴³ The increase in the state matching contribution may raise the award amount and make more awards available for eligible students, which may help these students to graduate on time.

¹⁴¹ National Merit Scholarship Corporation, *2014-15 Annual Report* (Oct. 31, 2015), available at http://www.nationalmerit.org/s/1758/images/gid2/editor_documents/annual_report.pdf

¹⁴² Florida Department of Education, Office of Student Financial Assistance, *End-of-Year Report, 2015-16*, Benacquisto Scholarship (FIS), available at: https://www.floridastudentfinancialaidsg.org/pdf/EOY_Reports/2015-16/FIS_2015_2016.pdf.

¹⁴³ Florida Department of Education, Office of Student Financial Assistance, *End-of-Year Report, 2015-16*, First Generation Matching Grant Program (FGMG), available at https://www.floridastudentfinancialaidsg.org/pdf/EOY_Reports/2015-16/FGMG_2015_2016.pdf.

William L. Boyd, IV, Florida Resident Access Grant (FRAG) (Section 18)

Section 18 of the bill renames the William L. Boyd, IV, Florida Resident Access Grant (FRAG) Program as the William L. Boyd, IV, Effective Access to Student Education (EASE) Grant Program.

Stanley G. Tate Florida Prepaid College Program (Section 21)

Section 21 of the bill specifies that a Florida Prepaid College Program plan (Prepaid Plan), purchased prior to July 1, 2024, is only obligated to pay for the credit hours in which a student is enrolled. In effect, this section of the bill protects a student under any potential block tuition policy by limiting the Prepaid Plan obligation to actual hours in which the student enrolls, even if the student enrolls in fewer credit hours than the rate at which the block tuition is set.

Tuition Incentives (Section 14)

Section 14 of the bill requires each state university to establish a block tuition and fee policy, which is intended to provide students with a financial incentive to enroll in additional courses and graduate in 4 years with a baccalaureate degree.

Block Tuition (Section 14)

Section 14 of the bill requires each state university board of trustees to adopt, for implementation by the fall 2018 semester, a block tuition policy for resident and non-resident undergraduate students. Under such a policy, students may take additional courses without paying increased tuition, which gives students a financial incentive to take more courses within an academic term or year and which may help students to graduate earlier.¹⁴⁴

Institutions that have implemented a block tuition policy include, but are not limited to, the University of Michigan, the Ohio State University and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC).¹⁴⁵ As an example, UNC allows students to take 12 or more credit hours and assesses a block tuition based on 12 credit hours.¹⁴⁶

2+2 Articulation and Academic Notification (Sections 9 and 10)

Sections 9 and 10 of the bill strengthen “2+2” articulation and improves academic notification by creating mechanisms for expanding locally-developed targeted “2+2” articulation agreements and requiring school districts to provide notification to students about applying acceleration mechanism credit to a postsecondary degree.

¹⁴⁴ Office of Program Policy and Government Accountability (OPPAGA), *The State Has Several Options Available When Considering the Funding of Higher Education*, Report 04-54, August 2004.

¹⁴⁵ Presentation to the Committee on Education, The Florida Senate (Dec. 12, 2016), Office of Program Policy and Government Accountability, *State University System Undergraduate Student Success Overview*, p. 33, available at http://www.flsenate.gov/PublishedContent/Committees/2016-2018/ED/MeetingRecords/MeetingPacket_3540.pdf.

¹⁴⁶ Email, Office of Program Policy and Government Accountability (Nov. 29, 2016).

