

## HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STAFF ANALYSIS

**BILL #:** CS/HB 461 Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program Student Service Requirements  
**SPONSOR(S):** Post-Secondary Education & Lifelong Learning Subcommittee, Melo, Valdes and others  
**TIED BILLS:** None **IDEN./SIM. BILLS:** SB 1060

REFERENCE	ACTION	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR or BUDGET/POLICY CHIEF
1) Post-Secondary Education & Lifelong Learning Subcommittee	17 Y, 0 N, As CS	Sleap	Kiner
2) Higher Education Appropriations Subcommittee	13 Y, 0 N	Peters	Smith
3) Education & Employment Committee			

### SUMMARY ANALYSIS

The Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program (Bright Futures Program) rewards Florida high school graduates who earn high academic achievement and enroll in postsecondary education at an eligible Florida public or private postsecondary education institution. Each of the four awards under the Bright Futures Program requires a student to perform a specified number of hours of volunteer service work to meet eligibility requirements.

Under the service work requirements, a student must also identify a civic issue or a professional area of interest, develop a plan of involvement to address the topic, and reflect and report upon the experience. Compensation or academic credit for service work performed by the student is prohibited, unless performed through specified courses.

Beginning with Florida high school students graduating in 2022-2023, the bill authorizes a student to meet eligibility requirements prescribed under the service work requirements through paid work.

The bill requires a student to evaluate and reflect upon his or her volunteer service or paid work experience through papers or other presentations and makes it optional for a student to identify a social or civic issue or a professional area of interest and develop a plan for personal involvement.

The bill has an indeterminate fiscal impact. See Fiscal Comments.

The bill takes effect upon becoming law.

# FULL ANALYSIS

## I. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS

### A. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

#### Present Situation

##### Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program

In 1997,<sup>1</sup> the Florida Legislature created the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program (Bright Futures Program), a lottery-funded scholarship program, to reward any Florida high school graduate who merits recognition of high academic achievement and who enrolls in a degree program, certificate program, or applied technology program at an eligible Florida public or private postsecondary education institution.<sup>2</sup>

The Bright Futures Program consists of the following awards:

- Florida Academic Scholarship;
- Florida Medallion Scholarship;
- Florida Gold Seal Career and Professional Education (CAPE) Scholarship; and
- Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholarship.<sup>3</sup>

##### *Florida Academic Scholarship and Florida Medallion Scholarship*

A Florida high school student who wishes to qualify for the Florida Academic Scholar (FAS) award or the Florida Medallion Scholars (FMS) award must graduate from a Florida public high school with a standard high school diploma, graduate from a registered Florida Department of Education (DOE) private high school, earn a general education diploma (GED), complete a home education program, or graduate from a non-Florida high school as an eligible student.<sup>4</sup>

A student must also meet the following initial eligibility requirements:<sup>5</sup>

Scholarship Type	16 High School Course Credits <sup>6</sup>	High School Weighted Bright Futures GPA	College Entrance Exams (ACT/SAT) <sup>7</sup>	Service Hours
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<sup>1</sup> Chapter 97-379, L.O.F.

<sup>2</sup> Section 1009.53(1), F.S.

<sup>3</sup> Section 1009.53(2), F.S.

<sup>4</sup> 2021-22 Bright Futures Student Handbook, *Chapter 1: Initial Eligibility Requirements* (Aug. 5, 2021), at 3, available at <https://www.floridastudentfinancialaids.org/PDF/BFHandbookChapter1.pdf>. An out-of-state student may qualify for a Bright Futures Scholarship if the student earned a high school diploma from a non-Florida school while living with a parent or guardian who is a Florida resident and on military or public service assignment away from Florida during the student's last year of high school. Florida Department of Education, *Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program and the Out-Of-State Student* (2021-22), at 2, available at <https://www.floridastudentfinancialaids.org/PDF/BFOOSGuide.pdf>.

<sup>5</sup> 2021-22 Bright Futures Student Handbook, *Chapter 1: Initial Eligibility Requirements* (Aug. 5, 2021), at 3, available at <https://www.floridastudentfinancialaids.org/PDF/BFHandbookChapter1.pdf>.

