

**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.)

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

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BILL: SB 270

INTRODUCER: Senator Burgess

SUBJECT: Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program

DATE: February 17, 2025

REVISED: \_\_\_\_\_

ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1. Palazesi	Bouck	HE	<b>Pre-meeting</b>
2. _____	_____	AHE	_____
3. _____	_____	FP	_____

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## I. Summary:

SB 270 expands the eligibility criteria for the Bright Futures Scholarship Program to include a student who graduated from a non-Florida school if the parent retired from military service within 12 months prior to the student's graduation.

The bill is effective on July 1, 2025.

## II. Present Situation:

### Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program

The Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program is a lottery-funded scholarship program for Florida high school graduates who merit high academic achievement and enroll in a degree, certificate, or applied technology program at an eligible Florida public or private postsecondary education institution.<sup>1</sup> Since the 1997-98 academic year, the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program has disbursed approximately \$9.2 billion for over 3.3 million students to attend an eligible postsecondary institution in this state.<sup>2</sup>

#### *General Eligibility Requirements*

Florida high school students who wish to qualify for a Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program award must meet the following initial eligibility requirements:<sup>3</sup>

- Be a Florida resident for at least one year preceding an award.
- Earn a standard Florida high school diploma or a high school equivalency diploma unless:

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

<sup>2</sup> Florida Department of Education, *Florida Bright Futures Student Counts and Total Costs (2024)*, available at <https://www.floridastudentfinancialaidsg.org/PDF/PSI/BFReportsA.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> Section 1009.531(1), F.S.

- The student completes a home education program.
- The student earns a high school diploma from a non-Florida school while living with a parent or guardian who is on military or public service assignment away from Florida; or
- The student earns a high school diploma from an eligible Florida private school.
- Be accepted by and enroll in an eligible Florida public or independent postsecondary education institution.
- Be enrolled for at least six semester credit hours or the equivalent in quarter hours or clock hours.
- Not have been found guilty of, or entered a plea of nolo contendere to, a felony charge, unless the student has been granted clemency.
- Apply for a scholarship by high school graduation, or by December 31 for mid-year graduates.

### ***Academic Eligibility Requirements***

There are four awards through the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship program, including the Florida Academic Scholars award (FAS), the Florida Medallion Scholars award (FMS), the Florida Gold Seal CAPE Scholars (GSC) award, and the Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholars (GSVS) award.<sup>4</sup>

In the 2023-2024 academic year, 34,535 students received an initial disbursement for the FAS and FMS awards.<sup>5</sup> Florida high school students who wish to qualify for the FSA and FMS scholarships must meet the following academic requirements:<sup>6</sup>

- Graduate from a Florida public high school with a standard diploma, from a registered private high school, earn a GED, complete a home education program, or graduate from a non-Florida high school if specific eligibility requirements are met.
- Complete the required high school coursework.
- Achieve the required minimum high school grade point average (GPA).<sup>7</sup>
- Achieve the required minimum score on either the ACT, CLT, or SAT college entrance exam.<sup>8</sup>
- Complete 100 total hours of volunteer service, paid work hours, or combination of both.
- Submit a Florida Financial Aid Application no later than August 31 after high school graduation.

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<sup>4</sup> Section 1009.53(2), F.S.

<sup>5</sup> Florida Department of Education, *Florida Department of Education Office of Student Financial Assistance End-Of-Year Report*, Florida Academic Scholarship, available at [https://www.floridastudentfinancialaidsg.org/PDF/PSI/BFFAS\\_2023\\_2024.pdf](https://www.floridastudentfinancialaidsg.org/PDF/PSI/BFFAS_2023_2024.pdf). Florida Department of Education, *Florida Department of Education Office of Student Financial Assistance End-Of-Year Report*, Florida Medallion Scholarship available at [https://www.floridastudentfinancialaidsg.org/PDF/PSI/BFFMS\\_2023\\_2024.pdf](https://www.floridastudentfinancialaidsg.org/PDF/PSI/BFFMS_2023_2024.pdf).