2+2 Targeted Pathway Program (Section 9)

Section 9 of the bill reinforces the state’s intent to assist students enrolled in associate in arts (AA) degree programs to graduate on time, transfer to a baccalaureate degree program, and complete the baccalaureate degree within 4 years. Accordingly, the bill establishes the “2+2” targeted pathway program to strengthen Florida’s “2+2” system of articulation and improve student retention and on-time graduation. Specifically, section 6 of the bill:

- Requires each public college to execute at least one “2+2” targeted pathway articulation agreement with one or more state universities.
- Requires the “2+2” targeted pathway articulation agreement to provide students who meet specified requirements guaranteed access to the state university and baccalaureate degree program in accordance with the terms of the agreement.
- Establishes student eligibility criteria to participate in a “2+2” targeted pathway articulation agreement. A student must:
 - Enroll in the program before completing 30 credit hours.
 - Complete an associate in arts degree.
 - Meet the university’s transfer admission requirements.
- Establishes requirements for state universities that execute “2+2” targeted pathway articulation agreements with their partner public college. A state university must:
 - Establish a 4-year on-time graduation plan for a baccalaureate degree program.
 - Advise students enrolled in the program about the university’s transfer and degree program requirements.
 - Provide students access to academic advisors and campus events, and guarantee admittance to the state university and degree program.
- Requires the state board governing the public colleges and BOG to collaborate to eliminate barriers to executing “2+2” targeted pathway articulation agreements.

The “2+2” targeted pathway program is consistent with recent efforts by state universities to strengthen regional articulation. The statewide “2+2” articulation agreement established in law¹⁴⁷ does not require a 4-year graduation plan and does not guarantee access to a specific university or degree program. To provide students a path to on-time graduation in 4 years with a baccalaureate degree, some state universities have established articulation agreements with regional public colleges.¹⁴⁸ For instance, the “DirectConnect to UCF”¹⁴⁹ guarantees admission to the University of Central Florida (UCF) with an associate degree from a partner institution, and offers university advising to develop an academic plan and access to UCF campuses for services and events. Similarly, the University of South Florida (USF) “FUSE” program¹⁵⁰ offers students guaranteed admission to a USF System institution. The FUSE program creates an academic pathway that provides a map for taking required courses, advising at USF and the partner

¹⁴⁷ Section 1007.23(2), F.S.

¹⁴⁸ Examples of regional articulation agreements are the “[DirectConnect to UCF](#),” the [University of South Florida “FUSE” program](#), “[TCC2FSU](#),” “[TCC2FAMU](#),” “[FIU Connect4Success](#),” “[Link to FAU](#),” “[2UWF Transfer Student Partnership](#),” and “[UNF/SJR Gateway](#).” The Florida Senate staff analysis.

¹⁴⁹ University of Central Florida, Presentation to the Senate Committee on Education, *DirectConnect to UCF* (Dec. 12, 2016), available at <http://www.flsenate.gov/Committees/Show/ED/Meeting%20Packet/3540/>.

¹⁵⁰ University of South Florida, Presentation to the Senate Committee on Education, *FUSE* (Dec. 12, 2016), available at <http://www.flsenate.gov/Committees/Show/ED/Meeting%20Packet/3540/>.

institution regarding university requirements, a specially-designed orientation session for 2+2 students at the beginning of the program, and access to USF facilities and events.

The value of such targeted “2+2” agreements is to assist AA students in transferring to a state university and graduating on time in 4 years with a baccalaureate degree. In 2014-15, more than 36 percent of AA graduates from the FCS did not apply to the SUS. Forty-five percent of AA graduates from the FCS ultimately enrolled in the SUS.¹⁵¹ The 4-year graduation rate for a 2011 cohort of AA transfer students to the SUS (those who transferred with an AA and graduated in two years) was 25 percent.¹⁵²

Academic Notification (Section 10)

Section 10 of the bill requires district school boards to notify students who enroll in acceleration mechanism courses or take exams about the *credit-by-examination equivalency list* and *dual enrollment and high school subject area equivalency list*. The notification requirement promotes targeted student advising at the secondary school level to inform students about generating college credits through certain acceleration mechanism courses and exams, and applying such credits purposefully to a postsecondary certificate or degree program, to ensure students receive credit for such courses and exams taken during high school.¹⁵³ As a result, the notification may also assist students with higher education planning and affordability considerations.