<sup>6</sup> The required coursework aligns with the State University System admission requirements found in Florida Board of Governor's Regulation 6.002, *Admission of Undergraduate First-Time-in-College, Degree-Seeking Freshmen*, available at [https://www.flbog.edu/wp-content/uploads/6\\_002FINAL\\_FTIC\\_03252020.pdf](https://www.flbog.edu/wp-content/uploads/6_002FINAL_FTIC_03252020.pdf).

<sup>7</sup> Section 1009.531(6)(b)-(d), F.S. To ensure the required exam scores represent top student performance and are equivalent between the ACT and SAT, the department determines the score for FAS as no lower than 89<sup>th</sup> national percentile on the SAT, for FMS no

FAS <sup>8</sup>	4 - English (three must include substantial writing)	3.50	29/1330	100 hours
FMS <sup>9</sup>	4 - Mathematics (at or above the Algebra I level)	3.00	25/1210	75 hours
	3 - Natural Science (two must have substantial laboratory)			
	3 - Social Science			
	2 - World Language (sequential, in same language)			

A student who has demonstrated academic merit through a recognition program may be eligible for an FAS or FMS award without having to meet one or more of the requirements above. These merit recognition programs include:<sup>10</sup>

- National Merit Finalists and Scholars;
- National Hispanic Scholars;
- Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE) Diploma;
- International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma;
- AICE Curriculum; and
- IB Curriculum.

A FAS award recipient is eligible for an award equal to the amount necessary to pay 100 percent of tuition and applicable fees and an additional stipend for textbooks as specified in the General Appropriations Act (GAA).<sup>11</sup> An FMS award recipient is eligible for an award equal to the amount necessary to pay 75 percent of tuition and fees,<sup>12</sup> however, an eligible FMS recipient enrolled at a Florida College System (FCS) institution is eligible for an award amount equal to the amount necessary to pay 100 percent of tuition and fees.<sup>13</sup>

A student may receive a FAS or FMS award for a maximum of 100 percent of the number of credit hours required to complete an associate degree, baccalaureate degree, or postsecondary career certificate program.<sup>14</sup>

For the 2020-2021 academic year, a total of \$438,909,995 dollars<sup>15</sup> were disbursed to 67,369 students<sup>16</sup> receiving a FAS award and \$212,251,523 dollars<sup>17</sup> to 51,818 students<sup>18</sup> receiving a FMS award.

### *Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholarship*

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lower than 75<sup>th</sup> national percentile on the SAT, and the required ACT score must be made concordant. The department must publish any changes to the exam requirements that apply to students graduating in the next 2 years.

<sup>8</sup> Section 1009.534, F.S.

<sup>9</sup> Section 1009.535, F.S.

<sup>10</sup> Sections 1009.534(1)(b)-(e) and 1009.535(1)(b)-(e), F.S.

<sup>11</sup> Section 1009.534(2), F.S.

<sup>12</sup> Section 1009.535(2), F.S.

<sup>13</sup> *Id.* Beginning with the fall 2021 semester, a FMS who is enrolled in an associate degree program at a FCS institution is eligible for the award.

<sup>14</sup> Section 1009.532(3)(a), F.S.

<sup>15</sup> Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program, *Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Disbursement History* (as of Sep. 2021), available at <https://www.floridastudentfinancialaids.org/PDF/PSI/BFReportsD2.pdf>.

<sup>16</sup> *Id.*

<sup>17</sup> Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program, *Florida Medallion Scholars Disbursement History* (as of Sep. 2021), available at <https://www.floridastudentfinancialaids.org/PDF/PSI/BFReportsD3.pdf>.

