

**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.)

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Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Appropriations

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BILL: CS/SB 86

INTRODUCER: Education Committee and Senator Baxley

SUBJECT: Student Financial Aid

DATE: March 30, 2021

REVISED: \_\_\_\_\_

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	<u>Jahnke</u>	<u>Bouck</u>	<u>ED</u>	<b>Fav/CS</b>
2.	<u>Underhill</u>	<u>Elwell</u>	<u>AED</u>	<b>Recommend: Fav/CS</b>
3.	<u>Underhill</u>	<u>Sadberry</u>	<u>AP</u>	<b>Pre-meeting</b>

**Please see Section IX. for Additional Information:**

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE - Substantial Changes

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**I. Summary:**

CS/SB 86 modifies provisions relating to postsecondary financial aid programs, and establishes new financial aid programs for Pell Grant eligible students and students without a high school diploma. Specifically, the bill:

- Requires the Board of Governors (BOG) office to create an online dashboard of data regarding state university graduates, which must include post-graduation salary; student loan debt; debt-to-income ratio; estimated loan payment as a percentage of income; and percentage of graduates who have continued their education.
- Requires each state university board of trustees to adopt procedures to connect undergraduate students to career planning, coaching, and related programs during the first academic year of the student's enrollment.
- Clarifies that postsecondary tuition and fee exemptions apply to a student who is currently in the custody of the Department of Children and Families or a specified relative or nonrelative, or who was at the time he or she reached 18 years of age.
- Modifies general eligibility for state financial aid by:
  - Requiring the BOG, State Board of Education (SBE), and the Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida (ICUF) to each identify and publish a list of career certificate, undergraduate, and graduate degree programs that do not lead directly to employment.
  - Specifying that students initially funded in the 2023-2024 academic year and thereafter, student eligibility for funding for the Bright Futures Scholarship Program and Benacquisto Scholarship Program is determined by enrollment in a program of study not on the list approved by the BOG, SBE, or ICUF.

- Modifies the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program by:
  - Changing that the Florida Academic Scholars (FAS) and Florida Medallion Scholars (FMS) awards shall be specified in the General Appropriations Act (GAA).
  - Specifying that beginning in the 2022-2023 academic year, the number of credit hours funded under a Bright Futures award shall be reduced by the number of credit hours earned through articulated acceleration mechanisms which are accepted by the postsecondary educational institution toward the requirements of a career certificate, an applied technology diploma, an associate in applied science degree, or an associate in science degree or in partial fulfillment of general education requirements for an associate or baccalaureate degree.
  - Creating additional eligibility options for FAS and FMS awards for students who earn an associate degree through dual enrollment or who earn an Advanced Placement Capstone Diploma.
  - Specifying that beginning in the 2022-2023 academic year, the authorization to use the unused portion of a FAS or FMS for graduate study must be for a program not on the approved list by the BOG, SBE, or ICUF.
- Establishes the Florida Bright Opportunities Grant Program for Pell Grant-eligible students with a tuition and registration fee balance at a Florida College System (FCS) institution or career center after application of all federal gift aid and state financial assistance.
- Establishes the Florida Endeavor Scholarship Program for students without a high school diploma or equivalent who are enrolled at a career center or FCS institution.
- Specifies that the 2021-2022 academic year is the final year of initial eligibility for nonresident students to qualify for the Benacquisto Scholarship Program, and modifies that the award shall be specified in the GAA.

For fiscal year 2021-2022, the funding required for the Florida Bright Opportunities Grant Program and the Florida Endeavor Scholarship Program is subject to an appropriation in the General Appropriations Act. The impact on state funding starting in 2022-2023 is expected to be a net positive to the state budget, but is indeterminate at this time. See Section V.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2021.

## **II. Present Situation:**

The present situation for each relevant portions of the bill is discussed under the Effect of Proposed Changes of this bill analysis.

## **III. Effect of Proposed Changes:**

### **Career Planning and Information**

#### *Present Situation*

#### Florida Economic Security Report

The Florida Economic Security Report<sup>1</sup> details the economic outcomes of recent completers from Florida's public postsecondary education institutions. Data from the District Technical

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<sup>1</sup> Section 445.07 F.S.

Centers (DTCs), the Florida College System (FCS), and the State University System of Florida (SUS) are included in this report. The report documents the variation in first and fifth-year earnings among completers who earned certificates, diplomas, or degrees from Florida's three public postsecondary educational systems. The report also presents data on the percentage of completers from various institutions who received public assistance, as well as the percentage of completers that are enrolled in continuing education programs. The average federal debt acquired by all students (not just graduates) is also reported.<sup>2</sup>

#### Florida Education & Training Placement Information Program

The Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program (FETPIP)<sup>3</sup> is a data collection and consumer reporting system established to provide follow-up data on former students and program participants who have graduated, exited or completed a public education or training program within the state of Florida. A major goal of Florida's K-20 Education system is to improve employment and earnings outcomes for all students. This information is part of the performance accountability processes for all parts of the K-20 system and serves as an indicator of student achievement and program needs. The reports provided by FETPIP may assist educators and parents to better prepare and counsel students for success in their future education or career choices.<sup>4</sup>

#### Board of Governors - Baccalaureate Follow-up Study

The Board of Governors (BOG) currently conducts a 1, 5, and 10 year employment and continuing education outcomes study of state university baccalaureate graduates.<sup>5</sup> The study is designed to better understand the employment and education outcomes of graduates over time and provides critical information to students, parents, educators, and policy-makers about the experiences of graduates after completing a baccalaureate degree from the state university system.<sup>6</sup> The BOG uses the results of the study to monitor the progress toward meeting the goals and objectives of the BOG's 2025 System Strategic Plan.

The results of BOG's study found that the majority of graduates were employed 1, 5, and 10 years after graduation, with earnings that increase over time. A significant number of graduates continued to pursue additional education, with many completing at least one additional credential.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, *Economic Security Report 2019* (Feb. 2020) available at [https://www.floridajobs.org/docs/default-source/state-program-reports/2020-state-program-report/2019-esr-\(final\)143322a4cbbb61cbb02aff01004f56df.pdf](https://www.floridajobs.org/docs/default-source/state-program-reports/2020-state-program-report/2019-esr-(final)143322a4cbbb61cbb02aff01004f56df.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> Section 1008.39, F.S.

<sup>4</sup> Florida Department of Education (DOE), *Florida Education & Training Placement Information Program*, <http://www.fldoe.org/accountability/fl-edu-training-placement-info-program/> (last visited Mar. 16, 2021).

<sup>5</sup> Florida Board of Governors (BOG), *Baccalaureate Follow-up Study: Employment and Education Outcomes 1, 5, and 10 Years After Graduation* (August 2020) available at [https://www.flbog.edu/wp-content/uploads/TAWA\\_03b\\_Baccalaureate\\_Follow-up\\_CE.pdf](https://www.flbog.edu/wp-content/uploads/TAWA_03b_Baccalaureate_Follow-up_CE.pdf).