Faculty Recruitment and Infrastructure Investments (Sections 7, 8, and 22)

The bill establishes the World Class Faculty and Scholar Program and the State University Professional and Graduate Degree Excellence Program, and authorizes funding for certain projects under the Alec P. Courtelis University Facility Enhancement Challenge Grant Program to advance state university national competitiveness.

World Class Faculty and Scholar Program (Section 7)

Section 7 of the bill establishes the World Class Faculty and Scholar Program to elevate the national prominence of state universities in Florida. Specifically, this section:

- Authorizes state university investments in recruiting and retaining talented faculty; and specifies that funding for the program will be as provided in the GAA.
- Expresses that such investments may include, but not be limited to, investments in research-centric cluster hires, faculty research and research commercialization efforts, instructional and research infrastructure, undergraduate student participation in research, professional development, awards for outstanding performance, and postdoctoral fellowships.

¹⁵¹ Board of Governors, *Associate in Arts Transfer Students in the State University System*, Presentation to the BOG Select Committee on 2+2 Articulation, (Mar. 17, 2016), available at http://www.flbog.edu/documents_meetings/0199_0978_7295_6.3.2%202+2%2003b_AA%20Transfer%20data%20points_JMI.pdf.

¹⁵² Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability, *State University System Undergraduate Student Success Overview*, Presentation to the Committee on Education, The Florida Senate (Dec. 12, 2016), available at <http://www.flsenate.gov/Committees/Show/ED/Meeting%20Packet/3540/>.

¹⁵³ Office of The Governor, *Governor Rick Scott Issues “Finish in Four, Save More” Challenge to Universities and Colleges* (May 25, 2016), <http://www.flgov.com/2016/05/25/governor-rick-scott-issues-finish-in-four-save-more-challenge-to-universities-and-colleges/> (last visited Jan. 20, 2017).

- Requires annually, by March 15, the BOG to provide to the Governor, President of the Senate, and Speaker of the House of Representatives, an accountability report which includes specific expenditure information on program funds and the impact of those expenditures in elevating the national competitiveness of the universities, specifically relating to the:
 - Success in recruiting research faculty and the resulting research funding;
 - 4-year graduation rate;
 - Number of undergraduate courses offered with fewer than 50 students; and
 - Increased national academic standing of targeted programs.

This section creates a funding mechanism to assist the state universities with faculty recruitment and retention efforts to attract exemplary faculty and research scholars to Florida, which may ultimately help Florida's state universities improve their national competitiveness. According to the BOG, the "single most significant asset that the state has that will determine Florida's future status in the industries of the future are its universities and their capacity to generate new ideas and innovations through research."¹⁵⁴

State University Professional and Graduate Degree Excellence Program (Section 8)

Section 8 of the bill establishes the State University Professional and Graduate Degree Excellence Program (Degree Excellence Program) to fund and support the efforts of state universities to enhance the quality and excellence of professional schools and graduate degree programs in medicine, law, and business, and expand the economic impact of state universities. Specifically, the bill:

- Authorizes quality improvement efforts of the state universities, and specifies that funding for the program will be as provided in the GAA.
- Expresses that such efforts may include, but not be limited to, targeted investments in faculty, students, research, infrastructure, and other strategic endeavors to elevate the national and global prominence of state university medicine, law, and graduate-level business programs.
- Requires annually, by March 15, the BOG to provide to the Governor, President of the Senate, and Speaker of the House of Representatives, an accountability report which includes specific expenditure information on program funds and the impact of those expenditures in elevating the national and global prominence of the university medicine, law, and graduate-level business programs, specifically relating to the:
 - First-time pass rate on the United States Medical Licensing Examination;
 - First-time pass rate on the Florida Bar Examination;
 - Percentage of graduates enrolled or employed at a wage threshold that reflects the added value of a graduate-level business degree;
 - Advancement in rankings of the state university medicine, law, and graduate-level business programs; and
 - Added economic benefit of the universities to the state.