<sup>18</sup> *Id.*

A Florida high school student who wishes to qualify for the Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholarship (FGSV) award must meet the following initial eligibility requirements:<sup>19</sup>

- Achieve a minimum 3.0 weighted GPA in the non-elective high school courses;
- Take at least three full credits in a single career and technical education program;
- Achieve a minimum 3.5 unweighted GPA in the career education courses;
- Complete 30 service hours; and
- Achieve the required minimum score on the ACT, SAT, or Florida Postsecondary Education Readiness Test (P.E.R.T.) exams depicted in the table below:<sup>20</sup>

Exam Type	Sub-test	Required Score
ACT	Reading	19
	English	17
	Mathematics	19
SAT	Reading Test	24
	Writing and Language Test	25
	Math Test	24
P.E.R.T.	Reading	106
	Writing	103
	Mathematics	114

A FGSV award recipient is eligible for an award equal to the amount specified in the GAA.<sup>21</sup> The award amount specified in the GAA for FY 2021-22 is \$48 per credit hour.<sup>22</sup>

A student may receive a FGSV award for a maximum of 100 percent of the number of credit hours or equivalent clock hours required to complete an applied technology diploma, associate in applied science or associate in science degree, or a postsecondary career certificate program.<sup>23</sup>

For the 2020-2021 academic year, a total of \$638,015 dollars<sup>24</sup> were disbursed to 755 students<sup>25</sup> receiving a FGSV award.

#### *Florida Gold Seal Career and Professional Education (CAPE) Scholarship*

A Florida high school student who wishes to qualify for the Florida Gold Seal Career and Professional Education (FGSC) Scholarship must meet the following initial eligibility requirements:<sup>26</sup>

- Earn a minimum of five postsecondary credit hours through CAPE industry certifications which articulate for college credit; and
- Complete 30 service hours.

An FGSC award recipient is eligible for an award equal to the amount specified in the GAA.<sup>27</sup>

A student may receive an FGSC award for a maximum of 100 percent of the number of credit hours or equivalent clock hours required to complete an applied technology diploma, associate in applied science or associate in science degree, or a postsecondary career certificate program.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Section 1009.532(1), F.S.; see also 2021-22 Bright Futures Student Handbook, *Chapter 1: Initial Eligibility Requirements* (Aug. 5, 2021), at 6, available at <https://www.floridastudentfinancialaids.org/PDF/BFHandbookChapter1.pdf>.

<sup>20</sup> *Id.*

<sup>21</sup> Section 1009.536(3), F.S.

<sup>22</sup> Chapter 2021-36, L.O.F.

<sup>23</sup> Section 1009.532(5)(a)1., F.S.; see also 2021-22 Bright Futures Student Handbook, *Chapter 2: What You Need to Know Now That You Are Eligible* (July 1, 2021), at 3, available at <https://www.floridastudentfinancialaids.org/PDF/BFHandbookChapter2.pdf>.

<sup>24</sup> Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program, *Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholars Disbursement History* (as of Sep. 2021), available at <https://www.floridastudentfinancialaids.org/PDF/PSI/BFReportsD4.pdf>.

<sup>25</sup> *Id.*

<sup>26</sup> Section 1009.536(2)(a)-(b), F.S.

<sup>27</sup> Section 1009.536(3), F.S.

<sup>28</sup> Section 1009.532(5)(b)1., F.S.; see also 2021-22 Bright Futures Student Handbook, *Chapter 2: What You Need to Know Now That You Are Eligible* (July 1, 2021), at 3, available at <https://www.floridastudentfinancialaids.org/PDF/BFHandbookChapter2.pdf>.

Upon completion of an eligible associate in science degree program which articulates to a baccalaureate degree, a FGSC scholar may also receive an award for a maximum of 60 credit hours toward the baccalaureate degree.<sup>29</sup>

For the 2020-2021 academic year, a total of \$262,253 dollars<sup>30</sup> were disbursed to 286 students<sup>31</sup> receiving a FGSC award.

### *Student Volunteer Requirements for the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program*

Each award in the Bright Futures Program requires a student to complete a specified number of hours of volunteer service work to be eligible to receive a scholarship award. A student must meet the following service requirements:

Bright Futures Scholarship Program	Required Service Hours <sup>32</sup>
FAS	100
FMS	75
FGSV	30
FGSC	30

The student's volunteer service work must be approved by the district school board, the administrators of a nonpublic school, or the DOE for home education students.<sup>33</sup>

Each district school board and the administrators of a nonpublic school must establish approved activities and the process for documentation of service hours, including the deadline by which the hours must be completed.<sup>34</sup> Service work may include, but is not limited to, a business or governmental internship, work for a nonprofit community service organization, or activities on behalf of a candidate for public office.<sup>35</sup> Except for credit earned through service-learning courses,<sup>36</sup> the student may not receive payment or academic credit for service work performed.<sup>37</sup>

The hours earned by a student must be documented in writing, signed by the student and the student's parent or guardian, and a representative of the organization where the work was performed.

