

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STAFF ANALYSIS

BILL #: CS/HB 859 Reading Achievement Initiative for Scholastic Excellence Program

SPONSOR(S): Early Learning & Elementary Education Subcommittee, Williams

TIED BILLS: None **IDEN./SIM. BILLS:** SB 1790

REFERENCE	ACTION	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR or BUDGET/POLICY CHIEF
1) Early Learning & Elementary Education Subcommittee	17 Y, 0 N, As CS	Aaronson	Brink
2) PreK-12 Appropriations Subcommittee			
3) Education & Employment Committee			

SUMMARY ANALYSIS

In July 2021, the Reading Achievement Initiative for Scholastic Excellence (RAISE) program was established within the Florida Department of Education to improve literacy outcomes for all students. Under the RAISE program, regional literacy support teams assist schools serving students in kindergarten through grade 5 that are underperforming based on school progress monitoring and statewide, standardized English Language Arts assessment results.

The RAISE program also includes a tutoring program whereby high school juniors and seniors meeting minimum criteria may serve as tutors during the school day for students in kindergarten through grade 3 enrolled at a school identified for the program. The hours that a high school student spends tutoring through the RAISE program may be counted as community-service hours to meet the requirements for graduation and the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship.

The bill revises the RAISE tutoring program by authorizing school districts to provide:

- tutoring for eligible kindergarten through grade 3 students after the school day, on school district property under the supervision of instructional personnel; and
- stipends to instructional personnel and high school students serving as tutors during after-school tutoring times.

The bill provides that unpaid hours of tutoring may count towards meeting community service requirements for high school graduation and the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship.

The bill does not have a fiscal impact. See fiscal comments, *infra*.

The bill takes effect on July 1, 2022.

FULL ANALYSIS

I. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS

A. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

Reading Achievement Initiative for Scholastic Excellence Program

Present Situation

In 2021, the Florida Legislature established the Reading Achievement Initiative for Scholastic Excellence (RAISE) program within the Florida Department of Education (DOE).¹ The mission of the RAISE program is to improve policies and practices that support improved literacy outcomes for all students.² The program provides instructional supports to school districts, school administrators, and instructional personnel in implementing evidence-based reading instruction and interventions in order to improve student reading achievement.³

Under the RAISE program, the DOE must establish at least 20 literacy support regions and regional support teams in Florida to assist schools in improving low reading scores.⁴ Eligible schools include:⁵

- schools serving students in kindergarten through grade 5 where 50 percent of the students score below a Level 3 on the statewide, standardized English Language Arts (ELA) assessment; and
- schools where 50 percent or more of students in kindergarten through grade 3 are not on track to pass the grade 3 ELA assessment based on data from the coordinated screening and progress monitoring system.⁶

Identified schools are required to implement a school improvement plan with strategies to improve reading performance.⁷ In the 2021-2022 school year, 1,458 elementary schools were identified by the DOE for support through the RAISE program.⁸

Tutoring Program

As part of the RAISE program, the DOE must establish a tutoring program and develop training to prepare eligible high school students to tutor students in kindergarten through grade 3.⁹

To be eligible to participate in the tutoring program, a student must be a rising high school junior or senior and meet the following requirements:¹⁰

- have a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or higher;
- have no history of out-of-school suspensions or expulsions;
- be on track to complete all core course requirements to graduate; and
- have written recommendations from at least two present or former high school teachers of record or extracurricular activity sponsors.

¹ Section 17, ch. 2021-9, L.O.F., *codified at* s.1008.365(2), F.S.

² Florida Department of Education, *Impact of House Bill 7011 on Schoolwide Improvement Plan Requirements for Schools Identified Under Reading Achievement Initiative for Scholastic Excellence* (2021), available at <https://info.fldoe.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-9270/dps-2021-146.pdf>. [hereinafter *FLDOE Impact of House Bill 7011*].

³ Section 1008.365(2), F.S. (2021).

⁴ Section 1008.365(3), F.S. (2021).

⁵ Section 1008.365(4), F.S. (2021).

⁶ Section 1008.25(8), F.S. (requiring the DOE to procure and require the use of a statewide, standardized progress monitoring system for the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program and public schools with students in kindergarten through grade 8 beginning with the 2022-2023 school year).

⁷ Section 1008.365(4), F.S. (2021).

⁸ *FLDOE Impact of House Bill 7011*, *supra* note 2.

⁹ Section 1008.365(8), F.S. (2021).

¹⁰ *Id.* at (8)(a).