¹⁵⁴ Board of Governors, *Draft of Advancing Research and Innovation Legislative Budget Request*, Presentation to the Board of Governors Task Force on University Research (Sept. 22, 2016), available at [http://www.flbog.edu/documents_meetings/0201_1017_7616_10.3.2%20TF-RSRCH%2003b%20LBR%20Request%20VPRs%20_2017_18%201aug2016%20Form%201%20\(002\)_JMI.pdf](http://www.flbog.edu/documents_meetings/0201_1017_7616_10.3.2%20TF-RSRCH%2003b%20LBR%20Request%20VPRs%20_2017_18%201aug2016%20Form%201%20(002)_JMI.pdf).

The Degree Excellence Program creates a funding mechanism to boost the excellence of state university professional schools and graduate degree programs in specified programs. Additionally, the Degree Excellence Program may bolster the state universities' efforts to recruit and retain talented students and faculty, which may help to raise the national and international prominence of the state universities and the programs within such universities.

The Degree Excellence Program may also assist in improving the national rankings of the state universities in medicine, law, and business. The table below lists the 2017 U.S. News and World Report rankings¹⁵⁵ for these programs.

Institution	Medicine (Research)¹⁵⁶	Medicine (Primary Care)¹⁵⁷	Law¹⁵⁸	Business¹⁵⁹
Florida Atlantic University	Unranked ¹⁶⁰	Unranked		Unranked
Florida A&M University			RNP ¹⁶¹	Unranked
Florida Gulf Coast University				Unranked
Florida International University	Unranked	Unranked	103	RNP
Florida State University	RNP	87	50	Unranked
University of Central Florida	88	RNP		Unranked
University of Florida	40	62	48	37
University of North Florida				Unranked
University of South Florida	63	67		RNP
University of West Florida				Unranked

Alec P. Courtelis University Facility Enhancement Challenge Grant Program (Section 22)

Section 22 of the bill provides that, notwithstanding the suspension of state matching funds, the legislature may choose for the 2017-18 fiscal year to prioritize funding for certain projects under the Alec P. Courtelis University Facility Enhancement Challenge Grant Program (Courtelis

¹⁵⁵The Florida Senate staff analysis of U.S. News & World Report, *Graduate School Rankings*, <http://grad-schools.usnews.rankingsandreviews.com/best-graduate-schools> (last visited Jan. 20, 2017).

¹⁵⁶ The Florida Senate staff analysis of U.S. News & World Report, *Medical Schools (Research)*, <http://grad-schools.usnews.rankingsandreviews.com/best-graduate-schools/top-medical-schools/research-rankings?int=af3309&int=b3b50a&int=b14409> (last visited Jan. 20, 2017).

¹⁵⁷ The Florida Senate staff analysis of U.S. News & World Report, *Medical Schools (Primary Care)*, <http://grad-schools.usnews.rankingsandreviews.com/best-graduate-schools/top-medical-schools/primary-care-rankings?int=af3309&int=b3b50a&int=aac509> (last visited Jan. 20, 2017).

¹⁵⁸ The Florida Senate staff analysis of U.S. News & World Report, *Law Schools*, <http://grad-schools.usnews.rankingsandreviews.com/best-graduate-schools/top-law-schools> (last visited Jan. 20, 2017).

¹⁵⁹ The Florida Senate staff analysis of U.S. News & World Report, *Business Schools*, <http://grad-schools.usnews.rankingsandreviews.com/best-graduate-schools/top-business-schools/mba-rankings?int=9dc208> (last visited Jan 20, 2017).

¹⁶⁰ “Unranked” indicates a school or program attribute does not align with U.S. News & World Report ranking metrics.

¹⁶¹ “RNP” indicates a ranking not published, which indicates the program is in the bottom 25 percent of the U.S. News & World Report rankings.

