

FLORIDA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

BILL ANALYSIS

This bill analysis was prepared by nonpartisan committee staff and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.

BILL #: [CS/CS/CS/HB 1105](#)

TITLE: Education

SPONSOR(S): Kincart Jonsson, Abbott

COMPANION BILL: [CS/CS/SB 270](#) (Burgess)

LINKED BILLS: None

RELATED BILLS: None

Committee References

[Careers & Workforce](#)

15 Y, 0 N, As CS



[Higher Education Budget](#)

14 Y, 0 N, As CS



[Education & Employment](#)

19 Y, 0 N, As CS

SUMMARY

Effect of the Bill:

The bill expands eligibility for the Florida Academic Scholar award requirements to include the Advanced Placement Capstone designation with eligible diploma options, increases eligibility and amends volunteer hour requirements for the Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholars (GSV) award and the Florida Gold Seal Cape Scholars award, and updates statutory language relating to the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program. The bill also:

- requires the Department of Education to develop multiple, additional equivalent, applied, or integrated courses that allow students to earn credit in both the career education course and courses required for high school graduation;
- revises requirements for the Florida Seal of Fine Arts and the Career and Technical Education graduation pathway to align with requirements for the GSV award;
- requires that information regarding work-related internships be included in counseling materials and presented with courses required for graduation;
- amends requirements for a Florida Career and Professional Education Act strategic plan;
- requires dual enrollment agreements to address scheduling changes that will increase access and student participation and include how students will be notified of transportation options; and
- expands the eligibility criteria for the Bright Futures Scholarship Program to include a student who graduated from a non-Florida school if the parent retired from military service assignment away from Florida within 12 months prior to the student's graduation.

Fiscal or Economic Impact:

The bill is expected to have a significant negative fiscal impact on the Bright Futures Scholarship Program.

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ANALYSIS

EFFECT OF THE BILL:

The bill requires the Department of Education (DOE) to develop, for approval by the State Board of Education (SBE), multiple, additional equivalent, applied, or integrated courses that meet similar requirements as [career education courses](#)¹ and allow students to earn [credit in both](#) the career education course and courses required for high school graduation. (Section [1](#))

The bill revises the requirements for the [Career and Technical Education \(CTE\) graduation pathway](#) for students. As an alternative to the current requirement to complete two credits in CTE that result in a program completion and industry certification, a student who entered grade 9 before the 2024-2025 school year may choose to complete three CTE courses, but is not required to earn an industry certification. A student who enters grade 9 in the 2024-2025 school year and thereafter, must complete three CTE courses, but is not required to earn an industry certification. Based upon the year a student enters grade 9, for a student who completes 3 CTE credits

¹ Section [1003.493\(2\), \(4\)-\(5\), F.S.](#)

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there is a corresponding reduction in the required credits for electives and work-based learning programs. (Section [1](#)).

The bill also requires that information regarding work-related internships approved by the SBE and identified in the course code directory² be included in counseling materials and [presented](#) with courses required for graduation. (Section [1](#)).

The bill revises eligibility requirements for a high school graduate to receive the [Florida Seal of Fine Arts](#) to include Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE) courses in dance, music, theatre, and the visual arts. (Section [2](#)).

The bill requires [career dual enrollment agreements](#) between career centers and high schools they serve to include how students will be notified of transportation options and address scheduling changes that will increase access and student participation. [Dual enrollment articulation agreements](#) between district superintendents and public postsecondary institution presidents must include any scheduling changes necessary to increase access and student participation. (Section [13](#)).

The bill expands eligibility requirements for the [Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program](#) to include students who earned a high school diploma from a non-Florida school while living with a parent or guardian who, within 12 months before the student's high school graduation, retired from military or public service assignment away from Florida. Currently, a student who earns a high school diploma from a non-Florida school may only qualify for the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program if that student is living with a parent or guardian who is on military or public service assignment away from Florida. (Section [8](#)).

The bill expands eligibility for the Florida Academic Scholar (FAS) award requirements to include the [Advanced Placement \(AP\) Capstone designation](#) on the same basis as the International Baccalaureate or Advanced International Certificate of Education diplomas beginning with the high school students graduating in 2025-2026. The bill requires that the AP Capstone designation may only be used for the FAS award if the student earns a score of three or higher on six AP Examinations, including AP Seminar and AP Research. For students who began high school before the 2025-2026 school year, four AP Examinations are required. For students who began high school during the 2025-2026 school year and after, three AP Examinations that satisfy the English language, mathematics, science and social studies credit requirements to earn a standard high school diploma³ plus an AP Examination of the student's choice are required.

The bill also specifies that earning an AP Capstone designation does not satisfy the requirements for a standard high school diploma. (Section [9](#)).

The bill amends the student recruitment strategies required as part of a [Florida Career and Professional Education \(CAPE\) Act](#) 3-year strategic plan to include providing in-person academic advising, including information on career education programs and postsecondary scholarships, by a certified school counselor or the school principal or his or her designee. It removes requirements for the strategic plan relating to certain students. The bill also updates language in the CAPE Act to include the Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholars and Florida Gold Seal CAPE Scholars awards within the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program and requires career and professional academies and high schools providing a career-themed course to provide students the opportunity to attain the Florida Gold Seal CAPE Scholars award.⁴ (Sections [3](#) and [4](#)).

