Senator Soto moved the following:

Senate Amendment to Amendment (274472) (with title amendment)

Between lines 2449 and 2450
insert:

Section 22. Section 1012.731, Florida Statutes, is created to read:
1012.731 The Florida Best and Brightest Instructional Personnel Scholarship Program.—

(1) LEGISLATIVE INTENT.—The Legislature recognizes that instructional personnel play a critical role in preparing
students to achieve a high level of academic performance. The Legislature further recognizes that research has linked student performance to an instructional personnel’s own academic achievements. Therefore, it is the intent of the Legislature to designate instructional personnel who have achieved high academic standards during their own education as Florida’s Best and Brightest Instructional Personnel scholars.

(2) DEFINITION.—For purposes of this section, the term “school district” includes the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind and a charter school governing board.

(3) PROGRAM.—There is created the Florida Best and Brightest Instructional Personnel Scholarship Program to be administered by the Department of Education. Beginning in the 2016-2017 school year, the scholarship program shall provide categorical funding for scholarships to be awarded to instructional personnel who have demonstrated a high level of academic achievement.

(4) INSTRUCTIONAL PERSONNEL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA.—

(a) To be eligible for a Florida Best and Brightest Instructional Personnel scholarship, the instructional personnel must be in their third year of teaching; must have scored at or above the 65th percentile on the SAT or the ACT, based upon the percentile ranks in effect when the instructional personnel took the assessment; and must have been evaluated as highly effective pursuant to s. 1012.34.

(b) In order to demonstrate eligibility for an award, the instructional personnel must submit to the school district no later than October 1 an official record of his or her SAT or ACT score demonstrating that he or she scored at or above the 65th
percentile, based upon the percentile ranks in effect when he or she took the assessment. If instructional personnel are deemed eligible by the school district, the instructional personnel will remain eligible as long as he or she is employed by the school district and maintains the highly effective level pursuant to s. 1012.34.

(5) ELIGIBILITY NOTIFICATION; FUNDING AND DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS.—

(a) By December 1 of each year, each school district shall submit to the department the number of eligible instructional personnel who qualify for the scholarship.

(b) By February 1 of each year, the department shall disburse scholarship funds, in an amount prescribed by the Legislature in the General Appropriations Act, to each school district for eligible instructional personnel to receive a scholarship. If the number of eligible instructional personnel exceeds the total appropriation authorized in the General Appropriation Act, the department shall prorate the per-person scholarship amount.

(c) By April 1 of each year, each school district shall provide payment of the scholarship to each eligible instructional personnel.

And the title is amended as follows:

Delete line 2765

and insert:

providing for rulemaking; creating s. 1012.731, F.S.;

providing legislative intent; defining the term
“school district”; establishing the Florida Best and Brightest Instructional Personnel Scholarship Program; providing eligibility criteria; requiring a school district to annually submit the number of eligible instructional personnel to the Department of Education; providing for funding and disbursement of funds; amending ss. 1012.795 and