<sup>6</sup> *Id.*

<sup>7</sup> *Id.*

### State University System Career Centers

All of the state universities offer career services to students and alumni. Career services have evolved over time and continue to change to meet the needs of today's students, technological advancements, workforce demands, and campus culture.<sup>8</sup> The directors of the SUS career centers form the Florida Career Centers Consortium and exchange best practices to enhance career readiness for students and alumni.<sup>9</sup> The SUS Career Centers:

- Engage with students early on and frequently to develop career plans;
- Collaborate with faculty to embed career frameworks in curricular offerings;
- Support students with degree and career choices by sharing salary and potential employment options;
- Prepare students for professional work environment by providing soft skill training assistance with professional attire and internship opportunities;
- Connect and partner with employers to ensure graduates are prepared to meet workforce needs; and
- Assist students in securing employment after graduation through online platforms, connecting students with mentors, and career fairs.<sup>10</sup>

### *Effect of Proposed Changes*

The bill creates s. 1006.75, F.S., to establish a new requirement connecting state university undergraduate students to career information. Specifically, the bill:

- Requires the BOG to create an online dashboard by January 1, 2022. The dashboard must present data, by academic discipline, of state university graduates, including at least the following information:
  - Post-graduation median salary 1, 5, and 10 years after graduation;
  - Median student loan debt;
  - Debt-to-income ratio;
  - Estimated monthly loan payment as a percentage of gross monthly income; and
  - The percentage of graduates who have continued their education beyond the baccalaureate level.
- Requires a link to the dashboard to be prominently displayed on each state university's office of admission's website.

Additionally, the bill requires each state university board of trustees to adopt procedures to connect undergraduate students to career planning, coaching, and related programs during the student's first academic year of enrollment. The BOG must approve the procedures by March 1, 2022, which include placing a hold on student registration before the end of each student's first year until the student:

- Registers with the university's career center;
- Completes a career center readiness training module provided by the career center; and

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<sup>8</sup> BOG, *Information Brief, How SUS Career Services Impact Student Success* (October 2019) available at [https://www.flbog.edu/wp-content/uploads/SPC\\_07b\\_Career-Centers-Info-Brief\\_CE.pdf](https://www.flbog.edu/wp-content/uploads/SPC_07b_Career-Centers-Info-Brief_CE.pdf).

<sup>9</sup> BOG, *Career Services and Student Success* (October 2019) available at [https://www.flbog.edu/wp-content/uploads/SPC\\_07\\_October\\_Career-Services-and-Student-Success\\_CE.pdf](https://www.flbog.edu/wp-content/uploads/SPC_07_October_Career-Services-and-Student-Success_CE.pdf).

<sup>10</sup> BOG, *Information Brief, How SUS Career Services Impact Student Success* (October 2019) available at [https://www.flbog.edu/wp-content/uploads/SPC\\_07b\\_Career-Centers-Info-Brief\\_CE.pdf](https://www.flbog.edu/wp-content/uploads/SPC_07b_Career-Centers-Info-Brief_CE.pdf).

- Is directed toward the online dashboard.

## Identification of Certificate and Degree Programs Aligned to Labor Market Demand

### *Present Situation*

#### Board of Governors - Programs of Strategic Emphasis

The Programs of Strategic Emphasis (PSE) exists as one of several tools for aligning the degree production goals of the State University System with the economic and workforce needs of Florida.<sup>11</sup> Periodically, the BOG revises the PSE list through an analysis of the current reports and data of key economic and workforce councils in Florida. These “key councils” include Enterprise Florida, Inc., the Council of 100, the Florida Chamber of Commerce, and the Department of Economic Opportunity.<sup>12</sup> This process identifies occupational areas with high demand for postsecondary graduates and provides an opportunity to identify emerging and evolving business sectors and occupations.<sup>13</sup> The current list of PSE includes 868<sup>14</sup> programs in the following areas:<sup>15</sup>

- Education;<sup>16</sup>
- Healthcare;<sup>17</sup>
- Global Competitiveness;<sup>18</sup>
- STEM;<sup>19</sup> and
- Gap Analysis.<sup>20</sup>

The BOG tracked their baccalaureate graduates into the workforce and found 92 percent of the graduates were employed one year after graduation, with 71 percent employed full-time.<sup>21</sup> The

<sup>11</sup> BOG, *Methodology for Updating Programs of Strategic Emphasis in the State University System of Florida* (September 2020) available at [https://www.flbog.edu/wp-content/uploads/CIP\\_2020\\_PSE\\_Methodology\\_CE\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.flbog.edu/wp-content/uploads/CIP_2020_PSE_Methodology_CE_FINAL.pdf).

<sup>12</sup> BOG, *Methodology for Updating Programs of Strategic Emphasis in the State University System of Florida, Board of Governors 2019 Mid-Course Correction - 2025 Strategic Plan* (September 2019) available at [https://www.flbog.edu/wp-content/uploads/SPC\\_06c\\_2019\\_PSE\\_Methodology\\_and\\_list\\_CE.pdf](https://www.flbog.edu/wp-content/uploads/SPC_06c_2019_PSE_Methodology_and_list_CE.pdf).

<sup>13</sup> State University System of Florida, *Programs of Strategic Emphasis* <https://www.flbog.edu/resources/academic/programs-of-strategic-emphasis/> (last visited Mar. 2, 2021).

<sup>14</sup> BOG, *Current PSE list approved by the BOG at its September 2020 meeting* (September 2020) available at <https://www.flbog.edu/wp-content/uploads/Current-PSE-list-approved-by-the-BOG-at-its-September-2020-meeting-PDF.pdf>.

<sup>15</sup> BOG, *Methodology for Updating Programs of Strategic Emphasis in the State University System of Florida* (September 2020) available at [https://www.flbog.edu/wp-content/uploads/CIP\\_2020\\_PSE\\_Methodology\\_CE\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.flbog.edu/wp-content/uploads/CIP_2020_PSE_Methodology_CE_FINAL.pdf).

<sup>16</sup> Largely based upon the annual State Board of Education list of critical teacher shortage areas.

<sup>17</sup> Based primarily on the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity workforce projections.

<sup>18</sup> Includes degree programs that assist in making the SUS globally competitive can be found throughout the system across many disciplines, especially within the sciences, engineering, and information technology programs.

<sup>19</sup> Includes science, technology, engineering, and mathematics disciplines. The primary references used were the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, the Department of Homeland Security, the National Science Foundation, and the Washington State Education Research and Data Center.

