2023 FL Legislative Session Update:

Teacher incentive programs, enhanced articulation, career planning for students, and career and technical education (CTE) expansion on the agenda



Introduction

The 2023 regular legislative session ends on May 5th, when many legislators will return to their districts and focus on their respective communities. Even with the comprehensive changes to workforce education last year, House and Senate leaders continue to focus on building a <u>Talent Strong Florida</u> through targeted higher education and workforce programs.

This session update outlines the Legislature's efforts to expand Florida's current CTE system by providing work-based learning opportunities to students in K-12, offering additional educational opportunities for veterans and military students, and establishing additional articulation agreements in the current 2+2 system.

Since FCAN released its session preview last month, the Legislature has considered and moved various bills through the legislative process that stand to directly impact postsecondary students in their educational and workforce journey in the Sunshine State. These bills are outlined in further detail below:

- CS/SB 240 and CS/HB 7051 Education
- SB 274 and HB 517 Nursing Education for Military Combat Medics
- CS/SB 732 and CS/HB 845 Collegiate Purple Star Campuses
- SB 750 and CS/HB 1401 Articulation Agreements
- SB 1272 and CS/HB 1019 Educational Grants
- CS/SB 196 and CS/HB 141 Guidance Services on Academic and Career Planning
- CS/HB 1247 William L. Boyd, IV, Effective Access to Student Education Grants
- SB 244 K-12 Teachers
- CS/SB 550 and CS/SB 339 Education of Dependents of Deceased or Disabled Servicemembers, Prisoners of War, and Persons Missing in Action
- CS/SB 1172 and CS/HB 1555 Hunger-Free Campus Pilot Program

Legislation Impacting Postsecondary Education

CS/SB 240 and CS/HB 7051 – Education

Bill Sponsors: Senate Education Pre-K - 12 Committee and Senator Travis Hutson (R - St. Augustine); House Postsecondary Education and Workforce Subcommittee and Representative Lauren Melo (R - Immokalee)

Committee substitute for Senate Bill 240 and House Bill 7051 are substantial bills that expand upon the work of the REACH Act (2021), provide additional CTE opportunities to students in the K-12 system, and increase funding for workforce education grant programs. Details on CTE expansion were provided in the 2023 Session Preview and additional highlights on the bills include:

Experiential Learning Tax Credit Program

• The House Bill includes an expansion of the current Internship Tax Credit Program to the Experiential Learning Tax Credit Program. Businesses would be eligible for this tax credit if they employ at least one apprentice or one pre-apprentice, expanding it from just hiring interns. The apprentice or pre-apprentice must have worked for at least 500 hours.

Florida Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

• The House Bill also requires a deep dive into the employment services provided by the Florida Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. The board must identify current best practices and access barriers for service delivery to persons with disabilities, including job coaching and training.

Florida Center for Nursing

Both proposals expand the current responsibilities for the Florida Center for Nursing.
Now, the Center must also convene various workgroups, tasked with reviewing data,
recommending systemic changes to address the nursing shortage, and annually
reporting these findings to the Legislature no later than January 10th.

Workforce Education Partnership Programs

• The House Bill provides guidance for state universities to establish workforce education programs in partnership with a private employer. The Board of Governors (BOG) is responsible for developing a template for program establishment. Participating students would receive a housing stipend, life management skills, and be eligible for tuition assistance in addition to the workforce training received.

Career and Technical Education (CTE) Expansion

• The Senate Bill appropriates \$100 million for the creation of the Workforce Development Capitalization Incentive Grant Program to fund the expansion and/or creation of CTE programs for secondary students.

- Removes current limitations on funding for middle school students participating in CTE programs.
- Both proposals modify the credit requirements for a standard high school diploma. Students would now have the opportunity to earn one credit in CTE to satisfy the credit required in fine or performing arts.
- Provides an opportunity for middle school students to continue their CTE coursework in a connected program in a district high school.

Additional Provisions

- The bills add responsibilities to local workforce development boards. Each local
 workforce development board chair must create an education and industry consortium
 to provide community-based information to assist the board in decision-making for
 program delivery. They also expand the current list of apprenticeship sponsors to include
 an educational institution, a community or faith-based organization, or a local workforce
 development board.
- The House Bill requires that every year, beginning with the 2023-24 academic year, each high school host an annual career fair and ensure 11th and 12th-grade students are able to attend and engage with employers.
- In order to address workforce needs, the Senate bill would allow school district technical centers to award college credits. This is an expansion of an effort to allow district career centers to offer an associate in applied science or an associate in science degree to graduates of a licensed practical nursing program from the same district career center.

