



2022 Florida Legislative Session Summary

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CS/HB 45: Educational Opportunities for Disabled Veterans

CS/HB 45 passed the House on March 2, 2022 (115-0), and subsequently passed the Senate on March 4, 2022 (38-0).

The Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008 (GI Bill) provides up to 36 months of educational benefits to veterans provided certain requirements are met. The percentage of maximum benefits payable under the GI Bill varies and is primarily based on an individual's aggregate length of active-duty service.

Number of Months Served	Percentage of Maximum Benefit Payable
At least 36 months of active duty	100
At least 30 continuous days active duty and discharged due to service-connected disability	100
Between 30 and up to 36 months of active duty	90
Between 24 and up to 30 months of active duty	80
Between 18 and up to 24 months of active duty	70
Between 6 and up to 18 months of active duty	60
Between 90 days and up to 6 months of active duty	50

This bill provides an education benefit to certain disabled veterans who qualify as residents, waiving the remaining tuition and fees not covered by the GI Bill for educational benefits. To qualify, the veteran must have been:

- Determined by the VA to have a service-connected 100-percent total and permanent disability rating for compensation; or
- Issued a valid identification card by FDVA that identifies the veteran as having a 100-percent, service-connected permanent and total disability rating for compensation or who has a service-connected total and permanent disability rating of 100 percent and receives disability retirement pay from a branch of the U.S. Armed Forces.

Beginning with the 2022-2023 academic year, a disabled veteran enrolled in a program of education approved for education assistance under the GI Bill who receives a tuition benefit to attend a state university, a Florida College System institution, a career center operated by a school district, or a charter technical career center under the GI Bill, but who does not qualify for the 100-percent eligibility tier federally, is eligible for a waiver of tuition and fees from the institution attended.

The bill requires institutions to report the number and value of all fee waivers granted under the program to the Board of Governors and the State Board of Education. This bill was approved by the Governor on June 9th and becomes effective on July 1, 2022.

Bill Sponsors: Representatives Benjamin and Morales and Senator Cruz

Department(s) affected: Student Affairs, and more specifically the Financial Assistance Services

[Bill Language](#)

CS/HB 461: FL Bright Futures Scholarship Program

CS/HB 461 passed the House on March 4, 2022 (113-0). The bill was amended in the Senate on March 4, 2022 (35-3) and returned to the House. The House concurred in the Senate amendment and subsequently passed the bill as amended on March 10, 2022 (119-0)

The Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program (Bright Futures Program) rewards Florida high school graduates who earn high academic achievement and enroll in postsecondary education at an eligible Florida public or private postsecondary institution. Each of the four awards under the Bright Futures Program requires a student to perform a specified number of hours of volunteer service work to meet eligibility requirements.

Bright Futures Scholarship Program	Required Service Hours
FL Academic Scholarship	100
FL Medallion Scholarship	75
FL Gold Seal Vocational Scholarship	30
FL Gold Seal Career and Professional Education	30

Beginning with high school students graduating in the 2022-2023 academic year, the bill authorizes a student to meet the volunteer service requirements prescribed under each award in the Bright Futures Program through 100 hours of paid work. The bill provides students with the option to meet the award's eligibility requirements through volunteer service or paid work. A student meeting an award requirement through paid work must obtain the same approval required of students meeting the requirement through volunteer service which includes the approval of the district school board, the administrators of a nonpublic school, or the DOE for a home education program student.

Additionally, the bill requires a student to evaluate and reflect upon his or her volunteer service or paid work experience through papers or other presentations and makes it optional for a student to identify a social or civic issue or a professional area and develop a plan for personal involvement or learning about the area.

The bill makes conforming changes to reflect the authorization of paid work to meet the requirements under the Bright Futures Program.

Subject to the Governor's veto powers, the bill takes effect upon becoming a law. It was presented to the Governor on June 17, 2022 and he has until July 2, 2022 to act on it.

Bill Sponsors: Representatives Melo and Valdes and Senator Hutson

Department(s) affected: Student Affairs, and more specifically the Financial Assistance Services

[Bill Language](#) (the bill has not been signed by the Governor yet, so has not been chaptered)

CS/SB 520: Public Records and Public Meetings

CS/SB 520 passed the Senate on February 10, 2022 (28-11), and subsequently passed the House on March 4, 2022 (86-26). Public record exemptions legally require a 2/3 vote in each chamber to pass.

This bill makes confidential and exempt from public disclosure requirements any personal identifying information of an applicant for the position of president of a state university or Florida College System (FCS) institution held by a state university or an FCS institution.

The bill provides that the personal identifying information of an applicant included in a final group of applicants for president is no longer confidential and exempt from public records requirements beginning at the earlier of the date the final group of applicants to be considered for president is established or at least 21 days before either an interview of an applicant or final action on the offer of employment.