<sup>20</sup> Includes degree programs leading to the occupational categories projected to be critically under-supplied in the Board of Governors’ analysis of labor market projections and related degree production. Consequently, the academic programs included in this category correspond to Florida’s high-need, high-wage occupational areas identified through the gap analysis. BOG, *The 2019 Gap Analysis: Explanation of Method* (July 2019) available at [https://www.flbog.edu/wp-content/uploads/SPC\\_06d\\_2019\\_Gap\\_Analysis\\_Methodology\\_CE.pdf](https://www.flbog.edu/wp-content/uploads/SPC_06d_2019_Gap_Analysis_Methodology_CE.pdf).

<sup>21</sup> BOG, *Baccalaureate Follow-up Study: Employment and Education Outcomes 1, 5, and 10 Years After Graduation* (August 2020) available at [https://www.flbog.edu/wp-content/uploads/TAWA\\_03b\\_Baccalaureate\\_Follow-up\\_CE.pdf](https://www.flbog.edu/wp-content/uploads/TAWA_03b_Baccalaureate_Follow-up_CE.pdf). The current study was based on individual-level data for 349,543 graduates from the State University Data System (SUDS). These

PSE degree fields accounted for the top five fields of study where baccalaureate graduates were found employed full-time one year after graduation.<sup>22</sup>

#### Department of Education – Career and Technical Education Audit

Governor Ron DeSantis issued Executive Order Number 19-31<sup>23</sup> to chart a course for Florida to become number one in the nation in workforce education, with the goal of ensuring students are prepared to succeed in jobs of the future and satisfy Florida’s growing workforce demands.<sup>24</sup> Governor DeSantis directed the Commissioner of Education (commissioner) to audit course offerings in career and technical education (CTE).

Additionally, the order directed the commissioner to develop a methodology for annual audits to include a review of student outcomes and alignment between:

- Programs offered at K-12 and postsecondary levels;
- Professional-level industry certifications; and
- High-growth, high-demand and high-wage employment opportunities.<sup>25</sup>

The commissioner is required to annually recommend CTE programs that should be eliminated and programs that should be added based on audit results.

The CTE audit is comprised of a statewide review of programs, local program review, and sharing information and best practices. The CTE methodology includes all of the following:<sup>26</sup>

- A statewide assessment of programs based on the extent to which there are data that support the demand for the program at statewide and regional levels.<sup>27</sup>
- A statewide assessment of programs based on their performance on key institutional measures of program quality.<sup>28</sup>
- A local review of programs that did not meet statewide benchmarks based on local or industry labor market needs and institutional performance.<sup>29</sup>

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records were matched to records from the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) and the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO). *Id.*

<sup>22</sup> *Id.* Engineering Technician; Engineering; Computer & Information Sciences; Business & Marketing; and Education.

<sup>23</sup> Office of the Governor, *Executive Order Number 19-31, January 30, 2019* available at [https://www.flgov.com/wp-content/uploads/orders/2019/EO\\_19-31.pdf](https://www.flgov.com/wp-content/uploads/orders/2019/EO_19-31.pdf).

<sup>24</sup> DOE, *Executive Order 19-31 Interim Report on Florida’s Career and Technical Education Audit, July 11, 2019* available at <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/18788/urlt/EO19-31InterimReport.pdf>.

<sup>25</sup> *Id.*

<sup>26</sup> DOE, *Florida’s CTE Audit: Statewide Review of Programs* (Jan. 24, 2020) available at <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/18788/urlt/2020CTEAuditPreliminaryFindings.pdf>.

<sup>27</sup> The CTE Audit utilizes the Regional Demand Occupation List to determine statewide and regional demand, as well as, middle to high wage occupations. Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Regional Demand Occupations List, <https://floridajobs.org/workforce-statistics/publications-and-reports/labor-market-information-reports/regional-demand-occupations-list> (last visited Mar. 5, 2021).

<sup>28</sup> DOE, *Florida’s CTE Audit: Statewide Review of Programs* (Jan. 24, 2020) available at <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/18788/urlt/2020CTEAuditPreliminaryFindings.pdf>.

<sup>29</sup> Florida Department of Education, *Career & Technical Education Audit, Phase 2: Local Program Review*, <http://www.fldoe.org/careerpathways/> (last visited Mar. 5, 2021).

### *Effect of Proposed Changes*

The bill creates s. 1009.46, F.S., to establish the duties of postsecondary educational institutions for state financial aid and tuition assistance programs. Specifically, the bill:

- Requires that each participating institution report the program of study to the Department of Education using the most recent classification of instructional programs (CIP) taxonomy.<sup>30</sup>
- Requires, by December 31, 2021, the BOG, State Board of Education (SBE), and Independent Colleges and Universities (ICUF) each approve a list of career certificate, undergraduate and graduate degree programs offered by a district career center, charter technical career center, FCS institution, independent college or university, or state university, which do not lead directly to employment, to be updated annually by December 31. In determining which programs will be included on the list, the BOG, SBE, and ICUF must consider national, state, and regional industry demand.
- Specifies, for each certificate and degree program listed, the BOG and SBE must identify occupations, current job openings, estimates of job growth, and employment wages.
- Specifies the SBE list must include programs at independent colleges and universities licensed by the Commission for Independent Education.
- Requires the BOG, SBE, and ICUF to publish the methodology used in determining whether programs were included on a list.
- Codifies certain existing requirements from SBE rule<sup>31</sup> related to applications for and disbursement of funds, student eligibility and notifications, reporting, and fund remittance, with sanctions for noncompliance.

### **General Eligibility for State Financial Aid and Tuition Assistance**

#### *Present Situation*

The general student eligibility requirements for state financial aid awards and tuition assistance grants consist of the following:<sup>32</sup>

- Achievement of the academic requirements of and acceptance at a state university or FCS institution; a nursing diploma school approved by the Florida Board of Nursing; a Florida college or university which is accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the SBE; a Florida institution the credits of which are acceptable for transfer to state universities; a career center; or a private career institution accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the SBE.
- Residency in Florida for no less than one year preceding the award of aid or a tuition assistance grant.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> The CIP is a taxonomy of instructional programs that provides a classification system for the thousands of different programs offered by postsecondary institutions. Its purpose is to facilitate the organization, collection, and reporting of fields of study and program completions. National Center for Education Statistics, *Introducing the 2020 Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) and Its Website*, <https://nces.ed.gov/blogs/nces/post/introducing-the-2020-classification-of-instructional-programs-cip-and-its-website> (last visited Mar. 5, 2021).

<sup>31</sup> Rule 6A-20.002, F.A.C.

<sup>32</sup> Section 1009.40(1)(a), F.S.

<sup>33</sup> Resident status for purposes of receiving state financial aid awards is determined in the same manner as resident status for tuition purposes pursuant to s. 1009.21. Section 1009.40(1)(a)2., F.S.

- Submission of certification attesting to the accuracy, completeness, and correctness of information provided to demonstrate a student's eligibility to receive state financial aid awards or tuition assistance grants.