CS/SB 240 unanimously passed its first committee stop in the Senate Education Pre-K - 12 Committee. It is still pending a hearing in the last committee stop for Fiscal Policy. HB 7051, initially filed as a committee proposed bill, passed unanimously out of the House Postsecondary Education and Workforce Subcommittee. It is waiting to be heard in the House Appropriations Committee and the House Education and Employment Committee before heading to the House floor.

SB 274 and HB 517 – Nursing Education for Military Combat Medics

Bill Sponsors: Senator Bryan Avila (R – Hialeah Gardens) and Representative Joel Rudman (R – Navarre)

In an effort to continue addressing Florida's nursing shortage, Senator Avila and Representative Rudman have respectively filed Senate Bill 274 and House Bill 517 to create the "Pathway for Military Combat Medics Act." The bills task the Articulation Coordinating Committee (ACC) to convene a workgroup so that they may establish course credits for military training and service for combat medics. The workgroup must finalize and provide its recommendations to the BOG and the State Board of Education (SBE) by December 1, 2023. The list of qualifying credits for military experience will be updated annually.

SB 274 has passed all committees of reference. The entire Senate voted on this bill on March 22nd, passing it with a vote of 39 yeas and 0 nays. HB 517 has also passed all three committees of reference. It is now waiting to be placed on the House calendar for a full vote.

CS/SB 732 and CS/HB 845 – Collegiate Purple Star Campuses

Bill Sponsors: Senate Education Postsecondary Committee and Senator Tom Wright (R – Port Orange); House Postsecondary Education and Workforce Subcommittee, Representative Lisa Dunkley (D – Lauderhill) and Representative Christine Hunschofsky (D – Parkland)

Committee substitute for Senate Bill 732 and committee substitute for House Bill 845 are identical bills that create the Collegiate Purple Star Campuses Program at Florida public colleges and universities. The bills define the term "military student" as someone who is an active member or veteran of the US Armed Forces. Postsecondary institutions that would like to designate their campus as a collegiate purple star campus must designate a military liaison, provide priority course registration for military students, and include resources for military students and their families on their website, among other responsibilities.

CS/SB 732 has unanimously passed through all three committees of reference and the full Senate floor with a vote of 38 yeas and 0 nays. CS/HB 845 has also passed all three committees of reference and is waiting for a full vote from the House.

SB 750 and CS/HB 1401 – Articulation Agreements

Bill Sponsors: Senator Alexis Calatayud (R – Miami); House Postsecondary Education and Workforce Subcommittee and Representative Kiyan Michael (R – Jacksonville Beach)

Senate Bill 750 and committee substitute for House Bill 1401 are companion bills that expand Florida's current 2+2 transfer pathways system. The bills place responsibility on the ACC to convene a workgroup, composed of representatives from the FCS, SUS, and district career centers, to identify statewide 2+2 agreements for associate of science to bachelor's degree programs. The Senate Bill requires <u>eight</u> agreements to be identified by August 1, 2024. The House version only requires a minimum of <u>four</u> agreements be identified by March 1, 2025.

In addition to the statewide agreements, both bills also require that each SUS institution work with an FCS school to identify one <u>local</u> 2+2 agreement for the degree pathway mentioned above.

The bills also work to strengthen current educator certification programs by convening another workgroup to identify seamless transfer pathways for education paraprofessionals or those who have earned their child development associate credential by March 1, 2024.

Both proposals add clarity to the current transfer credit acceptance system, providing that courses that do not satisfy general education requirements must be applied to institutionally required or program-required credits before being applied as elective credit. The House Bill details further direction in this area, by detailing a process in which the Department of Education (DOE) and the BOG must work together to streamline admissions and transfer requirements for students.

Lastly, the bills describe a new associate in arts specialized transfer degree and the process of approval by the SBE. The new degree program is created to assist students that need supplemental coursework and assistance before transferring.

SB 750 was reported favorably out of the Senate Education Postsecondary Committee, its first committee. The bill still has two committee stops left in the Senate Appropriations Committee on Education and the Senate Fiscal Policy Committee. The House version passed unanimously out of the House Postsecondary Education and Workforce Subcommittee, with a committee substitute. The bill has now been added to the House calendar for a full vote.

SB 1272 and CS/HB 1019 – Educational Grants

Bill Sponsors: Senator Corey Simon (R – Tallahassee); House Higher Education Appropriations Subcommittee and Representative Stan McClain (R – Ocala)

Senate Bill 1272 and committee substitute for House Bill 1019 provide EASE educational grants to formerly ABLE-eligible institutions. However, the bills have substantial differences in what requirements must be completed in order to receive the grant.