This bill also exempts from open meeting requirements any portion of a meeting held for the purpose of identifying or vetting applicants for president of a state university or FCS institution, including any portion of a meeting that would disclose personal identifying information of such applicants. However, the meeting exemption does not apply to any portion of a meeting held for the purpose of establishing qualifications for the position or establishing any compensation framework to be offered to an applicant. Additionally, any meeting held after a final group of applicants has been established must be open to the public.

This bill requires a complete recording to be made of any portion of a closed meeting and prohibits any closed portion of a meeting from being held off the record. The recording of the closed portion of a meeting is also exempt from the public disclosure requirements.

The exemptions established in the bill expire on October 2, 2027, unless saved from repeal by the Legislature.

These provisions became law upon approval by the Governor on March 15, 2022.

Bill Sponsors: Senator Brandes and Representative Garrison

Department(s) affected: Board of Trustees and President, as well as General Counsel to handle Public Records requests

[Bill Language](#)

CS/SB 722: Education for Student Inmates

CS/SB 722 passed the Senate on February 23, 2022 (38-0), and subsequently passed the House on March 4, 2022 (113-0).

The bill authorizes a county or municipal detention facility or the Department of Corrections to contract with a Florida College System institution to provide education services to its inmates. The educational services may include any educational, career, or vocational training that is authorized by a county or municipal detention facility or the DOC.

The bill affirmatively provides that state funds provided for the operation of postsecondary workforce programs may be expended on a state inmate with 24 months or less remaining on his or her sentence, notwithstanding s. 1011.81(4), F.S., which prohibits state funds for the Florida College System Program Fund from being expended on the education of state or federal inmates.

This bill becomes effective July 1, 2022

Bill Sponsors: Senator Perry and Representative Clemons

Department(s) affected: Student Affairs, and more specifically the Enrollment Services

[Bill Language](#)

CS/CS/HB 1577: Homeless Youth

CS/CS/HB 1577 passed the House on March 2, 2022 (117-0), and subsequently passed the Senate on March 4, 2022 (36-0). Part of the bill also passed the House and Senate in HB 7065 on March 4, 2022.

CS/CS/HB 1577 addresses the needs of homeless children and young adults. Specifically, the bill:

- requires district school boards to issue a certified unaccompanied homeless youth a card that includes information on the youth's rights and available benefits, and allows health care providers to accept the issued card as proof of the status as a certified unaccompanied homeless youth.
- expands the Keys-to-Independence program to unaccompanied homeless youth who meet certain requirements.
- waives fees for copies of a birth certificate for certified unaccompanied homeless youth and young adults who aged out of foster care.
- requires postsecondary institutions to have liaisons to assist former foster children and young adults and those experiencing homelessness to help students with issues related to the use of a tuition and fee exemption, and directs the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability to evaluate their effectiveness.
- requires postsecondary institutions to retain original documents on a student's tuition and fee exemption, and prohibits additional requests for such documentation.
- aligns Florida's eligibility for a tuition and fee exemption with federal law.
- requires any student determined to be an unaccompanied homeless youth for a tuition and fee exemption for a preceding year to be presumed homeless for subsequent years unless an institution has conflicting information.

The bill was approved by the Governor on April 6, 2022, and will become effective on July 1, 2022.

Bill Sponsors: Representative Woodson and Senator Garcia

Department(s) affected: Student Affairs, and more specifically Student Accessibility and Retention Services

[Bill Language](#)

CS/HB 7: Individual Freedoms

CS/HB 7 passed the House on February 24, 2022 (74-41), as amended, and subsequently passed the Senate on March 10, 2022 (24-15).

The bill provides that it is discrimination based on race, color, sex, or national origin under the FCRA (Florida Civil Rights Act of 1992) to subject a person, as a condition of employment, membership, certification, licensing, credentialing, or passing an examination, to training, instruction, or any other required activity that espouses, promotes, advances, inculcates, or compels such individual to believe certain specified concepts, including that:

- An individual, by virtue of his or her race, color, sex, or national origin, bears personal responsibility for and must feel guilt, anguish, or other forms of psychological distress because of actions, in which the individual played no part, committed in the past by other members of the same race, color, sex, or national origin.
- An individual's moral character or status as either privileged or oppressed is necessarily determined by his or her race, color, sex, or national origin.

Similarly, the bill provides that it is discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, or sex under the Florida Education Code to subject a student or employee to training or instruction that espouses, promotes, advances, inculcates, or compels such student or employee to believe the specified concepts. The bill also:

- Requires that instruction on required topics in grades K-12 and all supporting materials be consistent with specified principles of individual freedom.
- Prohibits state instructional materials reviewers from recommending materials that contradict the principles of individual freedom.
- Requires the Florida Department of Education to develop standards and curriculum relating to the history and contributions of Americans of the African diaspora.
- Requires the State Board of Education to develop or adopt a "Stories of Inspiration" curriculum.
- Specifies required topics for instruction in health education, life skills, and civic and character education.

