

THE FLORIDA SENATE
2016 SUMMARY OF LEGISLATION PASSED
Committee on Higher Education

CS/HB 793 — Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program

by Education Appropriations Subcommittee; and Rep. O'Toole and others (CS/SB 520 by Fiscal Policy Committee; and Senators Lee, Gaetz, Stargel, and Montford)

The bill modifies student eligibility and award provisions of the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program.

The bill modifies student eligibility requirements of the program. Specifically, the bill:

- Specifies that “community” service work means “volunteer” service work and prohibits students from receiving remuneration or academic credit for such work. Volunteer service work is expanded to 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. The bill further requires documentation of volunteer service work performed.
- Defers the 2-year initial award period and the 5-year renewal period for students who are unable to accept an award due to full-time religious or service obligations lasting at least 18 months until the student completes the obligation.
- Removes the higher SAT and ACT score requirement for home education program students to qualify for the initial Florida Medallion Scholars (FMS) award, making the test score requirement the same for all students.

The bill creates the Florida Gold Seal CAPE Scholars award as an alternative to the current Florida Gold Seal Vocational award. Specifically, the bill:

- Creates the Florida Gold Seal CAPE Scholars award for a student who meets the general eligibility requirements for the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship program, earns a minimum of five postsecondary credits through CAPE industry certifications which articulate for college credit, and meets the volunteer service work requirements.
- Allows a student who is eligible for a Florida Gold Seal CAPE Scholars award to receive the award for a maximum of 100 percent of the number of credit hours or equivalent clock hours required to complete an applied technology diploma program, a technical degree education program, or a career certificate program at a Florida public or nonpublic education institution.
- Allows a Florida Gold Seal CAPE Scholar who completes a technical degree education program to also receive a Florida Gold Seal CAPE Scholars award for a bachelor of science degree program for which there is a statewide articulation agreement, or a bachelor of applied science degree program at a Florida College System institution.

The bill appropriates \$66,468 for 2016-2017 Florida Bright Futures Scholarships for additional home education program students who may become eligible for awards.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect upon becoming law.

Vote: Senate 38-0; House 116-0