The Senate version outlines that the receiving institution must have been established for at least 20 years, offer nursing programs (RN, BSN, LPN, etc.), and be accredited by the Higher Learning Commission. Grants may also be administered to for-profit colleges and universities in Florida that have a level 6 accreditation from the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

The House version does not include any of the aforementioned details except the level 6 accreditation requirement. It also outlines that the receiving institution must have a secular purpose and clarifies it must not be an FCS or SUS institution.

SB 1272 was favorable out of the Senate Education Postsecondary Committee. The bill still has two hearings left in the Senate Appropriations Committee on Education and the full Senate Appropriations Committee. The House Bill has passed its first committee stop and still needs a hearing in the House Education and Employment Committee and the full House Appropriations Committee.

Other Relevant Bills

CS/SB 196 and CS/HB 141 – Guidance Services for Academic and Career Planning

Bill Sponsors: Senate Commerce and Tourism Committee and Senator Shevrin Jones (D – Miami Gardens); House Education Quality Subcommittee and Representative Kristen Arrington (D – Kissimmee)

Committee substitute for Senate Bill 196 and committee substitute for House Bill 141 are identical. The bills could require guidance counselors to discuss the CTE diploma pathway to a high school diploma, in addition to work-based learning opportunities, foundational and soft-skill credentialing programs, Advanced Placement (AP), and dual enrollment courses. The Senate

version of the bill has passed all three committees of reference and the full Senate with a vote of 39 yeas and 0 nays. The House companion has passed all committees of reference. It is now waiting to be heard in the House chamber.

CS/HB 1247 – William L. Boyd, IV, Effective Access to Student Education Grants

Bill Sponsors: House Postsecondary Education and Workforce Subcommittee and Representative John Temple (R – The Villages)

Committee substitute for House Bill 1247 provides a 3-tiered system for funding provided to Florida's private colleges and universities for the Effective Access to Student Education (EASE) Grant. In addition to current reporting requirements, institutions must also provide information on the workforce graduation rate and the workforce employment rate of their graduates.

CS/HB 1247 has passed all three committee references and is waiting to be heard on the House floor. There is currently no Senate companion bill.

SB 244 - K-12 Teachers

Bill Sponsors: Senator Alexis Calatayud (R – Miami)

Senate Bill 244 modifies current and creates new funding programs for aspiring teachers to partake in, in order to incentivize individuals to receive training in this field and address a current workforce shortage. Additional funding programs, originally described in the 2023 Session Preview, are listed below with more details:

Dual Enrollment Educator Scholarship Program

- This is a new program that would fund current teachers on their path to earning their graduate certification to teach dual enrollment courses.
- The DOE is responsible for listing which graduate programs are eligible for funding and
 must prioritize current students in an existing graduate program. Teachers who receive
 funding must complete their graduate program and all other required credentials within
 three years from the time they received the award.

Teacher Apprenticeship Program and Mentor Bonus

The Teacher Apprenticeship Program and Mentor Bonus, also new, is established to
create an alternative pathway for an individual to become a teacher in Florida. The
temporary apprenticeship certificate is valid for five years, may only be issued once per
person, and is nonrenewable. The teacher apprentice must spend two years in a
classroom setting, shadowing a teacher mentor, before they may apply for a professional
teaching certificate.

Heroes in the Classroom Bonus Program

• The Heroes in the Classroom Bonus Program is the last, new program established under this bill. Subject to appropriations, a one-time sign-on bonus may be provided to retired first responders or veterans who would like to become teachers. SB 244 has passed all three committees of reference. There is no House companion to this bill.

CS/SB 550 and CS/HB 339 – Education of Dependents of Deceased or Disabled Servicemembers, Prisoners of War, and Persons Missing in Action

Bill Sponsors: Senate Military and Veterans Affairs, Space, and Domestic Security Committee and Senator Danny Burgess (R – Zephyrhills); House Local Administration, Federal Affairs and Special Districts Subcommittee and Representative Taylor Michael Yarkosky (R – Clermont)

Committee substitute for Senate Bill 550 and committee substitute for House Bill 339 are similar bills that expand eligibility requirements for educational benefits for dependents of deceased or disabled servicemembers, prisoners of war, and persons missing in action. Immediately after the qualifying event, the servicemember must have established Florida as the official home in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) for at least six months prior.