The bill increases eligibility for the Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholars award by removing the requirement to complete a sequential program of studies, and instead requiring the student to earn three credits, instead of two, in CTE courses.⁵ For students entering grade 9 in the 2024-2025 school year and thereafter, the bill authorizes 75 hours of volunteer service as meeting a requirement for the Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholars award and the Florida Gold Seal Cape Scholars awards. (Section [11](#)).

² Florida Department of Education, *2024-2025 Course Directory*, [2024-2025 Course Directory](#) (last visited Apr. 17, 2025).

³ Section [1003.4282, F.S.](#)

⁴ Section [1009.536, F.S.](#)

⁵ Section [1009.536\(1\)\(a\), F.S.](#)

The bill adds the Florida Gold Seal CAPE Scholars award to the other Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program awards that workforce education programs and Florida College System (FCS) institutions are prohibited from including the transportation access fee when calculating the award amount. (Sections [5](#) and [6](#)).

The bill removes obsolete language regarding when paid work became eligible for meeting award requirements in the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program and student eligibility for Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholars and Florida Gold Seal CAPE Scholars awards, as well as conforming a cross-reference. (Sections [7](#), [9](#), [10](#), and [11](#)).

Finally, the bill authorizes the chair of the Florida Prepaid College Board to assign a designee to serve in his or her place on the board of directors of [Florida ABLE, Inc.](#) It also requires the board of Florida ABLE, Inc. to annually elect a board member to serve as chair instead of the chair of the Florida Prepaid College Board being designated to serve as the chair. (Section [12](#)).

The effective date for the bill is July 1, 2025. (Section [14](#)).

RULEMAKING:

Current law requires the SBE to adopt rules to implement requirements for earning a high school diploma and to administer the Bright Futures Scholarship Program.⁶ The bill modifies provisions of law already under the SBE's rulemaking authority, thus allowing the SBE to make rules to implement the bill.

Lawmaking is a legislative power; however, the Legislature may delegate a portion of such power to executive branch agencies to create rules that have the force of law. To exercise this delegated power, an agency must have a grant of rulemaking authority and a law to implement.

FISCAL OR ECONOMIC IMPACT:

STATE GOVERNMENT:

The bill would increase the number of students who are eligible for the Bright Futures Scholarship Program. The fiscal impact for expanding the Bright Futures Scholarship Program to include those students earning an AP Capstone designation would grant initial eligibility to an additional 660 students for the 2026-2027 academic year, resulting in approximately a \$3.8 million fiscal impact. Based on the current forecast growth, the total cost for initial eligibility and students meeting the renewal requirements would result in a cost of \$7.6 million for 2027-2028, \$9.8 million for 2028-2029, and \$11.2 million for 2029-2030.⁷ The additional pathway would increase the number of students eligible for Bright Futures awards, but some students who receive an AP Capstone designation may already qualify for a Florida Academic Scholar or Florida Medallion Scholar award by earning the required test score and GPA, with the fiscal impact of such considered by future Postsecondary Student Financial Aid estimating conferences.

The fiscal impact for expanding the Bright Futures Scholarship Program eligibility requirements for students who earn a high school diploma from a non-Florida school while living with a parent or guardian who, within 12 months before the student's graduation, retired from military or public service assignment away from Florida, has an indeterminate fiscal impact.

While the bill may create an increase in the number of students eligible for Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholars and Florida Gold Seal CAPE Scholars awards, the increase in these award types would have a minimal impact on Bright Futures Scholarship Program costs.

⁶ Sections [1003.4282\(11\)](#) and [1009.53\(3\)](#), F.S.

⁷ Email from Amelia Johnson, Deputy Chief of Staff, Florida Department of Education, (Feb. 27, 2025) (on file with Senate Appropriation Committee on Higher Education). Numbers were updated based on deferring the effective day to 2026.

RELEVANT INFORMATION

SUBJECT OVERVIEW:

[Career Education Courses](#)

“Career education” means education that provides instruction for the following purposes:⁸

- At the elementary, middle, and high school levels, exploratory courses designed to give students initial exposure to a broad range of occupations to assist them in preparing their academic and occupational plans, and practical arts courses that provide generic skills that may apply to many occupations but are not designed to prepare students for entry into a specific occupation. Career education provided before high school completion must be designed to strengthen both occupational awareness and academic skills integrated throughout all academic instruction.
- At the high school level, job-preparatory instruction in the competencies that prepare students for effective entry into an occupation, including diversified cooperative education, work experience, and job-entry programs that coordinate directed study and on-the-job training.
- At the postsecondary education level, courses of study that provide competencies needed for entry into specific occupations or for advancement within an occupation.

