

**By** Senator Burgess

23-01386A-26

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22 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

24           Section 1. Section 1009.8963, Florida Statutes, is created  
25 to read:

26           1009.8963 The Genetic Counseling Education Enhancement  
27       Grant Program.—

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30 the development, growth, and sustainability of graduate level  
31 genetic counseling programs accredited by the American Board of  
32 Genetic Counseling, Inc. The Board of Governors shall award  
33 competitive grants to state universities to address faculty  
34 shortages, student financial barriers, and clinical training  
35 needs in genetic counseling.

36 (2) Subject to appropriation, the board shall award funds  
37 to:

38 (a) Establish an accredited program at a state university  
39 through a one-time start-up grant based upon an application  
40 submitted in a format prescribed by the board. The application  
41 must include:

42 1. A detailed plan demonstrating how grant funds will be  
43 used to achieve program accreditation.

44 2. The projected outcomes of establishing the program,  
45 including all of the following:

46 a. The anticipated program enrollment.

47 b. The plan for hiring and retaining faculty for the  
48 program.

49 c. The anticipated program completion rates.

50 d. The anticipated first-time American Board of Genetic  
51 Counseling, Inc., board certification examination passage rates.

52 e. The anticipated program contributions to the state's  
53 genetic counseling workforce.

54 (b) Accredited programs based on program performance  
55 according to the following metrics:

56 1. The number of students completing the genetic counseling  
57 program.

58 2. The first-time American Board of Genetic Counseling,

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59 Inc., board certification examination passage rate for students  
60 completing the state university's genetic counseling program.

61  
62 The program shall reward excellence among genetic counseling  
63 programs with an average first-time American Board of Genetic  
64 Counseling, Inc., board certification examination passage rate  
65 above the national average.

66 (3) (a) Grant funds provided through the program must be  
67 used for:

68 1. The recruitment and retention of qualified faculty,  
69 including, but not limited to, salaries, professional  
70 development, and incentives.

71 2. Financial assistance to students enrolled in the  
72 accredited program. Such financial assistance must be in the  
73 form of scholarships that cover tuition, required books and  
74 materials, and reasonable living expenses.

75 3. The establishment and maintenance of clinical rotations  
76 required for completion of the master's degree in genetic  
77 counseling, including partnerships with health care facilities  
78 for supervised practicum experiences, simulation training  
79 resources, and faculty oversight.

80 (b) Grant funds may not be used for:

81 1. General administrative overhead costs.  
82 2. The construction of new facilities.  
83 3. Nonprogram-related activities.

84 (c) State universities that receive a grant through the  
85 program must maintain records sufficient to demonstrate  
86 compliance with this subsection.

87 (4) (a) Each state university receiving funds pursuant to

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88 this section shall submit an annual report to the board. The  
89 report must include:

90 1. Expenditures.

91 2. The outcomes achieved using grant funds.

92 3. Plans for the upcoming fiscal year for the program.

93 (b) The board shall annually compile the reports into a  
94 statewide summary. The summary must be submitted to the  
95 Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the  
96 House of Representatives by July 1 of each year.

97 (5) The Board of Governors shall adopt regulations to  
98 administer this section.

99 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.