Eligibility for renewal of undergraduate or career certificate financial aid awards must be evaluated at the end of the second semester or third quarter of each academic year. To be eligible for renewal a student must:

- Earn a minimum 2.0 grade point average (GPA); and
- Earn, for undergraduate full-time study, 12 credits per term or the equivalent for the number of terms for which aid was received or have earned, for career certificate study, at least the equivalent in clock hours of 6 semester credit hours per term or the equivalent for the number of terms for which aid was received.<sup>34</sup>

A student who fails to meet the required GPA for renewal may be granted a probationary award for one academic year to earn the required GPA for subsequent renewal. A student who fails to meet the minimum number of credits required for renewal must lose his or her eligibility for one academic year, after which the student may reapply.<sup>35</sup>

### ***Effect of Proposed Changes***

The bill amends s. 1009.40, F.S., to add a funding eligibility requirement. The bill specifies that beginning with students who initially receive an award in the 2023-2024 academic year, student eligibility for funding for state merit-based scholarship program awards under the Bright Futures Scholarship Program and the Benacquisto Scholarship Program is determined, as follows:

- A student enrolled in an associate in arts degree program, or a student enrolled in a state university who has not been admitted to an academic program, may receive an award up to the maximum amount established for the scholarship program for a maximum of 60 credit hours.
- A student enrolled in a certificate program, technical diploma program, career degree program, or major as part of a baccalaureate degree program:
  - May receive an award up to the maximum amount established for the program in the GAA if the certificate, diploma, career degree, or major is not on the list identified by the BOG, SBE, or ICUF.
  - May receive a reduced award from the maximum established for the program in the GAA if the certificate, diploma, career degree, or major is on the list identified by the BOG, SBE, or ICUF.
- A reduced award applies to the program of study that was on the list at the time of the student's initial enrollment at the postsecondary institution, or if the student changes his or her major program to a program on the list. A student may receive a maximum award if the program of study is removed from the list after the student's initial enrollment, but before the student's admission to the major. Any changes to the certificate and degree list after the student has enrolled would not negatively impact the student.

<sup>34</sup> Section 1009.40(1)(b), F.S.

<sup>35</sup> Section 1009.40(1)(b)3. and 4., F.S.



The bill also amends s. 1009.40, F.S., to include in the general eligibility requirements relating to Florida residency the Bright Opportunity Scholarship Program, Florida Endeavor Scholarship, Last Mile College Completion Program, and Florida Farmworker Student Scholarship Program.<sup>36</sup>

## **Need-based Financial Aid**

### ***Present Situation***

#### **Federal Financial Aid**

The Pell Grant is the largest federal grant program offered to undergraduate students and is designed to assist students from low-income households. To qualify for a Pell Grant, a student must demonstrate financial need through completing a Free Application for Federal Student Financial Aid (FAFSA).<sup>37</sup> The award amount a student receives is dependent on the student's expected family contribution (EFC),<sup>38</sup> the institution cost of attendance (COA),<sup>39</sup> full-time or part-time status, and plans to attend school for a full academic year or less.<sup>40</sup>

The Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG) provides an award to undergraduate students with exceptional financial need. The FSEOG award is between \$100 and \$4,000 a year, depending on the student's financial need, the amount of other aid awarded to the student, and the availability of limited federal funds allocated to the student's school for the program.<sup>41</sup> This is unlike the Pell Grant program, which provides awards to every eligible student.

#### **Florida Student Assistance Grant Program**

The Florida Student Assistance Grant (FSAG) Program, created in 1972, is Florida's largest need-based grant program, consisting of FSAG Public, FSAG Career Education (FSAG-CE), FSAG Private, and FSAG Postsecondary.<sup>42</sup> The FSAG Program provides state need-based

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<sup>36</sup> Sections 1009.71, F.S.; 1009.711, F.S.; 1009.75, F.S.; and 1009.894, F.S.

<sup>37</sup> Federal Student Financial Aid, *Help Center, Federal Pell Grant program*, <https://studentaid.gov/help-center/answers/article/federal-pell-grant-program> (last visited March 4, 2021).

<sup>38</sup> The EFC is calculated according to a formula established by law. The student's family's taxed and untaxed income, assets, and benefits (such as unemployment or Social Security) all could be considered in the formula. Also considered are the student's family size and the number of family members who will attend college or career school during the year. Federal Student Aid, *How Aid Is Calculated, What's the Expected Family Contribution (EFC)?*, <https://studentaid.gov/complete-aid-process/how-calculated#efc> (last visited March 4, 2021).

<sup>39</sup> COA is the amount it will cost a student to go to school. Most two-year and four-year colleges calculate their COA to show the total cost for the school year. The COA is the estimate of tuition and fees, cost of room and board (or living expenses), cost of books, supplies, transportation, loan fees, and miscellaneous expenses, allowance for child care or other dependent care, costs related to a disability, and reasonable costs for eligible study-abroad programs. Federal Student Aid, *What does cost of attendance (COA) mean?*, <https://studentaid.gov/help-center/answers/article/what-does-cost-of-attendance-mean> (last visited March 4, 2021).

<sup>40</sup> Federal Student Aid, *How Aid Is Calculated*, <https://studentaid.gov/complete-aid-process/how-calculated> (last visited March 8, 2021).

<sup>41</sup> Federal Student Aid, *FSEOG (Grants)*, <https://studentaid.gov/understand-aid/types/grants/fseog> (last visited March 4, 2021).

<sup>42</sup> DOE, Office of Student Financial Assistance, *Annual Report to the Commissioner 2018-19* (2019), at 11, available at <https://www.floridastudentfinancialaidsg.org/pdf/annualreportcurrent.pdf>.

assistance grants to students who meet general eligibility requirements,<sup>43</sup> demonstrate financial need, and meet enrollment requirements as specified by each program. The FSAG Program is administered by participating institutions in accordance with SBE rule.<sup>44</sup>

The funds appropriated for the FSAG Program must be distributed to eligible institutions in accordance with a formula approved by the SBE. The formula must consider at least the prior year's distribution of funds, the number of eligible applicants who did not receive awards, the standardization of the EFC, and provisions for unused funds. The formula must account for changes in the number of eligible students across all student assistance grant programs.<sup>45</sup>

In 2019-2020, the FSAG programs disbursed approximately \$270 million to nearly 175,000 students.<sup>46</sup>

In addition, the FSAG Public, FSAG Private, and FSAG Postsecondary programs provide for deposit of funds appropriated by the Legislature for grants through the FSAG program into the State Student Financial Assistance Trust Fund.<sup>47</sup> The FSAG-CE program does not have this provision.

For the 2021-22 award year, the Federal Pell Grant award is between \$650 and \$6,495.<sup>48</sup> The 2018-2019 average cost for taking 30 credit hours at an FCS institution was \$3,209.<sup>49</sup> Because the Pell Grant award amounts vary based on the circumstances of each student, some students who meet the family income threshold for a Pell award may still have a balance of tuition and fees not covered by the federal and state gift aid they are eligible to receive.

