

By the Appropriations Committee on Higher Education; and Senator Davis

608-02522-26

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A bill to be entitled

An act relating to the Linking Industry to Nursing Education Fund; amending s. 1009.8962, F.S.; providing that the Linking Industry to Nursing Education Fund was established for shortages in health science professions in addition to nursing; defining the term "health science"; revising the definition of the term "student"; authorizing the fund to match certain contributions if funds are available; revising how funds may be used; designating the Department of Education as the lead entity for identifying programs eligible for LINE funding; requiring the department to use the State Board of Education's Career and Technical Education Health Science curriculum framework to determine eligibility; requiring the department to compile and publish a list of eligible programs by a specified date; requiring the department to review and update the list annually; requiring the Office of Reimagining Education and Career Help to provide specified data to the department; prohibiting the Office of Reimagining Education and Career Help from determining eligibility; providing an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Present paragraphs (b) and (c) of subsection (3) and subsection (10) of section 1009.8962, Florida Statutes, are redesignated as paragraphs (c) and (d) and subsection (11),

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respectively, a new paragraph (b) is added to subsection (3) of that section, a new subsection (10) is added to that section, and subsection (2), present paragraph (c) of subsection (3), subsection (5), paragraph (a) of subsection (6), paragraph (d) of subsection (8), and paragraph (b) of subsection (9) of section 1009.8962, Florida Statutes, are amended, to read:

1009.8962 Linking Industry to Nursing Education (LINE) Fund.—

(2) Recognizing that the state has a persistent and growing nursing shortage and shortages in other related health science professions, it is the intent of the Legislature to address this critical workforce need by incentivizing collaboration between nursing and health science education programs and health care partners through the establishment of the LINE Fund. This fund is intended to meet local, regional, and state workforce demand by recruiting faculty and clinical preceptors, increasing the capacity of high-quality nursing and health science education programs as outlined in the State Board of Education's Career and Technical Education Health Science curriculum framework, and increasing the number of nursing and health science education program graduates who are prepared to enter the workforce.

(3) As used in this section, the term:

(b) "Health science" means a program that prepares graduates to provide direct patient care or diagnostic services that advance patient care in a health care setting as defined in s. 408.802, that are outlined in the State Board of Education's Career and Technical Education Health Science curriculum framework, and that is identified by the Department of Education pursuant to subsection (10).

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59 ~~(d)(e)~~ "Student" means a person who is a resident for
60 tuition purposes pursuant to s. 1009.21 and enrolled in a
61 nursing education program at an institution or in a health
62 science education degree or certificate program at an
63 institution that is part of the State Board of Education's
64 Career and Technical Education Health Science curriculum
65 framework.

66 (5) Subject to available funds, for every dollar
67 contributed to an institution by a health care partner, the fund
68 shall provide a dollar-to-dollar match to the participating
69 institution. Subject to available funds, the fund may also
70 provide a dollar-to-dollar match to the participating
71 institution for every dollar contributed to an institution or
72 its direct-support organization by an individual or entity that
73 does not meet the definition of a health care partner, provided
74 the contribution supports an eligible purpose of the LINE Fund.
75 Contributions from health care partners shall receive priority
76 when awarding matching funds to institutions.

77 (6) (a) Funds may be used for student scholarships,
78 recruitment of additional faculty and students, equipment,
79 facility renovation or remodeling, and simulation centers to
80 advance high-quality nursing and health science education
81 programs throughout the state.

82 (8) The Board of Governors or Department of Education, as
83 applicable, must review and evaluate each completed and timely
84 submitted proposal according to the following minimum criteria:

85 (d) How the funds will expand the institution's nursing and
86 health science education programs to meet local, regional, or
87 state workforce demands. If applicable, this shall include

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advanced education nursing programs and how the funds will increase the number of faculty and clinical preceptors and planned efforts to utilize the clinical placement process established in s. 14.36.

(9)

(b) Annually, by February 1, each institution awarded grant funds in the previous fiscal year shall submit a report to the Board of Governors or Department of Education, as applicable, that demonstrates the expansion as outlined in the proposal and the use of funds. At minimum, the report must include, by program level, the number of additional nursing and other applicable health science education students enrolled; if scholarships were awarded using grant funds, the number of students who received scholarships and the average award amount; and the outcomes of students as reported by the Office of Reimagining Education and Career Help pursuant to s. 14.36(3)(1).

(10)(a) The Department of Education shall serve as the lead entity for identifying and maintaining health science education programs eligible for participation in the LINE Fund.

(b) In carrying out this subsection, the department shall apply the State Board of Education's Career and Technical Education Health Science curriculum framework as the basis for determining program eligibility.

(c) No later than October 1, 2026, the department shall compile and publish an initial list of LINE-eligible health science programs. In developing the list, the department shall:

1. Compile the current Career and Technical Education Health Science pathways and programs;

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117 2. Identify aligned health science programs offered
118 through:

119 a. District technical colleges and career centers; and
120 b. Florida College System institutions offering career and
121 technical education-aligned health science certificates and
122 degrees;

123 3. Establish and apply alignment criteria, including
124 credential type and applicable licensure or certification
125 outcomes; and

126 4. Publish and maintain an approved list of LINE-eligible
127 health science programs for use in administering the LINE Fund.

128 (d) The department shall review and update the list
129 annually to reflect updates to the Career and Technical
130 Education Health Science curriculum framework and changes to
131 eligible program offerings.

132 (e) The Office of Reimagining Education and Career Help
133 (REACH) shall provide to the department workforce and labor
134 market demand data, including information on statewide and
135 regional health care workforce shortages, projected job growth,
136 and occupational demand, to support data-informed prioritization
137 of LINE funding. The REACH office may not determine program
138 eligibility.

139 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.