In addition to the service hours, a student must identify a social or civic issue or a professional area that interests him or her, develop a plan for their personal involvement in addressing the issue or learning more about the area, and, through papers or presentations, evaluate and reflect upon his or her experience.<sup>38</sup>

### **Effect of Proposed Changes**

Beginning with Florida high school students graduating in 2022-2023, the bill authorizes a student to meet the eligibility requirements prescribed under the service work requirements through paid work. The bill does not adjust the number of hours required for each award, but rather provides a student with the option to meet the requirement through volunteer service or paid work.

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<sup>29</sup> Section 1009.536(5)(b)2., F.S.

<sup>30</sup> Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program, *Florida Gold Seal CAPE Scholars Disbursement History* (as of Sep. 2021), available at <https://www.floridastudentfinancialaids.org/PDF/PSI/BFReportsD5.pdf>.

<sup>31</sup> *Id.*

<sup>32</sup> Sections 1009.534(1), 1009.535(1), 1009.536(1)(e) and 1009.536(3)(b), F.S.

<sup>33</sup> *Id.*

<sup>34</sup> 2021-22 Bright Futures Student Handbook, *Chapter 1: Initial Eligibility Requirements* (Aug. 5, 2021), at 4 and 6-7, available at <https://www.floridastudentfinancialaids.org/PDF/BFHandbookChapter1.pdf>.

<sup>35</sup> *Id.*

<sup>36</sup> Section 1003.497, F.S.

<sup>37</sup> 2021-22 Bright Futures Student Handbook, *Chapter 1: Initial Eligibility Requirements* (Aug. 5, 2021), at 4 and 6-7, available at <https://www.floridastudentfinancialaids.org/PDF/BFHandbookChapter1.pdf>.

<sup>38</sup> *Id.*

The bill requires that the volunteer or paid work must be approved by the district school board, the administrators of a nonpublic school, or the Department of Education for a home education program students. Additionally, a student must evaluate and reflect upon his or her volunteer service or paid work experience through papers or other presentations and makes it optional for a student to identify a social or civic issue or a professional area and develop a plan for personal involvement or learning about the area.

The bill makes conforming changes to reflect the authorization of paid work to meet the requirements under the Bright Futures Program.

**B. SECTION DIRECTORY:**

**Section 1.** Amending s. 1009.534, F.S.; authorizing a student's service requirements for an award under the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program to be paid rather than volunteer; authorizing, rather than requiring, a student to identify a specified interest or develop a plan for his or her service requirements under the program; conforming provisions to changes by the act.

**Section 2.** Amending s. 1009.535, F.S.; authorizing a student's service requirements for an award under the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program to be paid rather than volunteer; authorizing, rather than requiring, a student to identify a specified interest or develop a plan for his or her service requirements under the program; conforming provisions to changes by the act.

**Section 3.** Amending s. 1009.536, F.S.; authorizing a student's service requirements for an award under the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program to be paid rather than volunteer; authorizing, rather than requiring, a student to identify a specified interest or develop a plan for his or her service requirements under the program; conforming provisions to changes by the act.

**Section 4.** Provides the act shall take effect upon becoming a law.

**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:**

The bill may save students money and increase access to postsecondary opportunities by authorizing paid work as an option for a student to meet eligibility requirements under the Bright Futures Program, potentially allowing more students to qualify.

**D. FISCAL COMMENTS:**

The fiscal impact of the bill is indeterminate. By authorizing paid work as an option for a student to meet eligibility requirements under the Bright Futures Program, the number of students who may now qualify for an award under the program may increase.

**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 25, 2022, the Post-Secondary Education & Lifelong Learning Subcommittee adopted one amendment and reported the bill favorably as a committee substitute. The amendment revised the effective date of the bill to upon becoming law.

The analysis is drafted to the committee substitute passed by the Post-Secondary Education & Lifelong Learning Subcommittee.