### ***Effect of Proposed Changes***

The bill creates s. 1009.71, F.S., to establish the Florida Bright Opportunities Grant Program. The program is for Pell Grant-eligible students at FCS institutions and district career centers who have a tuition and registration fee balance after all federal and state gift aid has been applied to their account. Specifically, the program:

- Award applies to certificate, applied technology diploma (ATD), or associate degree programs only at FCS institutions or district career centers.
- Award covers the balance of tuition and registration fees, plus a book stipend, and is awarded on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Requires the student to meet specified general eligibility requirements for state financial aid awards and tuition assistance grants.

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<sup>43</sup> Section 1009.40, F.S.

<sup>44</sup> Sections 1009.50(6), 1009.505(5), 1009.51(6), and 1009.52(7), F.S. *See also* Rule 6A-20.031, F.A.C. Postsecondary educational institution administrative responsibilities for state student aid and tuition assistance programs are outlined in Rule 6A-20.002, F.A.C.

<sup>45</sup> Sections 1009.50(4)(a), 1009.51(4)(a), and 1009.52(4)(a), F.S.

<sup>46</sup> DOE, Office of Student Financial Assistance, *2019-20 End of Year Reports*, <https://www.floridastudentfinancialaidsg.org/SAPSPEOYR/SAPSPEOYR> (last visited Mar. 6, 2021).

<sup>47</sup> Sections 1009.50(5), 1009.51(5), and 1009.52(6), F.S.

<sup>48</sup> Federal Student Aid, *IFAP: GEN2101, 2021-2022 Federal Pell Grant Payment and Disbursements Schedules*, <https://ifap.ed.gov/dear-colleague-letters/GEN2101> (last visited Mar. 8, 2021).

<sup>49</sup> DOE, *College and Textbook Affordability in the Florida College System 2020* (November 2020) available at <https://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7749/urlt/2020AffordabilityReport.pdf>.

- Does not allow an institution to impose additional criteria to determine a student's eligibility.
- Student must be enrolled for at least six credit hours per term, or the equivalent clock hours.
- Limits the award to 8-10 semesters as specified in current law regarding financial aid eligibility.<sup>50</sup>
- Specifies requirements for the distribution and remittance of program funds, similar to FSAG programs.

### Florida Student Assistance Grant Program

The bill removes obsolete provisions regarding standardization of the EFC and unused funds in the distribution formula and removes unnecessary requirements related to the State Student Financial Assistance Trust Fund for FSAG programs.

## **Merit-based Financial Aid**

### *Present Situation*

#### Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program

The Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program (Bright Futures program) was established in 1997<sup>51</sup> as a lottery-funded scholarship program to reward a Florida high school graduate who merits recognition for high academic achievement and who enrolls in a degree program, certificate program, or applied technology program at an eligible Florida public or private<sup>52</sup> postsecondary education institution. The DOE is responsible for issuing awards for the Bright Futures program annually.<sup>53</sup>

The Bright Futures program consists of the following awards:<sup>54</sup>

- Florida Academic Scholarship (FAS);<sup>55</sup>
- Florida Medallion Scholarship (FMS);<sup>56</sup> and
- Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholarship (FGSV) and Florida Gold Seal CAPE Scholarship.<sup>57</sup>

Similarities and differences in specified provisions to qualify for FAS and FMS awards are depicted in the table below.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Section 1009.40(3), F.S.

<sup>51</sup> Chapter 1997-77, s. 2, Laws of Fla.

<sup>52</sup> A student who receives any award under the Bright Futures program and is enrolled in a nonpublic postsecondary education 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.

<sup>53</sup> Section 1009.53(5), F.S.

<sup>54</sup> Section 1009.53(2), F.S.

<sup>55</sup> Section 1009.534, F.S.

<sup>56</sup> Section 1009.535, F.S.

<sup>57</sup> Section 1009.536, F.S.

<sup>58</sup> Section 1009.531, F.S.

Type	16 High School Course Credits	High School Weighted Bright Futures GPA	College Entrance Exams by High School Graduation Year (ACT/SAT)	Service Hours
FAS	4 - English (three must include substantial writing) 4 - Mathematics (at or above the Algebra I level) 3 - Natural Science	3.50	29/1330	100 hours
FMS	(two must have substantial laboratory) 3 - Social Science 2 - World Language (sequential, in same language)	3.00	25/1210	75 hours

Students who have demonstrated academic merit through a recognition program may be eligible for Bright Futures without having to meet one or more of the requirements.<sup>59</sup>

The recognition programs that do not require college entrance exam scores include:<sup>60</sup>

- National Merit Finalists and Scholars;
- National Hispanic Scholars;
- Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE) Diploma; and
- International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma.

FAS award recipients receive an award equal to the amount necessary to pay of 100 percent of tuition and applicable fees and an additional stipend for textbooks as specified in the General Appropriations Act (GAA).<sup>61</sup> FMS award recipients receive an award equal to the amount necessary to pay of 75 percent of tuition and applicable fees.<sup>62</sup>

A student may receive an FAS or FMS award for a maximum of 100 percent of the number of credit hours required to complete an associate degree program, a baccalaureate degree program, or a postsecondary career certificate program.<sup>63</sup>

Florida Bright Futures Scholarship recipients who graduate with a baccalaureate degree in seven semesters, or the equivalent or fewer hours, and wish to pursue graduate study may apply the unused portion of their FAS or FMS award toward one semester of graduate study, not to exceed 15 semester hours paid at the undergraduate rate.<sup>64</sup>

For the 2019-2020 fiscal year, a total of \$618,607,165 was disbursed through the Bright Futures to 111,973 students.<sup>65</sup>

<sup>59</sup> Sections 1009.534(1) and 1009.535(1), F.S.

<sup>60</sup> DOE, Office of Student Financial Assistance, *2020-21 Bright Futures Student Handbook Chapter 1: Initial Eligibility Requirements (July 31, 2020)* available at <https://www.floridastudentfinancialaidsg.org/PDF/BFHandbookChapter1.pdf>.

<sup>61</sup> Section 1009.534(2), F.S.

<sup>62</sup> Section 1009.535(2), F.S. Beginning in the fall 2021 semester, a Florida Medallion Scholar who is enrolled in an associate degree program at an FCS institution is eligible for an award equal to the amount necessary to pay 100 percent of tuition and specified fees to assist with the payment of educational expenses. Section 1009.535(2), F.S.

<sup>63</sup> Section 1009.532(3)(a), F.S.

<sup>64</sup> Section 1009.5341, F.S.

<sup>65</sup> Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program, *Florida Bright Futures Student Counts and Total Costs (September 2020)* available at <https://www.floridastudentfinancialaidsg.org/PDF/PSI/BFReportsA.pdf>.