[Dual Credit for Career Education Courses](#)

Students can fulfill required credits for a standard high school diploma through equivalent, applied or integrated courses or career education courses, including work-related internships approved by the SBE and identified in the course directory.⁹

The DOE must develop, for approval by the SBE, multiple, career education courses, or a series of courses, which allow students to earn credit in both the career education course and courses required for high school graduation.¹⁰ Such courses must:

- include workforce and digital literacy skills; and
- integrate required course content with practical applications and designated rigorous coursework that results in one or more industry certifications or clearly articulated credit or advanced standing in a 2-year or 4-year certificate or degree program, including work-related internships or apprenticeships.¹¹

Additionally, school districts, postsecondary institutions, education consortia, local workforce boards, and local business and industry leaders may collaborate in creating career education courses that lead to academic course credit. Courses developed through this collaborative process must meet the same rigorous standards as those created by DOE and be approved by the state board.¹²

A student may substitute to satisfy the high school graduation requirement of four credits in mathematics and three credits in science by using industry certification courses that lead to college credit. Substitutions allow for up to two mathematics credits and one science credit, except for Algebra I, Geometry, and Biology I. Industry certification that can be substituted for credit must have a statewide college credit articulation agreement approved by the state board.¹³

In addition, a student who earns credit upon completion of 1 year of related technical instruction for an apprenticeship program or preapprenticeship program registered with the DOE may use such credit to satisfy the high school graduation credit requirement, requirements for fine or performing arts, speech and debate, or CTE, or

⁸ Section [1003.01\(2\), F.S.](#)

⁹ Section [1003.4282\(1\)\(b\), F.S.](#) An equivalent course is one or more courses identified by content-area experts as being a match to the core curricular content of another course, based upon review of the state academic standards for that subject. An applied course aligns with state academic standards and includes real-world applications of a career and technical education standard used in business or industry. An integrated course includes content from several courses within a content area or across content areas.

¹⁰ Section [1003.4282\(7\)\(a\), F.S.](#)

¹¹ Section [1003.4282\(7\)\(a\)2., F.S.](#)

¹² Section [1003.4282\(7\)\(b\) and \(c\), F.S.](#)

¹³ [Id.](#)

electives. The SBE is required to approve and identify in the Course Code Directory the apprenticeship and preapprenticeship programs from which earned credit may be used to satisfy high school graduation requirements.¹⁴

A student in grades 6 through 12 may be awarded one high school credit upon providing his or her school with verifiable documentation showing an accumulation of at least 135 hours of participation in Career and Technical Student Organization (CTSO) activities that occur outside of regular class time.¹⁵

CTE Graduation Pathway

Students may complete an alternative pathway to earning a standard high school diploma through the CTE pathway option. A student completing the CTE pathway option must successfully complete at least 18 credits and earn at least a cumulative (GPA) of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale.¹⁶ A student must also complete the following requirements:¹⁷

- Complete the credits required for a standard high school diploma in English Language Arts, mathematics, science, social studies, and personal financial literacy;¹⁸
- Complete two credits in CTE. The courses must result in a program completion and an industry certification; and
- For a student who enters grade 9 before the 2023-2024 school year, complete two credits in electives or work-based learning programs. A one-half credit in financial literacy may be included in the two credits of electives; or
- For a student who enters grade 9 in the 2023-2024 school year and thereafter, complete one and one-half credits in electives or work-based learning programs.

Career Education Notification

District school boards must notify the parent of a student who earns an industry certification which articulates for college credit. The notification must include:¹⁹

- the estimated cost savings of earning an industry certification prior to high school graduation versus the costs of acquiring such certification after high school graduation;
- the postsecondary credits available and the tuition and fees associated with those postsecondary credits; and
- any additional industry certifications available to the student.

District school boards are also required, at the beginning of each school year, to notify students in or entering high school and their parents of the opportunity and benefits of:²⁰

- advanced placement, International Baccalaureate, Advanced International Certificate of Education,
- and dual enrollment courses;
- career and professional academies;
- career-themed courses;
- the CTE pathway to earn a standard high school diploma;²¹
- work-based learning opportunities, including internships and apprenticeship and preapprenticeship programs;
- foundational and soft-skill credentialing programs;²²
- Florida Virtual School courses; and
- options for early graduation.²³

The parents and students must also be provided with guidance on accessing and utilizing Florida's online

¹⁴ Section [1003.4282\(7\)\(a\)3, F.S.](#)

¹⁵ Rule 6A-1.09442(4), F.A.C.; *see also* s. [1003.4282\(7\)\(a\)4, F.S.](#)

¹⁶ Section [1003.4282\(9\), F.S.](#)

¹⁷ Section [1003.4282\(9\)\(a\), F.S.](#)

¹⁸ Section [1003.4282\(3\)\(a\)-\(d\) and \(h\), F.S.](#)

¹⁹ Section [1003.02\(1\)\(j\), F.S.](#)

²⁰ Section [1003.02\(1\)\(i\), F.S.](#)

²¹ Section [1003.4282\(10\), F.S.](#)

²² Section [445.06, F.S.](#)

²³ Section [1003.4281, F.S.](#)

career planning and work-based learning coordination system and the contact information of a certified school counselor who can advise students on these options.²⁴

Career Dual Enrollment Agreements

Career dual enrollment includes courses offered through career certificate (clock hour programs) and career associate degree (college credit) programs that lead to an industry certification.²⁵