Program) with matching funds available prior to June 30, 2011, which have not yet been constructed. Additionally, the bill deletes obsolete references to the Alec P. Courtelis Capital Facilities Matching Trust Fund, which has no cash balance.¹⁶²

Private funds eligible for a state match for new facilities under the Courtelis Program are approximately \$4.3 million.¹⁶³ The authorization to fund these new projects with existing matching funds is likely to affect new construction of university facilities.

Experiential Learning Opportunities (Section 4)

The bill modifies the requirements of the strategic plan, developed by the BOG, to require state universities to use data-driven gap analyses to identify internship opportunities in high-demand fields.

Modifications to BOG's strategic plan emphasizes the value of internships in experiential learning.¹⁶⁴ Through internships, students are likely to gain exposure to relevant on-the-job experience and develop skills critical to securing and maintaining gainful employment in high-demand fields of unmet need.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2017.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

¹⁶² Board of Governors, *2017 Legislative Bill Analysis* of SB 4 (Jan. 18, 2017).

¹⁶³ Board of Governors, *2017 Legislative Bill Analysis* of SB 4 (Jan. 20, 2017).

¹⁶⁴ Governor Scott's "Finish in Four, Save More" challenge encourages universities and colleges to "make it easier for students to get class credit for internships in their fields, which puts students on the path to getting a good paying job." Office of the Governor, *Governor Rick Scott Issues "Finish in Four, Save More" Challenge to Universities and Colleges* (May 25, 2016) <http://www.flgov.com/2016/05/25/governor-rick-scott-issues-finish-in-four-save-more-challenge-to-universities-and-colleges/> (last visited Jan. 20, 2017).

B. Private Sector Impact:

CS/CS/SB 2 provides additional financial aid and tuition assistance to students and families. Specifically, the bill:

- Provides students who qualify for the Florida Academic Scholars (FAS) award an increased tuition and fee benefit, plus \$300 for textbooks and college-related expenses in the fall and spring terms, which will reduce the out-of-pocket cost of education for these students. This may increase the average FAS award by approximately \$3,063 over the average 2015-16 award, from \$2,581 to \$5,644.
- Expands the Benacquisto Scholarship Program to include out-of-state National Merit Scholar students who are accepted by and enroll in an eligible Florida postsecondary education institution, which is likely to provide a significant cost savings to such students. These students will be eligible for an annual award of approximately \$20,500.
- Doubles the state match for the First Generation in College Matching Grant, which is likely to make the matching grant available to more students, or result in an increased award amount. The average award could double from \$1,289 to \$2,578.
- Establishes the Florida Farmworker Student Scholarship Program for farmworkers and the children of farmworkers. Scholarship recipients are eligible for an award equal to 100 percent of tuition and specified fees at a public postsecondary institution. A scholarship recipient enrolled in 30 credit hours at a state university would receive an award of approximately \$6,000.
- Requires a block tuition policy that may provide a cost savings to students, but the potential savings are indeterminate.

C. Government Sector Impact:

The bill has an estimated fiscal impact of \$161.8 million. Specifically, the bill:

- Increases the Florida Academic Scholars (FAS) award, which is estimated to cost an additional \$126.2 million from the Educational Enhancement Trust Fund (EETF) to cover 100 percent of tuition and specified fees, and \$24.9 million from EETF for college-related expenses.
- Includes out-of-state students in the Benacquisto Scholarship Program, which may cost up to an estimated \$1.1 million from the General Revenue Fund for 54 additional scholars.
- Doubles the state match for the First Generation in College Matching Grant program, which may cost up to an additional \$5.3 million from the General Revenue Fund.
- Makes \$4.3 million in projects identified by the Board of Governors of the State University System that have not been completed eligible for prioritized funding by the legislature under the Alec P. Courtelis University Facility Enhancement Challenge Grant Program.
- Requires implementation of a block tuition policy for resident and non-resident undergraduate students at the state universities; however, the potential cost to the state universities in lost tuition revenue is indeterminate.
- Revises the state university and Florida College System performance funding programs, which has no state fiscal impact. However, such revisions may influence

institutional performance relating to the revised metrics, and therefore affect the performance-funding distribution.