### Benacquisto Scholarship Program

The Benacquisto Scholarship Program (scholarship)<sup>66</sup> was created in 2014 to reward a Florida high school graduate who achieves recognition as a National Merit Scholar (NMS)<sup>67</sup> and enrolls in a baccalaureate degree program at an eligible Florida public or independent postsecondary educational institution.<sup>68</sup>

In addition to achieving recognition as an NMS, in order to be eligible for an award under the scholarship, a student must:<sup>69</sup>

- Be a state resident as determined by statute and SBE rules;
- Earn a standard Florida high school diploma or its equivalent pursuant to statute, unless:
  - The student completes a home education program pursuant to statute;<sup>70</sup> or
  - The student earns a high school diploma from a non-Florida school while living with a parent who is on military or public service assignment out of this state;
- Be accepted by and enroll in a Florida public or independent postsecondary educational institution that is regionally accredited; and
- Be enrolled full-time in a baccalaureate degree program at an eligible regionally accredited Florida public or independent postsecondary educational institution during the fall academic term following high school graduation.

In 2018, eligibility was expanded to allow out-of-state students to qualify for a scholarship.<sup>71</sup>

Scholarship recipients attending a public postsecondary institution, who qualify as a Florida resident, receive an award equal to the institutional cost of attendance (COA) minus the sum of the student's Florida Bright Futures Scholarship and NMS award. Scholarship recipients attending a public postsecondary institution, who qualify as non-residents of Florida, receive an award equal to the institutional COA for a Florida resident minus the student's NMS award.<sup>72</sup> Eligible students who attend independent postsecondary educational institutions in Florida each receive scholarship awards equal to the highest COA for a resident of this state enrolled at a Florida public university, as reported by the BOG, minus the sum of the student's Florida Bright Futures Scholarship and NMS award.<sup>73</sup>

<sup>66</sup> The scholarship was renamed in 2016 from the Florida National Merit Scholar Incentive Program to the Benacquisto Scholarship Program. Chapter 2016-237, s. 26, Laws of Fla.

<sup>67</sup> DOE, Office of Student Financial Assistance, *Annual Report to the Commissioner 2018-19* (2019) available at <https://www.floridastudentfinancialaidsg.org/pdf/annualreportcurrent.pdf>. The National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC) is a private, not-for-profit organization that operates without government assistance to recognize and honor academically talented students. National Merit Scholarship Corporation, *Mission*, <https://www.nationalmerit.org/s/1758/interior.aspx?sid=1758&gid=2&pgid=395> (last visited Mar. 3, 2021). NMSC organizes the National Merit Scholarship Program, which began in 1955 as an academic competition for recognition and scholarship. High school students enter the National Merit Program by taking the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT), which serves as an initial screen of approximately 1.5 million entrants each year, and meeting the program participation requirements. National Merit Scholarship Corporation, *National Merit Scholarship Program*, <https://www.nationalmerit.org/s/1758/interior.aspx?sid=1758&gid=2&pgid=424> (last visited Mar. 3, 2021).

<sup>68</sup> Section 1009.893(2), F.S.

<sup>69</sup> Section 1009.893(4)(a), F.S.

<sup>70</sup> Section 1002.41, F.S.

<sup>71</sup> Chapter 2018-4, s. 22, Laws of Fla. See s. 1009.893(4)(b), F.S.

<sup>72</sup> Section 1009.893(5)(a), F.S.

<sup>73</sup> Section 1009.893(5)(b), F.S.

In the 2019-2020 fiscal year, the scholarship distributed \$21.6 million to 1,377 students, of which 202 were non-Florida residents. The average award was \$15,650.<sup>74</sup>

### *Effect of Proposed Changes*

#### Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program

The bill modifies ss. 1009.534 and 1009.535, F.S., relating to the FAS and FMS awards. Specifically, the bill:

- Changes the FAS and FMS award from the award necessary to pay a specified percentage of tuition and specified fees to an award as specified in the GAA.
- Changes the FMS award for a FCS student in an associate degree program from an award necessary to pay the specified percentage of tuition and specified fees to an award as specified in the GAA.
- Simplifies the reference to the required college entrance exam scores.<sup>75</sup>
- Removes reference to a national achievement program no longer available through the National Merit Scholarship Corporation.
- Updates the reference to the National Hispanic Recognition Program to include all Recognition Programs administered by the College Board, which includes African American Recognition, Hispanic Recognition, Indigenous Recognition, and Rural and Small Town Recognition.<sup>76</sup>
- Beginning for graduates in 2021-2022, adds additional alternative eligibility options: earned associate degree through dual enrollment or AP Capstone Diploma with scores of 4 or higher on six AP exams. Students who meet the requirements for these options would not be required to submit scores for college entrance exams.

The bill modifies s. 1009.5341, F.S., relating to the use of Bright Futures funds for graduate study, as follows:

- For 2021-2022, recipients may use the unused portion of their FAS or FMS award for graduate study, without a semester or credit hours limit. However, the bill does not change the provision in s. 1009.531, F.S., limiting usage of a Bright Futures award to five years after high school graduation.
- Beginning in 2022-2023, recipients may use the unused portion of their FAS or FMS award for graduate study only in a certificate or degree field not on an approved BOG, SBE, or ICUF list required in the bill.

The bill modifies s. 1009.53, F.S., to update the DOE notification process and ability to certify forward funds. Specifically, the bill:

- Modifies the notification process from beginning in January calendar year to beginning in September school year, to provide families more time to plan for students' postsecondary plans.

<sup>74</sup> DOE, Office of Student Financial Assistance, *End-of-Year Report, 2019-2020*, [https://www.floridastudentfinancialaidsg.org/PDF/PSI/FIS\\_2019\\_2020.pdf](https://www.floridastudentfinancialaidsg.org/PDF/PSI/FIS_2019_2020.pdf) (last visited Mar. 6, 2021).

<sup>75</sup> Program eligibility requires specified scores on the SAT and ACT. Section 1009.531(6), F.S.

<sup>76</sup> The College Board, *The College Board National Recognition Programs*, <https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/psat-nmsqt-psat-10/scholarships-and-recognition/recognition-programs> (last visited Mar. 6, 2021).

- Removes unnecessary provisions relating to DOE authorization to certify forward 10 percent of allocated funds, and to federal loan programs.

The bill modifies s. 1009.532, F.S., related to Bright Futures renewal awards, to reduce the number of credit hours that can be funded by Bright Futures by the number of credit hours earned through articulated acceleration mechanisms which are accepted by the postsecondary educational institution toward the requirements of a career certificate, an applied technology diploma, an associate in applied science degree, or an associate in science degree or in partial fulfillment of general education requirements for an associate or baccalaureate degree for students initially funded in the 2022-2023 academic year.<sup>77</sup>

#### Benacquisto Scholarship Program

The bill modifies s. 1009.893, F.S., to change initial eligibility and remove award provisions related to COA. Specifically, the bill:

- Specifies that the 2021-2022 academic year is the final year of initial eligibility for nonresident students. However, current nonresident students receiving a scholarship may continue to receive renewal awards.
- Modifies the award to remove the requirement that the award level is tied to the cost of attendance and instead sets the award as specified in the GAA.