Additionally, career dual enrollment must be provided as a curricular option for high school students to earn an industry certification that counts as credit toward a high school diploma and which may articulate toward college credit.²⁶ A student must have a 2.0 unweighted GPA for enrollment in career certificate courses.²⁷

Each district school board career center must enter into a career dual enrollment agreement with each high school in any school district it serves.²⁸ Articulation agreements must be annually submitted by the career center to the DOE on or before August 1, and must include, at a minimum:²⁹

- The available courses and programs, and the clock hour credits a student will earn upon completion of each course and program.
- Delineate the high school course credits earned for each completed course.
- Identify any college credit articulation agreements associated with each career clock hour program.
- Describe how students and parents will be informed of career dual enrollment opportunities, including related workforce demand, student eligibility criteria, application processes and course registration procedures, as well as the postsecondary career education expectations for participating students.
- Establish additional eligibility criteria for participation and outline a process for assessing eligibility and monitoring the progress of participating students.
- Delineate costs associated with providing transportation to students who are unable to provide their own.

Dual Enrollment Articulation Agreements

Each public postsecondary institution and school district in its service area is required to jointly develop and implement a comprehensive dual enrollment articulation agreement.³⁰ The dual enrollment articulation agreement must be submitted annually to the DOE on or before August 1 and must include, but is not limited to, the following components:

- The delineation of courses and programs available to students who participate in dual enrollment.³¹
- A description of the processes by which students and parents are informed about and exercise options to participate in dual enrollment, including registration.³²
- The type of high school credit earned for passage of a dual enrollment course.³³
- A listing of any additional student eligibility criteria.³⁴
- Each institution's responsibilities for determining student eligibility and performance monitoring, transmission of grades, program costs including instructional materials, and student transportation.³⁵

²⁴ Section [1003.02\(1\)\(i\), F.S.](#)

²⁵ Section [1007.271\(7\), F.S.](#); see also r. 6A-6.0575, F.A.C., and Florida Department of Education, Dual Enrollment, 2024-2025 Dual Enrollment Course – High School Subject Area Equivalency List, [Dual Enrollment](#) (last visited Apr. 17, 2025).

²⁶ *Id.*

²⁷ Section [1007.271\(3\), F.S.](#)

²⁸ Section [1007.271\(7\), F.S.](#)

²⁹ Section [1007.271\(7\)\(a\)-\(f\), F.S.](#)

³⁰ Section [1007.271\(21\), F.S.](#)

³¹ Section [1007.271\(21\)\(c\), F.S.](#)

³² Section [1007.271\(21\)\(b\), \(d\), and \(i\), F.S.](#) Career centers, FCS institutions, and SUS institutions must also delineate courses and programs for dually enrolled home education students. Courses and programs may be added, revised, or deleted at any time. Any course or program limitations may not exceed those for other dual enrollment students. Section [1007.271\(13\)\(b\)1., F.S.](#)

³³ Section [1007.271\(21\)\(f\), F.S.](#)

³⁴ Section [1007.271\(21\)\(e\), F.S.](#) Career centers, FCS institutions, and SUS institutions must also identify eligibility criteria for home education student participation, not to exceed those required of other dually enrolled students. Section [1007.271\(13\)\(b\)2., F.S.](#) Exceptions to the required grade point average may be granted on an individual student basis. Section [1007.271\(21\)\(h\), F.S.](#)

³⁵ Section [1007.271\(21\)\(l\)-\(o\), F.S.](#)

District school boards must enter dual enrollment articulation agreements with local FCS institutions if capacity allows.³⁶ Additionally, district school boards must make reasonable efforts to enter into dual enrollment articulation agreements with a FCS institution that offers online dual enrollment courses.³⁷

Florida CAPE Act

In 2007, the Florida Legislature passed the CAPE Act³⁸ to provide a statewide planning partnership between the business and education communities to attract, expand, and retain targeted, high-value industry to sustain a strong, knowledge-based economy.³⁹ The primary purpose of the CAPE Act is to:⁴⁰

- improve middle and high school academic performance by providing rigorous and relevant curriculum opportunities;
- provide rigorous and relevant career-themed courses that articulate to postsecondary-level coursework and lead to industry certification;
- support local and regional economic development;
- respond to Florida's critical workforce needs; and
- provide state residents with access to high-wage and high-demand careers.

