

**By** the Appropriations Committee on Higher Education; the Committee on Education Postsecondary; and Senator Burgess

608-02543-25

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1                                   A bill to be entitled  
2       An act relating to the Florida Bright Futures  
3       Scholarship Program; amending s. 1009.531, F.S.;  
4       revising eligibility requirements for a student who  
5       earns a high school diploma from a non-Florida school  
6       under certain circumstances; amending s. 1009.534,  
7       F.S.; revising student eligibility requirements for  
8       the Florida Academic Scholars award to include earning  
9       an Advanced Placement Capstone designation from the  
10      College Board; providing requirements for the  
11      designation; amending s. 1009.26, F.S.; conforming a  
12      cross-reference; providing an effective date.

13  
14 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:  
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16           Section 1. Paragraph (b) of subsection (1) of section  
17   1009.531, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

18           1009.531 Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program;  
19   student eligibility requirements for initial awards.—

20           (1) In order to be eligible for an initial award from any  
21   of the scholarships under the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship  
22   Program, a student must:

23           (b) Earn a standard Florida high school diploma pursuant to  
24   s. 1002.3105(5), s. 1003.4281, or s. 1003.4282 or a high school  
25   equivalency diploma pursuant to s. 1003.435 unless:

26           1. The student completes a home education program according  
27   to s. 1002.41;

28           2. The student earns a high school diploma from a non-  
29   Florida school while living with a parent or guardian who is on l

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30 or, within 12 months before the student's high school  
31 graduation, has retired from, military or public service  
32 assignment away from Florida; or

33 3. The student earns a high school diploma from a Florida  
34 private school operating pursuant to s. 1002.42.

35 Section 2. Present subsections (2), (3), and (4) of section  
36 1009.534, Florida Statutes, are redesignated as subsections (3),  
37 (4), and (5), respectively, a new subsection (2) is added to  
38 that section, and subsection (1) of that section is amended, to  
39 read:

40 1009.534 Florida Academic Scholars award.—

41 (1) A student is eligible for a Florida Academic Scholars  
42 award if he or she meets the general eligibility requirements  
43 for the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program and:

44 (a) Has achieved a 3.5 weighted grade point average as  
45 calculated pursuant to s. 1009.531, or its equivalent, in high  
46 school courses that are designated by the State Board of  
47 Education as college-preparatory academic courses and has  
48 attained at least the score required under s. 1009.531(6)(a) on  
49 the combined verbal and quantitative parts of the Scholastic  
50 Aptitude Test, the Scholastic Assessment Test, or the recentered  
51 Scholastic Assessment Test of the College Entrance Examination,  
52 or an equivalent score on the ACT Assessment Program;

53 (b) Has attended a home education program according to s.  
54 1002.41 during grades 11 and 12, has completed the International  
55 Baccalaureate curriculum but failed to earn the International  
56 Baccalaureate Diploma, or has completed the Advanced  
57 International Certificate of Education curriculum but failed to  
58 earn the Advanced International Certificate of Education

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59 Diploma, and has attained at least the score required under s.  
60 1009.531(6) (a) on the combined verbal and quantitative parts of  
61 the Scholastic Aptitude Test, the Scholastic Assessment Test, or  
62 the recentered Scholastic Assessment Test of the College  
63 Entrance Examination, or an equivalent score on the ACT  
64 Assessment Program;

65 (c) Has been awarded an International Baccalaureate Diploma  
66 from the International Baccalaureate Office, ~~or~~ an Advanced  
67 International Certificate of Education Diploma from the  
68 University of Cambridge International Examinations Office, or an  
69 Advanced Placement Capstone designation from the College Board  
70 beginning with high school students graduating in the 2025-2026  
71 school year;

72 (d) Has been recognized by the merit or achievement  
73 programs of the National Merit Scholarship Corporation as a  
74 scholar or finalist; or

75 (e) Has been recognized by the National Hispanic  
76 Recognition Program as a scholar recipient.

77  
78 The student must complete a program of volunteer service or,  
79 beginning with a high school student graduating in the 2022-2023  
80 academic year and thereafter, paid work, as approved by the  
81 district school board, the administrators of a nonpublic school,  
82 or the Department of Education for home education program  
83 students, which must include 100 hours of volunteer service,  
84 paid work, or a combination of both. Eligible paid work  
85 completed on or after June 27, 2022, shall be included in the  
86 student's total of paid work hours. The student may identify a  
87 social or civic issue or a professional area that interests him

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88 or her and develop a plan for his or her personal involvement in  
89 addressing the issue or learning about the area. The student  
90 must, through papers or other presentations, evaluate and  
91 reflect upon his or her volunteer service or paid work  
92 experience. Such volunteer service or paid work may include, but  
93 is not limited to, a business or governmental internship, work  
94 for a nonprofit community service organization, or activities on  
95 behalf of a candidate for public office. The hours of volunteer  
96 service or paid work must be documented in writing, and the  
97 document must be signed by the student, the student's parent or  
98 guardian, and a representative of the organization for which the  
99 student performed the volunteer service or paid work.

100 (2) For purposes of this section, the Advanced Placement  
101 Capstone designation shall consist of six Advanced Placement  
102 courses, including Advanced Placement Seminar; Advanced  
103 Placement Research; one Advanced Placement course in mathematics  
104 or science; one Advanced Placement course in English; one  
105 Advanced Placement course in art, history, or social sciences;  
106 and one Advanced Placement course in a subject of the student's  
107 choice. Receipt of the Advanced Placement Capstone designation  
108 does not satisfy the requirements for a standard high school  
109 diploma under s. 1003.4282.

110 Section 3. Paragraph (c) of subsection (18) of section  
111 1009.26, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

112 1009.26 Fee waivers.—

113 (18)

114 (c) Upon enrollment in a Program of Strategic Emphasis or a  
115 state-approved teacher preparation program, the tuition and fees  
116 waived under this subsection must be reported for state funding

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117 purposes under ss. 1009.534 and 1009.535 and must be disbursed  
118 to the student. The amount disbursed to the student must be  
119 equal to the award amount the student has received under s.  
120 1009.534(3) ~~s. 1009.534(2)~~ or s. 1009.535(2).

121 Section 4. This act shall take effect July 1, 2025.