### **Students without a High School Diploma or Equivalent**

#### *Present Situation*

In order to be eligible for a state financial aid award, a student must achieve the academic requirements of and acceptance at a public postsecondary institution, or specified private institution.<sup>78</sup> Generally, a student is required to have a high school diploma or high school equivalency diploma to enroll in an FCS institution,<sup>79</sup> and students must have a high school diploma for admission to a state university.<sup>80</sup> Eligibility for federal financial aid requires a high school diploma or a recognized equivalent, completion of a home education program, or enrollment in an eligible career pathway program through an "ability-to-benefit" alternative.<sup>81</sup>

<sup>77</sup> Articulated acceleration mechanisms are available to shorten the time necessary for a student to complete the requirements associated with the conference of a high school diploma and a postsecondary degree, broaden the scope of curricular options available to students, or increase the depth of study available for a particular subject. Articulated acceleration mechanisms include, but are not limited to, dual enrollment, advanced placement, credit by examination, IB Program, and AICE Program. Section 1007.27(1), F.S. First-time-in-college (FTIC) FAS students at a state university brought an average of 25.5 accelerated credits and FTIC FMS students at a state university were awarded an average of 18 accelerated credits. Email, Florida Board of Governors, Jason Jones (Nov. 2, 2020) (on file with the Senate Committee on Education).

<sup>78</sup> Section 1009.40(1)(a), F.S.

<sup>79</sup> Section 1007.263(2)(a), F.S. Students may also have a home education affidavit, or demonstrated competency in college credit postsecondary coursework. *Id.* A student who has been awarded a certificate of completion is eligible to enroll in certificate career education programs. Section 1007.263(4), F.S.

<sup>80</sup> Board of Governors Regulation 6.002.

<sup>81</sup> Federal Student Aid, Basic Eligibility Criteria, <https://studentaid.gov/understand-aid/eligibility/requirements> (last visited March 5, 2021). A student in an eligible career pathway program may demonstrate readiness for higher education by completion of an approved "ability to benefit" test, or completing six credit hours or equivalent course work. *Id.*

Between 2015 and 2019, 11.9 percent of persons age 25 and older living in Florida did not have a high school diploma or equivalent.<sup>82</sup> The dropout rate for Florida's 2019-20 high school cohort was 3.1 percent.<sup>83</sup> Only 50 percent of Florida's 2013-14 high school drop outs were found employed and six percent were found continuing their education at a postsecondary institution five years later in the Fall of 2018. Over half (52 percent) of those employed were making less than \$8.25 per hour.<sup>84</sup>

### ***Effect of Proposed Changes***

The bill creates s. 1009.711, F.S., to establish the Florida Endeavor Scholarship. The program is for students without a high school diploma or equivalent who are enrolled at a district career center or FCS institution. Specifically, the program:

- Award applies to students who did not earn a high school credential prior to enrolling in a career certificate or non-college-credit ATD program, or in a General Education Program at a FCS institution, district career center, or a charter technical career center.
- Requires the student to meet specified general eligibility requirements for state financial aid awards and tuition assistance grants.
- Requires the student to demonstrate readiness for enrollment in a postsecondary clock hour program. In order to demonstrate readiness, the student must do one of the following:
  - Meet the basic skills assessment requirement for the certificate or diploma program;
  - Demonstrate grade 9 level or above literacy and numeracy skills on an assessment approved by the SBE for basic skills; or
  - Enroll for at least one term in a school district or FCS institution Integrated education and Training program.
- Specifies that to maintain eligibility after the initial term of enrollment, a student must demonstrate progress toward the completion of a clock hour certificate or diploma program through attendance and successful completion of program standards. A student who does not maintain the specified requirements is not eligible for a renewal award.
- Does not allow an institution to impose additional criteria to determine a student's eligibility.
- Award covers tuition, registration, and testing fees, including high school equivalency diploma test fees, for a certificate or non-college-credit ATD program at a career center or FCS institution, and is awarded on a first-come first-served basis, with priority for returning students.
- Specifies requirements for the distribution and remittance of program funds.

### **Fee Waivers and Exemptions**

#### ***Present Situation***

All students in workforce education programs, FCS institutions, and state universities must be charged fees unless a fee waiver or exemption applies.<sup>85</sup> Tuition and fee exemptions can be

<sup>82</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, *QuickFacts, Florida*, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/FL/PST120219> (last visited Mar. 5, 2021).

<sup>83</sup> DOE, *Florida's High School Cohort 2019-20 Graduation Rate* (January 2021) available at <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7584/urlt/GradRates1920.pdf>.

<sup>84</sup> DOE, *Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program Annual Outcomes Report* (December 2019) available at <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7592/urlt/1718AORFall.pdf>, at page 25.

<sup>85</sup> Sections 1009.22, 1009.23, and 1009.24, F.S., respectively.



distinguished from fee waivers or educational benefits. An exemption is “provided for certain students who are, by statutory definition, exempt from the payment of tuition and fees, including lab fees” and may generally include students who are in dual enrollment, apprenticeship programs, welfare transition, and in the custody of a relative, among other categories. In contrast, waivers transpire when students have their fees waived or forgiven by an institution. Examples of waivers include those related to state employees, college employees and their dependents, Purple Heart recipients, and certain classroom teachers.<sup>86</sup>

A student who is or was at the time he or she reached 18 years of age in the custody of the Department of Children and Families (DCF) or in the custody of a relative or nonrelative specified in law,<sup>87</sup> is exempt from the payment of tuition and fees at a state university, FCS institution, or Florida school district that provides workforce education programs. Such exemption includes fees associated with enrollment in applied academics for adult education instruction and remains valid until the student reaches 28 years of age.<sup>88</sup> Such exemptions are outlined by year in the following tables:

**State University System DCF Specified Fee Exemptions by Academic Year<sup>89</sup>**

	2017-18		2018-19		2019-20	
	Headcount	Amount	Headcount	Amount	Headcount	Amount
Adopted	1,156	\$3,204,829	1,485	\$4,076,209	1,704	\$4,836,057
Foster Care/State Custody	1,035	\$2,911,275	811	\$2,444,456	801	\$2,477,687
Non-State Custody	127	\$365,738	449	\$1,118,653	488	\$1,255,052
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,318</b>	<b>\$6,481,842</b>	<b>2,745</b>	<b>\$7,639,318</b>	<b>2,993</b>	<b>\$8,568,796</b>

**Florida College System DCF Specified Fee Exemptions by Academic Year<sup>90</sup>**

	2017-18		2018-19		2019-20	
	Headcount	Amount	Headcount	Amount	Headcount	Amount
Adopted from DCF Services	1,459	\$2,459,399	1,735	\$2,972,262	1,833	\$3,207,602
Custody of DCF	2,459	\$4,281,744	2,464	\$4,280,172	2,325	\$4,040,160
Custody of a Relative	283	\$501,827	318	\$588,870	324	\$573,952
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,201</b>	<b>\$7,242,970</b>	<b>4,517</b>	<b>\$7,841,304</b>	<b>4,482</b>	<b>\$7,821,714</b>

It is unclear to what extent all postsecondary institutions currently apply the tuition and fee exemptions to students who qualify for the exemption and begin postsecondary education before the age of 18.<sup>91</sup>

<sup>86</sup> The Florida College System, *Exemptions and Waivers in The Florida College System* (March 2012), available at <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7724/urlt/0072361-fyi2012-02exemptions.pdf> at 1.

