

The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Higher Education

BILL: SB 960

INTRODUCER: Senator Lee

SUBJECT: Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program

DATE: March 9, 2015

REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	Bailey	Klebacha	HE	Favorable
2.			AED	
3.			FP	

I. Summary:

SB 960 modifies student community service requirements affecting student eligibility for the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program awards by clarifying that community service work means volunteer service work, expanding the permissible activities that students can participate in to meet the volunteer service work requirement, and placing parameters on such activities.

Specifically, the bill:

- Expands service work areas beyond social areas of interest to include a civic issue or a professional area of interest.
- Requires students to develop a plan for personal involvement in addressing the issue or learning about the issue in addition to reflecting on such experience through papers or presentations.
- Provides accountability requirements for students' service work.
- Prohibits students from receiving compensation or academic credit for the volunteer service work.

Additionally, the bill specifies that volunteer service work may include, but is not limited to, the following activities:

- Internship with a business or government entity;
- Work for a nonprofit community service organization; or
- Activity on behalf of a candidate for public office.

The volunteer service hours must be documented in writing and signed by the student, the student's parent or guardian, and a representative of the organization where the student volunteered.

The bill takes effect on July 1, 2015.

II. Present Situation:

The Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program (Program) is a lottery-funded scholarship program to reward a Florida high school graduate who merits recognition for high academic achievement and who enrolls in a degree program, certificate program, or applied technology program at an eligible public and private postsecondary institutions in Florida after graduating from high school.¹ The Department of Education (DOE) administers the Program in accordance with rules and procedures adopted by the State Board of Education.²

The Bright Futures Scholarship Program consists of three types of awards:³

- Florida Academic Scholarship (FAS),
- Florida Medallion Scholarship (FMS), and
- Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholarship (FGSV).

To be eligible to receive a Program award, students must meet the general eligibility criteria⁴ and specific academic and community service work requirements.⁵ The community service work must be approved by the district school board, the administrators of a nonpublic school, or the DOE for home education program students.⁶

To fulfill the community service work requirement for FAS, students graduating in the 2011-2012 academic year and each year thereafter, must perform at least 100 hours of community service work, identify a social problem of interest, develop a plan for personal involvement in addressing the problem, and reflect on such experience through papers or presentations.⁷ The community service work requirement for the FMS and FGSV is the same as the requirement for FAS except for the number of community service work hours that FMS and FGSV students must volunteer. FMS students must perform a minimum of 75 hours of community service work⁸ and FGSV students must perform at least 30 hours of community service work.⁹

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

SB 960 modifies student community service requirements affecting student eligibility for the Florida Academic Scholarship (FAS), Florida Medallion Scholarship (FMS), and Florida Gold

¹ Section 1009.53(1), F.S. and 1009.531(2)(a-c), F.S., specify a student graduating from high school prior to the 2010-2011 academic year is eligible to accept an initial award for 3 years following high school graduation and to accept a renewal award for 7 years following high school graduation. Students graduating in the 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 academic school years are eligible to accept an initial award for 3 years following high school graduation and to accept a renewal award for 5 years following high school graduation. In the 2012-2013 academic school year, and thereafter, a student graduating from high school is able to accept an initial award for 2 years following high school and to accept a renewal award for 5 years following high school graduation.

² Section 1009.53(3), F.S.

³ Section 1009.53(2), F.S.

⁴ Section 1009.531, F.S.

⁵ Sections 1009.534(1), 1009.535(1), and 1009.536(1)(e), F.S.

⁶ Sections 1009.534(1), 1009.535(1), and 1009.536(1)(e), F.S.

⁷ Sections 1009.534(1), F.S.

⁸ Section 1009.535(1), F.S.

⁹ Section 1009.536(1)(e), F.S.

Seal Vocational Scholarship (FGSV) awards by clarifying that community service work means volunteer service work, expanding the permissible activities that students can participate in to meet the volunteer service work requirement, and placing parameters on such activities.

Specifically, the bill:

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- Requires students to develop a plan for personal involvement in addressing the issue or learning about the issue in addition to reflecting on such experience through papers or presentations.
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- Prohibits students from receiving compensation or academic credit for the volunteer service work.

Additionally, the bill specifies that volunteer service work may include, but is not limited to, the following activities:

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- Work for a nonprofit community service organization; or
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IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

None.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This bill substantially amends the following sections of the Florida Statutes: 1009.534, 1009.535, and 1009.536.

IX. Additional Information:

A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

B. Amendments:

None.