

1                                   A bill to be entitled  
 2           An act relating to the Sunshine Scholarship Program;  
 3           creating s. 1009.895, F.S.; establishing the Sunshine  
 4           Scholarship Program for specified purposes; requiring  
 5           the Department of Education to administer the program;  
 6           providing a definition; requiring certain financial  
 7           aid to be credited to a student's tuition and fees  
 8           before award of a sunshine scholarship; providing  
 9           student eligibility requirements; requiring a student  
 10          to repay the scholarship amount under certain  
 11          circumstances; providing that the program only applies  
 12          to a student's tuition and fees; providing for  
 13          funding; providing for rulemaking; providing an  
 14          effective date.

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

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 18           Section 1.   Section 1009.895, Florida Statutes, is created  
 19   to read:

20           1009.895   Sunshine Scholarship Program.—

21           (1)   There is established the Sunshine Scholarship Program  
 22   to be administered by the Department of Education. The Sunshine  
 23   Scholarship Program shall provide funding for 100 percent of  
 24   tuition and fees for Florida residents pursuing an associate  
 25   degree or career certificate from an eligible postsecondary

26 | institution. The term "eligible postsecondary institution" means  
27 | a Florida College System institution, a career center operated  
28 | by a school district, or a charter technical career center.

29 | Financial aid received from the Pell Grant, the Florida Public  
30 | Student Assistance Grant Program, and the Florida Bright Futures  
31 | Scholarship Program shall be credited to the student's tuition  
32 | and fees before funds from the Sunshine Scholarship Program are  
33 | awarded.

34 | (2) To be eligible to receive a scholarship pursuant to  
35 | this section, a student must:

36 | (a) Be a resident for tuition purposes, as defined in s.  
37 | 1009.21.

38 | (b) Meet the general requirements for student eligibility  
39 | as provided in s. 1009.40, except as otherwise provided in this  
40 | section.

41 | (c) Have a total annual household income equal to or less  
42 | than \$50,000.

43 | (d) Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid  
44 | (FAFSA) for each academic year in which the scholarship is  
45 | sought.

46 | (e) Be accepted by and enrolled in an eligible  
47 | postsecondary institution.

48 | (f) Maintain continuous enrollment as a full-time student  
49 | while receiving the scholarship. "Full-time student" means a  
50 | student enrolled in a minimum of 12 semester hours or the clock

51 hour equivalent.

52 (3) Upon completion of his or her program of study or upon  
53 disenrollment from an eligible postsecondary institution, the  
54 student must reside and work within the state for the same  
55 period of time he or she received funds from the program. If the  
56 student does not reside and work within the state for the  
57 specified period, the student must repay the total amount  
58 awarded, plus an annual interest rate equal to the federal  
59 student loan interest rate in effect when the student entered  
60 the program. The requirements of this subsection do not apply:

61 (a) When a student enlists in the United States Armed  
62 Forces; or

63 (b) While a student is continuously enrolled in a  
64 baccalaureate degree program or higher at a Florida  
65 postsecondary institution. Once the student graduates or  
66 disenrolls from a Florida postsecondary institution, the  
67 requirements of this subsection apply.

68 (4) To remain eligible for the program, a student must  
69 maintain the equivalent of a cumulative grade point average of  
70 2.5 on a 4.0 scale while enrolled at an eligible postsecondary  
71 institution.

72 (5) The Sunshine Scholarship Program applies only to  
73 tuition and fees. Each student is responsible for additional  
74 user fees, textbooks, and other college-related expenses.

75 (6) Funding for the program shall be as provided in the

HB 503

2021

76 | General Appropriations Act.

77 |       (7) The State Board of Education shall adopt rules to  
78 | administer this section.

79 |       Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2021.