<sup>87</sup> Section 39.5085, F.S., or s. 39.6225, F.S.

<sup>88</sup>Section 1009.25(1)(c) and (d), F.S.

<sup>89</sup> Florida Board of Governors (BOG) ODA Analysis (Nov. 9, 2020), Email, Troy Miller, Deputy Chief Data Officer, BOG (Nov. 10, 2020) (on file with the Senate Committee on Education).

<sup>90</sup> The Florida College System, *Summary of Student Fee Exemptions and Waivers For the 2017-2018 Fiscal Year* (2018), version 1, available at <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/19874/urlt/1718ExemptWaiverSS.PDF> at 1; The Florida College System, *Summary of Student Fee Exemptions and Waivers For the 2018-2019 Fiscal Year* (2019), version 1, available at <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/19874/urlt/1819ExemptWaiverSS.PDF> at 1; and The Florida College System, *Summary of Student Fee Exemptions and Waivers For the 2019-2020 Fiscal Year* (2020), version 1, available at <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/19874/urlt/1920ExemptWaiveresSS.pdf> at 1.

<sup>91</sup> Email, Alan F. Abramowitz, Executive Director, Florida Statewide Guardian ad Litem Office (Oct. 1, 2020) (on file with the Senate Committee on Education); see also *DCF Fee Exemptions in the Florida College System, FAQ*, The Florida

***Effect of Proposed Changes***

The bill amends s. 1009.25, F.S., to clarify that tuition and fee exemptions apply to a student who is currently in the custody of the Department of Children and Families (DCF) or in the custody of a relative or nonrelative defined in law, or was so at the time he or she reached 18 years of age. Therefore, the bill may reduce confusion in the identification of students under DCF custody who are eligible for a tuition and fee exemption, specifically those students who enroll at a postsecondary institution prior to the age of 18.

**IV. Constitutional Issues:****A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:**

None.

**B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:**

None.

**C. Trust Funds Restrictions:**

None.

**D. State Tax or Fee Increases:**

None.

**E. Other Constitutional Issues:**

None.

**V. Fiscal Impact Statement:****A. Tax/Fee Issues:**

None.

**B. Private Sector Impact:**

None.

**C. Government Sector Impact:**

For fiscal year 2021-2022, the funding required for the Florida Bright Opportunities Grant Program and the Florida Endeavor Scholarship Program is subject to an appropriation in the General Appropriations Act.

The provisions of the bill that make changes to existing programs are expected to have a net positive effect on the state budget starting with the 2022-2023 fiscal year. Although additional students may qualify for Bright Futures through high school acceleration programs, Bright Futures students may no longer be eligible for the maximum award if they are enrolled in a degree program on the approved list by the BOG, SBE, or ICUF. In addition, there would be a reduced cost to the state as it relates to the Benacquisto Scholarship program, as the state would no longer be funding new non-resident students. The net effect of these provisions is indeterminate at this time.

**VI. Technical Deficiencies:**

None.

**VII. Related Issues:**

None.

**VIII. Statutes Affected:**

This bill substantially amends the following sections of the Florida Statutes: 1009.25, 1009.40, 1009.50, 1009.505, 1009.51, 1009.52, 1009.53, 1009.532, 1009.534, 1009.5341, 1009.535, 1009.893.

The bill creates the following sections of the Florida Statutes: 1006.75, 1009.46, 1009.71, and 1009.711.

**IX. Additional Information:**

**A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:**

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

**CS by Education on March 16, 2021:**

The committee substitute:

- Requires the Board of Governors (BOG) office to create, by Jan 1, 2022, an online dashboard of data regarding state university graduates.
- Requires each state university board of trustees to adopt procedures to connect undergraduates to career planning, approved by the BOG by March 1, 2022, to include a hold on student registration after the student's first year until the student meets specified provisions.
- Requires the BOG and State Board of Education (SBE) to identify and publish a list of career certificate and undergraduate and graduate degree programs that do not lead directly to employment.
- Authorizes the Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida (ICUF) to identify a list for its member institutions. Institutions licensed by the Commission for Independent Education will be included on the SBE list.
- Requires the BOG, SBE, and ICUF to also publish their methodology in identifying programs for the list.

- Specifies that an annually updated list is effective for the next academic year.
- Modifies eligibility for state financial aid to remove the provision in the bill making certain students ineligible for financial aid award, and:
  - Applies provisions relating to a program list only to merit-based awards under the Bright Futures Scholarship Program and Benacquisto Scholarship programs, rather than all state financial aid programs.
  - Extends implementation of modified eligibility for a Bright Futures or Benacquisto scholarship based on the identified list to students initially funded in 2023-2024.
  - Specifies that a student in an associate of arts degree program or in a baccalaureate program prior to admittance to a major may receive a maximum award, up to 60 credit hours.
  - Specifies that a student who has been admitted to a certificate, diploma, or career degree, or major program that is not on the list may receive the maximum award specified for the scholarship program.
  - Specifies that a student who has been admitted to a certificate, diploma, or career degree, or major program that is on the list may receive a reduced award, as specified in the General Appropriations Act.
  - Clarifies that a reduced award applies to a program of study that was on the list at the time of the student's initial enrollment, or if the student changes major. A student may receive a maximum award if the program is removed from the list before the student is admitted to the major.
  - Modifies the provision deducting acceleration credits from a Bright Futures award to apply only to those credits that apply to a certificate, diploma, associate in applied science or associate in science degrees, or to general education.
  - Modifies the graduate program provision of a Bright Futures award to specify that in 2022-2023 the graduate program must not be on a specified list.
- Modifies the Florida Endeavor Scholarship student eligibility requirements to authorize a student to earn an award prior to initial enrollment, and:
  - Authorizes scholarship funds to be used for testing fees, including GED test fees.
  - Specifies that a student who meets basic skills assessment requirements, or is enrolled in an Integrated Education and Training program, may receive an award.
  - Specifies renewal requirements, including demonstration of progress by meeting program standards toward completion of a certificate or diploma.

**B. Amendments:**

None.