CS/SB 550 has passed its first committee of reference in the Senate Military and Veterans Affairs, Space, and Domestic Security Committee. It has two additional committee references and currently awaits to be heard in Senate Appropriations Committee on Education. CS/HB 339 has passed all three committees, as well as the entire House chamber with a vote of 111 yeas and 0 nays. It has been sent to the Senate and referenced to the Senate Fiscal Policy Committee, with the Senate likely looking to pass the House version of this bill.

CS/SB 1172 and CS/HB 1555 – Hunger-Free Campus Pilot Program

Bill Sponsors: Senate Agriculture Committee and Senator Alexis Calatayud (R – Miami); House Postsecondary Education and Workforce Subcommittee and Representative Susan Valdes (D – Tampa)

Committee substitute for Senate Bill 1172 and committee substitute for House Bill 1555 are similar bills that create the "Hunger-Free Campus Pilot Program" at Florida's public postsecondary institutions. In an effort to combat food insecurity, common among college students, the Florida Education Commissioner is tasked with identifying three state college or university institutions with the highest percentage of students receiving a federal Pell Grant.

Once identified and selected, these institutions will participate in this pilot program for one year, starting on the effective date of this bill (July 1, 2023). Participating institutions must establish a task force, with student representatives who will identify goals to address hunger on their campus. A faculty member must also be selected to assist students in applying to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or SNAP. Additionally, the institution must also create at least one physical food pantry on its campus and develop a meal credit donation program, among other responsibilities.

At the end of the pilot program, each institution must provide a report to the DOE which will be used to provide recommendations to the Legislature on establishing long-term funding for the program. Lastly, the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA)

must conduct a study on food insecurity in Florida's public postsecondary institutions and provide their findings to the Legislature and the DOE.

CS/SB 1172 has passed its first committee and is waiting to be heard in the Senate Appropriations Committee on Agriculture, Environment, and General Government. CS/HB 1555 has also passed its first committee of reference and is waiting to be heard in the House Higher Education Appropriations Subcommittee.

Budget

April 5th was officially the halfway point of the 2023 legislative session and both chambers have already released and voted on their initial budget proposals. Now, the House and the Senate will enter budget negotiations, also referred to as budget conference, to settle the differences in their respective allocations. In February, Governor DeSantis announced the Framework for Freedom budget, covered in detail in FCAN's 2023 Session Preview, which totaled \$114.8 billion. The Senate has released its budget plan (SB 2500) at \$113.6 billion with the House proposing \$112.9 billion (HB 5001), both lower than the Governor's proposal. Listed below are the funding differences for major higher education programs and initiatives within each budget proposal.

- SUS operating funds: \$3.3 billion (S) and \$3 billion (H)
 - The Senate allocated \$645 million for performance-based funding while the House allocated \$560 million.
- FCS operating funds: \$1.5 billion (S) and \$1.3 billion (H)
- Private Colleges and Universities: \$212 million (S) and \$168 million (H)
 - The Senate and House proposed an increase to the per-student allocation for the EASE Grant. The Senate provides \$158 million for this grant, providing eligible students with \$4,200 each. In the House, the proposal includes \$109.6 million, with funding at \$3,341 per student (at the highest level). Additionally, the House proposal outlines a tiered funding model outlined under HB 1247, described above.
- Florida Student Assistance Grant (FSAG): \$288 million from both chambers for Florida's need-based aid grant.
- Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program: \$590.6 million from both chambers.
- Workforce Education funding includes the following:
 - Student Success Incentive Funds: \$30 million from both chambers.
 - This includes the 2+2 incentive fund and Work Florida incentive fund.
 - Student Success in CTE Incentive Funds: \$5 million (S) and \$2.5 million (H) for this new program. Funds will be provided to successful district technical centers and public colleges to establish new CTE programs in high-demand areas.
 - o Open Door Grant Program: \$35 million from both chambers.

- Pathways to Career Opportunities Grant Program: \$20 million from both chambers.
- o Teacher Apprenticeship Program and Mentor Bonus: \$4 million (S)
 - This is a new program, outlined in SB 244, described above. The Senate bill currently does not have a House companion, the reason behind the House not including funding for this program in its budget proposal. However, this could be added in during budget conference.
- Adult General Education Performance-based Incentive: \$10.5 million (S) and \$2.5 million (H)
 - This is a new funding program, created to award school districts and FCS institutions with high performance in adult basic education, adult high school, and English language learning. Funds may be used to continue and/or expand these programs.
- No tuition increases



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This preview is intended as an educational resource and does not constitute an endorsement or opposition to any specific bill or legislation.

For more research and data from FCAN, visit www.floridacollegeaccess.org/research-and-data/.

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