In accordance with the CAPE Act, school boards are required to develop a 3-year strategic plan in partnership with local workforce development boards, economic development agencies, and state-approved postsecondary institutions to better align academy programs or career themed courses with local and regional workforce needs. Two or more school districts may collaborate in the development of the strategic plan.⁴¹

The strategic plan must describe in detail provisions for the efficient transportation of students, the maximum use of shared resources, access to courses aligned to state curriculum standards through virtual education providers legislatively authorized to provide part-time instruction to middle school students. Additionally, the plan must include an objective review of proposed career and professional academy courses and other career-themed courses to determine if the courses will lead to the attainment of industry certifications included on the CAPE Industry Certification Funding List.⁴²

The 3-year strategic plan must be constructed and based, in part, on the following strategies:

- using state labor projections to determine local and regional workforce needs for the ensuing 3 years and developing and implementing career academies or career-themed courses based on occupations identified by the Labor Market Statistics Center within the Florida Commerce and the Labor Market Estimating Conference;⁴³
- to ensure instruction by industry-certified faculty and standards and strategies to maintain current industry credentials and for recruiting and retaining faculty to meet those standards;⁴⁴
- to improve the passage rate for industry certification examinations if the rate falls below 50 percent;⁴⁵
- to recruit students into career-themed courses and career and professional academies which include opportunities for students who have been unsuccessful in traditional classrooms but who are interested in enrolling in career-themed courses or a career and professional academy. School boards must provide opportunities for students who may be deemed as potential dropouts or whose cumulative grade point average drops below a 2.0 to enroll in career-themed courses or participate in career and professional academies;⁴⁶

³⁶ Section [1007.271\(4\)\(a\), F.S.](#)

³⁷ Section [1007.271\(4\)\(b\), F.S.](#)

³⁸ Section [1, ch. 2007-216, L.O.F.](#)

³⁹ Section [1003.491, F.S.](#)

⁴⁰ Section [1003.491\(1\), F.S.](#)

⁴¹ Section [1003.491\(2\), F.S.](#)

⁴² [Id.](#); see also Florida Department of Education, *Cape Industry Certification Funding List*, available at <https://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/5398/urlt/2324CAPECertFundList.pdf>.

⁴³ Section [1003.491\(3\)\(a\) and \(b\), F.S.](#)

⁴⁴ Section [1003.491\(3\)\(d\), F.S.](#)

⁴⁵ Section [1003.491\(3\)\(i\), F.S.](#)

⁴⁶ Section [1003.491\(3\)\(j\), F.S.](#)

- to implement career-themed courses or career and professional academy training that lead to industry certification in juvenile justice education programs;⁴⁷
- to provide professional development for high school certified school counselors on the benefits of career and professional academies and career-themed courses that lead to industry certifications;⁴⁸
- to redirect appropriated career funding in high schools and postsecondary institutions to support career academies and career-themed courses that lead to industry certification;⁴⁹ and
- to inform and promote the CTE opportunities available in the district to students, parents, the community and stakeholders.⁵⁰

Within their strategic 3-year plans, each school board must include alignment of requirements for middle school career planning, middle and high school career and professional academies or career-themed course leading to industry certification or postsecondary credit, and high school graduation requirements. The plan must include provisions to ensure that career-themed courses and courses offered through career and professional academies are academically rigorous, meet or exceed appropriate state-adopted subject area standards, result in attainment of industry certification, and, when appropriate, result in postsecondary credit.⁵¹

The strategic plan must be reviewed, updated, and jointly approved every 3 years by the local school district, local workforce development boards, economic development agencies, and state-approved postsecondary institutions.⁵²

[Florida Seal of Fine Arts Program](#)

In 2024, the Legislature established the Florida Seal of Fine Arts Program within the Department of Education to encourage students to pursue exemplary skill in the performing or visual arts and recognize high school graduates who demonstrated high proficiency in the area of fine arts.⁵³

To receive the Florida Seal of Fine Arts, a student must earn a standard high school diploma and complete at least three year-long courses in dance, music, theatre, or the visual arts with a grade of “A” or higher in each course or earn three sequential course credits in such courses with an “A” or higher. A student must also meet at least two of the following requirements:⁵⁴

- Complete a fine arts International Baccalaureate, advanced placement, dual enrollment or honors course in the formerly listed fine arts subjects with a grade of “B” or higher;
- Participate in a district or statewide organization’s juried event as a selected student participant for 2 or more years;
- Complete at least 25 volunteer hours of arts-related community service and present on their experiences;
- Meet the requirements of a portfolio-based program identifying the student as an exemplary practitioner of the fine arts; and
- Receive district, state, or national recognition for the creation and submission of an original work of art.

A rubric is used to confirm a student meets the requirements to receive a seal. School districts must keep records to identify a student has met the requirements and notify the Commissioner of Education of how many students have met the requirements to receive the seal. The Commissioner of Education provides seals to school districts to affix to the diplomas of students who earn the Seal of Fine Arts.⁵⁵

[Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program](#)

Overview

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

⁴⁷ Section [1003.491\(3\)\(l\), F.S.](#)

⁴⁸ Section [1003.491\(3\)\(p\), F.S.](#)

⁴⁹ Section [1003.491\(3\)\(q\), F.S.](#)

⁵⁰ Section [1003.491\(3\)\(r\), F.S.](#)

⁵¹ Section [1003.491\(3\)\(f\) and \(g\), F.S.](#)

⁵² Section [1003.491\(2\), F.S.](#)

⁵³ Florida Department of Education, *Florida Seal of Fine Arts Memo* (2024), available at [Content Areas - Fine Arts](#).