High school students that participate as tutors must be recruited, trained, and deployed by the school district. Tutoring must occur during the school day, on school district property, and under the supervision of instructional personnel.¹¹

A high school student may earn up to three elective credits for high school graduation based on the verified number of hours the student spends tutoring. The hours may be counted towards community service requirements for high school graduation and the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program.¹²

The DOE must designate a high school student who provides at least 75 verified hours of tutoring in the RAISE program as a New Worlds Scholar and award him or her a commemorative pin for this designation.¹³

The State Board of Education is currently in development of Rule 6A-6.0531, F.A.C., to outline minimum training criteria and processes for verifying tutoring hours of high school students for the designation of a New Worlds Scholar, as well as other requirements relating to the RAISE tutoring program. Participating high school students must be trained in effective reading tutoring practices based on evidence-based practices and aligned to the state board-adopted ELA standards.¹⁴

Bright Futures Scholarship Requirements

The Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program is a lottery-funded scholarship program for Florida high school graduates who merit high academic achievement and enroll in a degree, certificate, or applied technology program at an eligible Florida public or private postsecondary education institution.¹⁵ There are four awards through the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship program, including the Florida Academic Scholarship, the Florida Medallion Scholarship, the Florida Gold Seal CAPE Scholarship, and the Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholarship.¹⁶

High school students must meet initial academic and service work requirements in order to be eligible for the Florida Academic Scholarship or the Florida Medallion Scholarship.¹⁷

Type of Award	High School Weighted Bright Futures GPA	College Entrance Exams by High School Graduation Year (ACT/SAT)	Service Hours
Florida Academic Scholars	3.50	29/1330	100 hours
Florida Medallion Scholars	3.00	25/1210	75 hours

High school students must complete 30 service hours to be eligible for the Florida Gold Seal CAPE Scholarship and the Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholarship.¹⁸

The district school board and administrators of a nonpublic school establish the activities and process for documentation of service hours. Except for credit earned through service-learning courses, students may not receive payment or academic credit for the service hours performed.¹⁹

¹¹ *Id.* at (8)(b).

¹² *Id.* at (8)(c).

¹³ *Id.*

¹⁴ Rule 6A-6.0531 currently under review for SBE consideration on February 9, 2022. Florida Administrative Register, *Volume 47, Number 211* (2021), available at <https://164.51.187.128/Faw/FAWDocuments/FAWVOLUMEFOLDERS2021/47211/47211doc.pdf>.

¹⁵ Section 1009.53(1), F.S.

¹⁶ Section 1009.53(2), F.S.

¹⁷ Florida Student Financial Aid, *Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program, Florida Academic Scholarship (FAS)/ Florida Medallion Scholarship (FMS), 2021-22* (2021), available at <https://www.floridastudentfinancialaids.org/PDF/FAS-FMS.pdf>.

¹⁸ Florida Student Financial Aid, *2021-22 Bright Futures Student Handbook, Chapter 1: Initial Eligibility Requirements* (2021), available at <https://www.floridastudentfinancialaids.org/PDF/BFHandbookChapter1.pdf>.

¹⁹ *Id.*

In the 2020-2021 academic year, 120,228 students received a disbursement from the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship and disbursements totaled \$7,484,636,388.²⁰

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill authorizes school districts participating in the RAISE tutoring program to offer the program after the school day and to provide a stipend to instructional personnel and high school students serving as tutors during after school hours.

The bill provides that unpaid hours of tutoring may count towards meeting community service requirements for high school graduation and the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship.

B. SECTION DIRECTORY:

Section 1: Amends s. 1008.365, F.S.; authorizing tutoring provided through the tutoring program within the Reading Achievement Initiative for Scholastic Excellence Program to be provided after the school day; conforming provisions to changes made by the act; authorizing school districts that participate in the tutoring program to provide a stipend to instructional personnel and high school students serving as tutors for after-school tutoring.

Section 2: Provides an effective date of July 1, 2022.

II. FISCAL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE GOVERNMENT:

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

See fiscal comments.

B. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

None.

C. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:

None.

D. FISCAL COMMENTS:

Because the bill authorizes, but does not require, a school district to provide stipends to instructional personnel or high school students that provide RAISE tutoring during after school hours, the bill has no fiscal impact.

²⁰ Florida Student Financial Aid, *Florida Bright Futures Student Counts and Total Costs, Report A*, available at <https://www.floridastudentfinancialaids.org/PDF/PSI/BFReportsA.pdf>.

III. COMMENTS

A. CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES:

1. Applicability of Municipality/County Mandates Provision:

None.

2. Other:

None.

B. RULE-MAKING AUTHORITY:

None.

C. DRAFTING ISSUES OR OTHER COMMENTS:

None.

IV. AMENDMENTS/COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE CHANGES

On January 13, 2021, the Early Learning and Elementary Education Subcommittee adopted one amendment and reported the bill favorably as a committee substitute. The amendment:

- Restores current language to require that tutoring occurs on school district property under the supervision of instructional personnel.
- Clarifies that unpaid hours of tutoring may count towards community service requirements for high school graduation and the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program.

The analysis is drafted to the bill as amended by the Early Learning and Elementary Education Subcommittee.