The bill was approved by the Governor on April 22, 2022 and becomes effective on July 1, 2022.

Bill Sponsors: Representative Avila and Senator Diaz

Department(s) affected: Academic Affairs, and more specifically the Accelerated Programs Division (due to our St. Petersburg Collegiate High Schools)

[Bill Language](#)

HB 3: Law Enforcement

CS/HB 3 passed the House on February 16, 2022 (108-4). The bill was amended in the Senate on March 10, 2022 (34-0) and returned to the House. The House concurred in the Senate amendment and subsequently passed the bill as amended on March 10, 2022 (114-3).

Applicable to the Florida College System: Creates the Florida Law Enforcement Academy Scholarship Program to cover tuition, fees, and up to \$1,000 of eligible education expenses for trainees enrolled in a law enforcement officer basic recruit training program;

Department(s) affected: Student Affairs, and more specifically Financial Assistance Services

SB 7044: Postsecondary Education

SB 7044 passed the Senate on March 7, 2022 (22-15), and subsequently passed the House on March 9, 2022 (77-40).

The bill requires, by September 1, 2022, the BOG and State Board of Education (SBE), as applicable, to identify and determine the accrediting agencies or associations recognized by the United States Department of Education (USDOE) that are best suited to serve as an accreditor for public postsecondary institutions. The bill prohibits a public postsecondary institution from being accredited by the same accrediting agency or association for consecutive accreditation cycles. Programs with specific accreditation requirements are exempt from this requirement.

The bill requires, in the year following reaffirmation or fifth-year review, each public postsecondary institution seek and obtain accreditation from an accrediting agency or association identified by the BOG or SBE, respectively, before its next reaffirmation or fifth-year review date. A public postsecondary institution must initially seek regional accreditation and must provide to the BOG or SBE quarterly reports of its progress. If the institution is not granted candidacy status by any of the regional accrediting agencies or associations, the institution must seek accreditation by another agency or association recognized by the USDOE. The bill authorizes a public postsecondary institution to remain with its current accrediting agency or association if the institution is not granted candidacy by an accrediting agency or association before its next reaffirmation or fifth-year review date. It also provides a cause of action for any public postsecondary institution, or nonpublic postsecondary education institution that receives state funds, that is negatively impacted by a retaliatory action by its accrediting agency or association. The accreditation provisions in the bill expire on December 31, 2032.

The bill requires additional information about textbooks and instructional materials that each Florida College System (FCS) institution and state university must post at least 45 days before the first day of class for each term, to include syllabus information for general education core courses. The bill also establishes transparency requirements for an FCS institution and state university to prominently post all tuition and fees, and email to enrolled students any notice of a proposed change to tuition and fees. Any FCS institution or state university proposal or action to increase a fee is subject to an extraordinary vote by the applicable system governing board.

The bill revises the maintenance requirements and course information that must be included in the statewide course numbering system (SCNS). The bill requires the SBE to adopt rules governing the SCNS procedures, collection of course information, publication of course information, and faculty discipline committee reviews. Additionally, the bill requires certain postsecondary education institutions receiving general education course credit in transfer to apply the credit to general education core course requirements and other general education requirements before applying as elective credit.

The bill was approved by the Governor on April 19, 2022 and the bill will become effective on July 1, 2022.

Bill Sponsors: Senator Diaz and Representative Mariano

Department(s) affected: Academic Affairs, and more specifically Institutional Effectiveness due to the accreditation aspect of the bill

[Bill Language](#)

SB 2524: Education

For the Higher Education System, the bill:

- Expands access to nursing education programs by:
 - Revising data collection and reporting requirements.
 - Creating the Linking Industry to Nursing Education (LINE) Fund and the Prepping Institutions, Programs, Employers, and Learners through Incentives for Nursing Education (PIPELINE) Fund.
- Creates the Student Open Access Resources (SOAR) Grant Program and Repository to provide funding for public postsecondary institution open education resources to expand textbook affordability for students. **SOAR WAS VETOED BY GOVERNOR**
- Establishes the Inclusive Transition and Employment Management Program within the DOE.
- Increases the number of programs for which a student may receive a Program of Strategic Emphasis tuition and fee waiver.
- Provides instructional materials for private school students free of charge and revises reporting and reimbursement deadlines for the Dual Enrollment Scholarship Program.
- Requires Effective Access to Student Education (EASE) institutions to publicly report on performance metrics.
- Expands institutional eligibility and student accessibility to the Open Door Grant Program.
 - The Florida Legislature appropriated \$20 million for FCS institutions to support this program in FY 2022-23.
 - provides funds to support student completion of short- term, high-demand credit and non-credit CTE programs
 - Extended eligibility for Open Door funds to school districts without a career center that offer eligible integrated education and training programs;
 - Removed completion of a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as a requirement for student eligibility; and
 - Allowed institutions to use Open Door funds to cover the student portion of the Student Investment approach.
- Makes changes to university performance funding metrics and eligibility.
- Clarifies the authority to establish fees for Educational Research Child Development Centers.
- Revises maximum dormitory beds allowable in Florida College System facilities.