The fiscal impact for the World Class Faculty and Scholar, State University Professional and Graduate Degree Excellence, and Florida Farmworker Student Scholarship programs is indeterminate. These programs are contingent upon an appropriation in the GAA.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This bill substantially amends the following sections of the Florida Statutes: 267.062, 1001.66, 1001.67, 1001.7065, 1001.76, 1001.92, 1007.23, 1007.27, 1008.30, 1009.22, 1009.23, 1009.24, 1009.534, 1009.701, 1009.89, 1009.893, and 1013.79.

This bill creates the following sections of the Florida Statutes: 1004.6497 and 1004.6498.

IX. Additional Information:

A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Substantial Changes:

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

CS/CS by Appropriations on February 23, 2017:

The committee substitute:

- Specifies that the Florida College System Performance-Based Incentive must include State Board of Education adopted metrics on a:
 - Student retention rate;
 - 100 percent-of-normal-time program completion and graduation rate, using a cohort definition of “full-time” based on a student’s majority enrollment in full-time terms.
 - Continuing education or postgraduation job placement rate for workforce education programs with wage thresholds that reflect the added value of the applicable degree.
- Clarifies that the distinguished college metrics related to a normal-time completion rate apply only to full-time, first-time-in-college students.
- States the intent to provide, at a minimum, summer term funding for the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program Florida Academic Scholars award.
- Specifies that a Florida Prepaid College Program plan (Prepaid Plan), purchased prior to July 1, 2024, is only obligated to pay for the credit hours in which a student is enrolled. This protects a student under any potential block tuition policy by limiting the Prepaid Plan obligation to actual hours in which the student enrolls, even if the student enrolls in fewer credit hours than the rate at which the block tuition is set.

- Establishes the Florida Farmworker Student Scholarship Program for farmworkers, as defined in s. 420.503, and the children of farmworkers. Scholarship recipients must enroll full-time and are eligible for an award equal to 100 percent of tuition and specified fees at a public postsecondary institution. Initial eligibility criteria for the scholarship includes all of the following:
 - Florida residency as required by s. 1009.40 and rules of the State Board of Education;
 - A minimum 3.5 weighted grade point average on all high school courses;
 - Completion of 30 hours of community service;
 - Having at last a 90 percent attendance rate with no disciplinary action brought against the student.
- Expands and enhances policy and funding options for state universities to recruit and retain the very best faculty, enrich professional and graduate school strength and viability, and upgrade aging facilities and research infrastructure. Specifically, it
 - Establishes the World Class Faculty and Scholar Program to fund and support the efforts of state universities to recruit and retain exemplary faculty and research scholars, and specifies that funding for the program will be as provided in the General Appropriations Act (GAA).
 - Establishes the State University Professional and Graduate Degree Excellence Program to fund and support the efforts of state universities to enhance the quality and excellence of professional schools and graduate degree programs in high-impact fields of medicine, law, and business, and specifies that funding for the program will be as provided in the GAA.
 - Authorizes the legislature to prioritize funding for certain projects under the Alec P. Courtelis University Facility Enhancement Challenge Grant Program (Courtelis Program) for the 2017-2018 fiscal year, subject to the GAA.
 - Links education to job opportunities by modifying requirements of the strategic plan, developed by the Board of Governors of the State University System (BOG) to require state universities to use data-driven gap analyses to identify internship opportunities for students in high-demand fields.

CS by Education on January 23, 2017:

The committee substitute clarifies that:

- The eligibility requirements for out-of-state students to qualify for the Benacquisto Scholarship applies to students who initially enroll in a baccalaureate program in the 2017-18 academic year or later.
- The Benacquisto Scholarship award for an out-of-state student must be equal to the institutional cost of attendance for a resident of this state less the student's National Merit Scholarship.

B. Amendments:

None.