

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STAFF ANALYSIS

BILL #: HB 895 The Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program

SPONSOR(S): Arrington and others

TIED BILLS: None. **IDEN./SIM. BILLS:** SB 1484

REFERENCE	ACTION	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR or BUDGET/POLICY CHIEF
1) Education Quality Subcommittee	17 Y, 0 N	Collins	Sanchez
2) PreK-12 Appropriations Subcommittee			
3) Education & Employment Committee			

SUMMARY ANALYSIS

The Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program is a lottery-funded program which rewards Florida high school graduates who merit recognition for high academic achievement and encourages them to continue their postsecondary education at an eligible Florida institution. Current law requires the Department of Education to advise the availability of the Bright Futures Scholarship Program and notify students, teachers, parents, certified school counselors, and principals or other relevant school administration of the criteria and application procedures.

Current law requires Florida High school counselors to: advise students regarding their abilities and aptitudes, educational and occupational opportunities, and personal and social adjustments; providing placement services; and similar functions.

The bill requires each public high school to establish a Bright Futures Scholarship mentorship program. The mentorship program must provide students with access to a certified school counselor and information regarding the Bright Futures Scholarship program.

This bill does not appear to have a fiscal impact.

Provides an effective date of July 1, 2024.

FULL ANALYSIS

I. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS

A. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

Present Situation

Florida School Counselors

Florida high school counselors are responsible for: advising students with regard to their abilities and aptitudes, educational and occupational opportunities, and personal and social adjustments; providing placement services; and similar functions.¹ There are seven standards set out for School Guidance Counselors in Rule 6A-5.079, F.A.C. These standards establish Florida's expectations for school counselors. These standards inform the foundation for school counseling preparation programs, educator certification requirements, professional learning for school counselors, and school counselor evaluation systems.²

One responsibility of school counselors is to help students with career development and postsecondary planning.³ School counselors are to promote awareness of application and admission processes for various postsecondary options, including financial resources.⁴ All students are to receive assistance with developing a path to prepare for postsecondary educational and employment opportunities.⁵

Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program

The Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program is a lottery-funded program which rewards Florida high school graduates who merit recognition for high academic achievement and encourages them to continue their postsecondary education at an eligible Florida institution.⁶ Eligible participating institutions include Florida state universities, community colleges, career centers, and eligible private postsecondary institutions.

The Bright Futures Scholarship Program consists of four types of awards: the Florida Academic Scholars Award, the Florida Medallion Scholars Award, the Florida Gold Seal CAPE Scholars Award and the Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholars Award.⁷ To be considered for an award under the Bright Futures Scholarship program, a student must be accepted by and enrolled in an eligible Florida public or independent postsecondary education institution for at least 6 credit hours per semester or the equivalent in quarter hours or clock hours.⁸ A student who receives a Bright Futures Scholarship will receive an award for a maximum of 100 percent of the number of credit hours required to complete the program.⁹

The Department of Education must advertise the availability of the Bright Futures Scholarship Program and notify students, teachers, parents, certified school counselors, and principals or other relevant school administration of the criteria and application procedures.¹⁰ Additionally, each school district shall annually provide to each high school student in grade 11 or 12 a complete and accurate Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Evaluation Report and Key.¹¹

¹ Section 1012.01(2)(b), F.S.

² Rule 6A-5.079(1), F.A.C.

³ Rule 6A-5.079(3)(g), F.A.C.

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ Rule 6A-5.079(3)(f), F.A.C.

⁶ Section 1009.53(1), F.S.

⁷ Section 1009.53(2), F.S.

⁸ Section 1009.531(1)(c)(d), F.S.

⁹ Sections 1009.532(3)(a) and 1009.536(4), F.S.

¹⁰ Section 1003.53(3), F.S.

¹¹ Section 1009.531(4), F.S.

Effect of the Bill

The bill requires each public high school to establish a Bright Futures Scholarship mentorship program. The mentorship program must provide students with access to a certified school counselor. The school counselor must provide students with information concerning the eligibility requirements for each Florida Bright Futures Scholarship award and what scholarship the student is on track to be eligible for.

The bill requires the school to create an outreach campaign through the use of social media and the school's website to provide information regarding the Bright Futures Scholarship for parents and students. The mentorship program may connect current students with mentors who have previously received the award.

B. SECTION DIRECTORY:

Section 1: Amends s. 1009.53, F.S.; requiring public high schools to establish a Bright Futures Scholarship mentorship program for students; providing requirements for such program.

Section 2: Provides an effective date.

II. FISCAL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE GOVERNMENT:

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

None.

B. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

None.

C. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:

None.

D. FISCAL COMMENTS:

None.

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

None.