⁵⁴ Section [1003.4321, F.S.](#)

⁵⁵ *Id.*

at an eligible Florida public or private postsecondary education institution.⁵⁶ Since the 1997-1998 academic year, the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program has disbursed approximately \$9.2 billion for over 3.3 million students to attend an eligible postsecondary institution in this state.⁵⁷

General Eligibility Requirements

Florida high school students who wish to qualify for a Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program award must meet the following initial eligibility requirements:

- Be a Florida resident for at least one year preceding an award.
- Earn a standard Florida high school diploma or a high school equivalency diploma unless:
 - The student completes a home education program.
 - The student earns a high school diploma from a non-Florida school while living with a parent or guardian who is on military or public service assignment away from Florida; or
 - The student earns a high school diploma from an eligible Florida private school.
- Be accepted by and enroll in an eligible Florida public or independent postsecondary education institution.
- Be enrolled for at least six semester credit hours or the equivalent in quarter hours or clock hours.
- Not have been found guilty of, or entered a plea of nolo contendere to, a felony charge, unless the student has been granted clemency.
- Apply for a scholarship by high school graduation, or by December 31 for mid-year graduates.⁵⁸

Academic Eligibility Requirements

There are four awards through the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship program, including 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.⁵⁹ In the 2023-2024 academic year, 35,111 students received an initial disbursement for one of the four awards offered through the Bright Futures Scholarship Program.⁶⁰

Florida Academic Scholar (FAS) Award

Florida high school students who wish to qualify for the FAS award must meet the following academic requirements:

Graduate from a Florida public high school with a standard diploma, from a registered private high school, earn a GED, complete a home education program, or graduate from a non-Florida high school if specific eligibility requirements are met.

- Complete the required high school coursework.
- Achieve the required minimum high school grade point average (GPA) of 3.5.⁶¹
- Achieve the required minimum score on either the ACT, CLT, or SAT college entrance exam.⁶²
- Complete 100 total hours of volunteer service, paid work hours, or combination of both.
- Submit a Florida Financial Aid Application no later than August 31 after high school graduation.⁶³

A student is exempt from the required ACT, CLT, or SAT college entrance exam scores if he or she is:

- Awarded an International Baccalaureate Diploma from the International Baccalaureate Office or an Advanced International Certificate of Education Diploma from the University of Cambridge International Examinations Office;

⁵⁶ Section [1009.53\(1\), F.S.](#)

⁵⁷ Florida Department of Education, Office of Student Financial Assistance, *Florida Bright Futures Student Counts and Total Costs* (2024), available at [BFReportsA](#).

⁵⁸ Section [1009.531\(1\), F.S.](#)

⁵⁹ Section [1009.53\(2\), F.S.](#)

⁶⁰ Florida Department of Education, Office of Student Financial Assistance, *2023-2024 Florida Bright Futures End-of-Year Report* (2024), available at [EndOfYearReport](#).

⁶¹ Florida Department of Education, Office of Student Financial Assistance, *2024-2025 Bright Futures Student Handbook* (2024), available at [Bright Futures Student Handbook- Chapter 1](#), at 3.

⁶² Section [1009.531\(6\), F.S.](#) The SAT score requirement for the FAS must be set no lower than the 89th national percentile. The corresponding ACT and CLT scores must be concordant with the applicable SAT scores.

⁶³ Florida Department of Education, Office of Student Financial Assistance, *2024-2025 Bright Futures Student Handbook* (2024), available at [Bright Futures Student Handbook- Chapter 1](#), at 3.

- Recognized by the merit or achievement programs of the National Merit Scholarship Corporation as a scholar or finalist; or
- Recognized by the National Hispanic Recognition Program as a scholar recipient.⁶⁴

Florida Medallion Scholar (FMS) Award

Florida high school students who wish to qualify for the FMS award must meet the following academic requirements:

- Graduate from a Florida public high school with a standard diploma, from a registered private high school, earn a GED, complete a home education program, or graduate from a non-Florida high school if specific eligibility requirements are met.
- Complete the required high school coursework.
- Achieve the required minimum high school grade point average (GPA) of 3.0.
- Achieve the required minimum score on either the ACT, CLT, or SAT college entrance exam.⁶⁵
- Complete 75 hours of volunteer service, 100 hours of paid work, or 100 hours of a combination of both.
- Submit a Florida Financial Aid Application no later than August 31 after high school graduation.⁶⁶

A student is exempt from the required ACT, CLT, or SAT college entrance exam scores if he or she is:

- Awarded an International Baccalaureate Diploma from the International Baccalaureate Office or an Advanced International Certificate of Education Diploma from the University of Cambridge International Examinations Office;
- Recognized by the merit or achievement programs of the National Merit Scholarship Corporation as a scholar or finalist; or
- Recognized by the National Hispanic Recognition Program as a scholar recipient.⁶⁷

Florida Gold Seal CAPE (GSC) Award

Florida high school students who wish to qualify for the Florida GSC award must meet the following initial eligibility requirements:

- Earn a minimum of five postsecondary credit hours through CAPE industry certifications that articulate for college credit.
- Complete 30 volunteer service hours, 100 paid work hours, or the combination of 100 total hours.⁶⁸

Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholars (GSV) Award

Florida high school students who wish to qualify for a Florida GSVS award must meet the following initial eligibility requirements:

- Achieve the required weighted minimum 3.0 GPA in non-elective high school courses.
- Take at least three full credits in a single career and technical education program.
- Achieve the required minimum 3.5 unweighted GPA in career education courses.
- Achieve the required minimum score on the ACT, SAT, or Florida Postsecondary Education Readiness Test (PERT).
- Complete 30 volunteer service hours, 100 paid work hours, or the combination of 100 total hours.⁶⁹

Utilization

Number of Students Disbursed Bright Futures Funds 2023-2024⁷⁰

⁶⁴ Section [1009.534\(1\), F.S.](#)

⁶⁵ Section [1009.531\(6\), F.S.](#) The SAT score requirement for the FAS must be set no lower than the 75th national percentile. The corresponding ACT and CLT scores must be concordant with the applicable SAT scores.

⁶⁶ Florida Department of Education, Office of Student Financial Assistance, *2024-2025 Bright Futures Student Handbook* (2024), available at [Bright Futures Student Handbook- Chapter 1](#), at 3.

⁶⁷ Florida Department of Education, Office of Student Financial Assistance, *2024-2025 Bright Futures Student Handbook* (2024), available at [Bright Futures Student Handbook- Chapter 1](#), at 5.

⁶⁸ Florida Department of Education, Office of Student Financial Assistance, *2024-2025 Bright Futures Student Handbook* (2024), available at [Bright Futures Student Handbook- Chapter 1](#), at 8.

⁶⁹ Florida Department of Education, Office of Student Financial Assistance, *2024-2025 Bright Futures Student Handbook* (2024), available at [Bright Futures Student Handbook- Chapter 1](#), at 6.

Florida Bright Futures	FAS	FMS	GSC	GSV
Initial Recipients	20,093	14,442	284	292
Renewal Recipients	48,165	34,384	117	290
Total Recipients	68,258	48,826	401	582
Total Disbursements	\$400,539,928	\$204,984,425	\$345,222	\$509,419

Enrollment Caps

Program Length Specifications⁷¹		
Number of FAS/FMS Hours Funding Available	Number of GSC/GSV Hours Funding Available⁷²	Duration of Funding Available⁷³
100% of program of study	100% of program of study, up to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 72 hours (AS, AAS, CCC, or PSAV) • 60 hours (ATD) 	Up to 5 years from high school graduation

Advanced Placement (AP) Capstone Designation

The AP Capstone is a diploma program based on two yearlong AP courses: AP Seminar and AP Research. These courses are designed to complement other AP courses that the AP Capstone student may take. The AP Seminar course is an introductory AP class for grades 10 and 11, and serves as a prerequisite for AP Research, which is typically offered in grades 11 or 12. The AP scores for both courses are based on teacher assessment of student presentation components and College Board scoring of student-written components plus an end-of-course examination (for AP Seminar only). To earn an AP Capstone designation, students must earn scores of three or higher in the AP Seminar and AP Research courses, and on four additional AP Examinations of their choosing. Students who earn scores of three or higher in the AP Seminar and AP Research courses, but not on four additional AP Examinations, receive the AP Seminar and Research Certificate.⁷⁴

Florida ABLE, Inc.

Congress enacted the ABLE Act (Achieving a Better Life Experience Act) in 2014.⁷⁵ The ABLE Act permits a state to implement an ABLE Program and establish ABLE accounts for eligible individuals with disabilities⁷⁶ to spend distributions on “qualified disability expenses.”⁷⁷ The purposes of the ABLE Act are to encourage individuals and

⁷⁰ Florida Department of Education, Office of Student Financial Assistance, *Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Statistical Reports*, [Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Statistical Reports - Florida Student Scholarship & Grant Programs](#) (last visited Apr. 11, 2025).

⁷¹ Florida Department of Education, Office of Student Financial Assistance, *2024-2025 Bright Futures Student Handbook* (2024), available at [Bright Futures Student Handbook- Chapter 2](#).

⁷² Beginning with the 2016-17 high school graduates, students who earn a Gold Seal CAPE (GSC) award and attain an AS or AAS degree may receive an additional 60 hours of funding toward a qualifying BS or BAS degree program.

⁷³ For students graduating high school in 2010-11 and thereafter, if annual renewal requirements were not met due to a verifiable illness or other documented emergency (as reported by the postsecondary institution), an exception of one academic year to the renewal timeframe may be granted if a course of study is not completed after five academic years.

⁷⁴ College Board, *How AP Capstone Works*, [How AP Capstone Works – AP Central | College Board](#) (Last visited Apr. 17, 2025).

⁷⁵ Pub. L. No. 113-295, 128 Stat. 4056 (Dec. 19, 2014).

⁷⁶ 26 U.S.C. § 529(e). An individual is an eligible individual for a taxable year if during such taxable year: (1) the individual is entitled to benefits based on blindness or disability under title II or XVI of the Social Security Act, and such blindness or disability occurred before the date on which the individual attained age 26; or (2) a disability certification with respect to such individual is filed with the Secretary of Education for such taxable year.