LINE Fund: \$19 million in total for schools to recruit faculty and clinical preceptors for their nursing programs, to work toward combating the shortage of nursing instructors, with funds matched dollar-to-dollar by health care partners in their community.

PIPELINE Fund: \$40 million in total to financially reward colleges and universities for their nursing education programs, based on student success. First-time National Council of State Boards of Nursing Licensing Examination (NCLEX) passage rate of completers.

The bill was approved by the Governor on June 2, 2022, and will become effective on July 1, 2022, except as otherwise provided.

Department(s) affected: Mainly the College of Nursing, however there are aspects of this bill that affect multiple departments.

[Bill Language](#)

Relevant K-12 Legislation:

HB 173: Care of Students with Epilepsy or Seizure Disorders

- The bill requires a school to implement an individualized seizure action plan (ISAP) once a parent submits it to the school principal and school nurse. The bill requires that an ISAP:
 - be developed by a medical professional in consultation with a parent and signed by both individuals;
 - include specified information, such as recommended care, symptoms, prescribed rescue medication, and contact information for medical assistance;
 - be submitted by a parent to the school principal and school nurse or other appropriate employee; and remain in effect until the parent submits a revised ISAP.
- To assist schools in meeting the training requirements under the bill, the Department of Education must identify on its website one or more free online training courses provided by a nonprofit national organization.
- The bill was approved by the Governor on March 25, 2022, ch. 2022-19, L.O.F., and will become effective on July 1, 2022.
- [Bill Language](#)

SB 1054: Financial Literacy Instruction in Public Schools

- Students entering grade 9 in the 2023-2024 school year must earn one-half credit in personal financial literacy and money management to receive a standard high school diploma. The bill maintains the total number of credits students must successfully complete to earn a standard high school diploma by reducing the number of elective credits from eight to seven and one-half.
- The bill also requires that, beginning with students entering grade 9 in the 2023-2024 school year, students in the Career and Technical Education (CTE) graduation pathway and the Academically Challenging Curriculum to Enhance Learning (ACCEL) graduation pathway must earn one-half credit in personal financial literacy and money management in order to receive a high school diploma.
- The bill became law on March 22, 2022, chapter 2022-17, Laws of Florida, and becomes effective on July 1, 2022.
- [Bill Language](#)

HB 235: Restraint of Students with Disabilities in Public Schools

- For students with disabilities in public schools, the bill revises requirements relating to the use of mechanical and physical restraint. The bill prohibits the use of mechanical restraint by school personnel except for school resource officers, school safety officers, school guardians, or school security guards, who may use mechanical restraint in the exercise of their duties to restrain students in grades 6 through 12. However, devices prescribed or recommended by physical or behavioral health professionals may still be used for their indicated purposes. Authorized school personnel are still permitted to use appropriate physical restraint as permitted by existing law.
- The bill was approved by the Governor on March 25, 2022, ch. 2022-20, L.O.F., and will become effective on July 1, 2022.
- [Bill Language](#)

2022 FCS Implementation

	May require review of local policy and/or procedure	May require data or information to be submitted to the state
Dual Enrollment (SB 2524*)	Yes	Yes; information currently collected
Uniform Award of Credit for Law Enforcement Training (HB 3)	Yes	Not anticipated
Statewide Course Numbering System (SB 7044)	Yes	Possibly; information on faculty committees
Institutional Accreditation (SB 7044)	Yes	Yes; quarterly reports on progress
Textbook Affordability (SB 7044)	Yes	Yes; beyond current information collected
Open Educational Resources (SB 2524*)	Possibly	Yes; for OER grant recipients
Open Door Grant Program (SB 2524*)	Yes	Yes; information currently collected
Linking Industry to Nursing Education (LINE) (SB 2524*)	If applicable	If applicable
Prepping Institutions, Programs, Employers, and Learners through Incentives for Nursing Education (PIPELINE) (SB 2524*)	Not anticipated	Not anticipated
Nursing Data Collection (SB 2524*)	Not anticipated	Yes; information currently collected
Education for Student Inmates (SB 722*)	Possibly	Yes; through current reporting mechanism
Fee Waivers/Exemptions (HB 45*, HB 1577, SB 7034)	Yes	Yes; through current reporting mechanism
Individual Freedom (HB 7)	Yes	Not anticipated
Drone Usage (SB 2512)	If applicable	If applicable