<sup>6</sup> Florida Department of Education, *Bright Futures Student Handbook*, available at <https://www.floridastudentfinancialaidsg.org/pdf/bfhandbookchapter1.pdf>, at 3.

<sup>7</sup> *Id.* The required minimum GPA for the FAS scholarship is 3.5 and the minimum required GPA for the FMS is 3.0.

<sup>8</sup> Section 1009.531 (6)(a), F.S. The SAT score requirement for the FAS must be set no lower than the 89th national percentile, while the requirement for the FMS must be set no lower than the 75th national percentile. The corresponding ACT and CLT scores must be concordant with the applicable SAT scores.

In the 2023-2024 academic year, 284 students received an initial disbursement for the Florida GSC award.<sup>9</sup> Florida high school students who wish to qualify for the Florida GSC award must meet the following initial eligibility requirements:<sup>10</sup>

- Earn a minimum of five postsecondary credit hours through CAPE industry certifications that articulate for college credit.
- Complete 30 volunteer service hours, 100 paid work hours, or the combination of 100 total hours.

In the 2023-2024 academic year, 292 students received an initial disbursement for the Florida GSVS award.<sup>11</sup> Florida high school students who wish to qualify for a Florida GSVS award must meet the following initial eligibility requirements:<sup>12</sup>

- Achieve the required weighted minimum 3.0 GPA in non-elective high school courses.
- Take at least three full credits in a single career and technical education program.
- Achieve the required minimum 3.5 unweighted GPA in career education courses.
- Achieve the required minimum score on the ACT, SAT, or Florida Postsecondary Education Readiness Test (PERT).
- Complete 30 volunteer service hours, 100 paid work hours, or the combination of 100 total hours.

### III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

SB 270 amends s. 1009.531, F.S., to expand eligibility requirements for the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship program to students who earned a high school diploma from a non-Florida school while living with a parent or guardian who, within 12 months before the student's high school graduation, retired from military or public service assignment away from Florida. Currently, a student who earns a high school diploma from a non-Florida school may only qualify for the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program if that student is living with a parent or guardian who is on military or public service away from Florida.

The bill is effective on July 1, 2025.

### IV. Constitutional Issues:

#### A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

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<sup>9</sup> Florida Department of Education, *Florida Department of Education Office of Student Financial Assistance End-Of-Year Report Florida Gold Seal CAPE Scholarship*, available at [https://www.floridastudentfinancialaidsg.org/PDF/PSI/BFGSC\\_2023\\_2024.pdf](https://www.floridastudentfinancialaidsg.org/PDF/PSI/BFGSC_2023_2024.pdf).

<sup>10</sup> Florida Department of Education, *Bright Futures Student Handbook*, available at <https://www.floridastudentfinancialaidsg.org/pdf/bfhandbookchapter1.pdf>, at 8.

<sup>11</sup> Florida Department of Education, *Florida Department of Education Office of Student Financial Assistance End-Of-Year Report Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholarship*, available at [https://www.floridastudentfinancialaidsg.org/PDF/PSI/BFGSV\\_2023\\_2024.pdf](https://www.floridastudentfinancialaidsg.org/PDF/PSI/BFGSV_2023_2024.pdf).

<sup>12</sup> Florida Department of Education, *Bright Futures Student Handbook*, available at <https://www.floridastudentfinancialaidsg.org/pdf/bfhandbookchapter1.pdf>, at 6.

**B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:**

None.

**C. Trust Funds Restrictions:**

None.

**D. State Tax or Fee Increases:**

None.

**E. Other Constitutional Issues:**

None.

**V. Fiscal Impact Statement:****A. Tax/Fee Issues:**

None.

**B. Private Sector Impact:**

None.

**C. Government Sector Impact:**

The bill may increase the number of students who are eligible for a Bright Futures scholarship, but the fiscal impact is indeterminate.

**VI. Technical Deficiencies:**

None.

**VII. Related Issues:**

None.

**VIII. Statutes Affected:**

This bill substantially amends the following section of the Florida Statutes: 1009.531.

**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.

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This Senate Bill Analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's introducer or the Florida Senate.

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