⁷⁷ 26 U.S.C. § 529(e)(5). “Qualified disability expense” is defined as “any expense related to the eligible individual’s blindness or disability which are made for the benefit of an eligible individual who is the designated beneficiary, including the following expenses: education, housing, transportation, employment training and support, assistive technology and personal support services, health, prevention and wellness, financial management and administrative services, legal fees, expenses for

families to save money to support individuals with disabilities to maintain health, independence, and quality of life and to provide secure funding for disability-related expenses on behalf of designated beneficiaries with disabilities to supplement benefits provided through other sources.⁷⁸

The Florida ABLE Program was created in 2015 to encourage and assist the saving of private funds in tax-exempt accounts in order to pay for the qualified expenses of eligible individuals with disabilities.⁷⁹ The Florida Prepaid College Board was required to establish a direct-support organization to be known as “Florida ABLE, Inc.” to establish and administer the Florida ABLE Program.⁸⁰

Current law requires the board of directors of the Florida ABLE program to consist of:

- The chair of Florida Prepaid, who must serve as the chair of the board.
- One individual who possesses knowledge, skill, and experience in the areas of accounting, risk management, or investment management, who must be appointed by Florida Prepaid. A current member of Florida Prepaid, other than the chair, may be appointed.
- One individual who possesses knowledge, skill, and experience in the areas of accounting, risk management, or investment management, who must be appointed by the Governor.
- Two individuals who are advocates of persons with disabilities, one of whom must be appointed by the President of the Senate and one of whom must be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives. At least one of the individuals appointed must be an advocate of persons with developmental disabilities, as that term is defined in statute.⁸¹

Currently, the Governor-appointee and the individuals appointed by the President of the Senate and Speaker of the House all serve 3-year terms and each may be reappointed for up to one consecutive term.⁸²

RECENT LEGISLATION:

YEAR	BILL #	HOUSE SPONSOR(S)	SENATE SPONSOR	OTHER INFORMATION
2022	CS/HB 461	Melo, Valdés	Hutson	Became law on June 27, 2022 and took effect on that date.
2023	CS/CS/SB 240	Melo	Hutson	Became law on May 15, 2023 and took effect on July 1, 2023.
2024	HB 523	Canady, Black	Perry	Became law on April 2, 2024 and took effect on July 1, 2024.
2024	CS/CS/HB 917	Snyder	Simon	Became law on April 26, 2024 and took effect on July 1, 2024.

oversight and monitoring, funeral and burial expenses, and other expenses, which are approved by the Secretary under regulations and consistent with the purposes of this section.”

⁷⁸ 26 U.S.C. § 529(b).
⁷⁹ Section 2, ch. 2015-56, L.O.F.
⁸⁰ Section [1009.986\(3\), F.S.](#)
⁸¹ Sections [393.063](#) and [1009.986\(3\)\(d\)1., F.S.](#)
⁸² Section [1009.986\(3\)\(d\)2.b., F.S.](#)

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BILL HISTORY

COMMITTEE REFERENCE	ACTION	DATE	STAFF DIRECTOR/ POLICY CHIEF	ANALYSIS PREPARED BY
Careers & Workforce Subcommittee	15 Y, 0 N, As CS	3/25/2025	Kiner	Blalock
THE CHANGES ADOPTED BY THE COMMITTEE:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amends requirements for a Florida Career and Professional Education Act (CAPE) strategic plan. Revises the course requirements for the Career and Technical Education (CTE) graduation pathway to align with the course requirements for the Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholars (GSV) award. Removes the requirement to complete a sequential program of studies and requires students to earn three CTE credits instead of two in order to be eligible for the GSV award. Lowers the minimum grade point average that a student must earn for high school CTE courses in order to be eligible for the GSV award. Increases the volunteer service hours required for eligibility for the GSV award and the Florida Gold Seal CAPE Scholars award from 30 hours to 75 hours. Expands eligibility for the Bright Futures Scholarship Program to include students of active duty military personnel and public service employees who may be stationed outside the state due to their job requirements and retire within 12 months prior to the student's graduation. Expands eligibility for the Florida Academic Scholar award requirements to include the Advanced Placement Capstone designation. 			
Higher Education Budget Subcommittee	14 Y, 0 N, As CS	4/8/2025	Fontaine	Stenson
THE CHANGES ADOPTED BY THE COMMITTEE:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revises requirements for a high school graduate to earn the Florida Seal of Fine Arts to include AICE courses. Revises number and type of AP courses required to use AP Capstone designation as eligibility for a Florida Academic Scholars (FAS) award. Removes bill language that lowered GPA requirement to be eligible for Gold Seal Vocational Scholars (GSV) award. 			
Education & Employment Committee	19 Y, 0 N, As CS	4/17/2025	Hassell	Blalock
THE CHANGES ADOPTED BY THE COMMITTEE:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Authorized appointment of a designee on the Florida ABLE, Inc. board of directors and required the board to annually elect a chair. Modified references to AP Courses required to qualify for a Florida Academic Scholars award to AP Examinations. 			

THIS BILL ANALYSIS HAS BEEN UPDATED TO INCORPORATE ALL OF THE CHANGES DESCRIBED ABOVE.
