

CHAPTER 2016-137

Committee Substitute for House Bill No. 837

An act relating to education programs for individuals with disabilities; amending s. 1002.39, F.S.; exempting a foster child from specified eligibility provisions; providing that a student enrolled in a transition-to-work program is eligible for a John M. McKay Scholarship; creating a transition-to-work program for specific students enrolled in the John M. McKay Scholarships for Students with Disabilities Program; providing program requirements; providing participation requirements for schools, students, and businesses; exempting a John M. McKay Scholarship award from a specified funding calculation; amending s. 1002.41, F.S.; authorizing a school district to provide exceptional student education-related services to certain home education program students; requiring reporting and funding through the Florida Education Finance Program; amending s. 1004.935, F.S.; deleting the scheduled termination of the Adults with Disabilities Workforce Education Pilot Program; changing the name of the program to the “Adults with Disabilities Workforce Education Program”; amending s. 1007.271, F.S.; requiring a home education secondary student to be responsible for his or her own instructional materials and transportation in order to participate in the dual enrollment program unless the articulation agreement provides otherwise; requiring a postsecondary institution eligible to participate in the dual enrollment program to enter into a home education articulation agreement; requiring the postsecondary institution to annually complete and submit the agreement to the Department of Education by a specified date; conforming provisions to changes made by the act; requiring a district school board and a Florida College System institution to annually complete and submit to the department by a specified date a dual enrollment articulation agreement with a state university or an eligible independent college or university, as applicable; providing requirements for a private school student to participate in a dual enrollment program; requiring a postsecondary institution to annually complete and submit the articulation agreement to the department by a specified date; requiring specified information to be included in dual enrollment articulation agreements and disseminated to students with disabilities; amending s. 1011.61, F.S.; exempting a John M. McKay Scholarship award from a specified funding calculation for purposes of the Florida Education Finance Program; providing effective dates.

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

Section 1. Subsections (10) through (13) of section 1002.39, Florida Statutes, are renumbered as subsections (11) through (14), respectively, paragraph (a) of subsection (2), paragraph (h) of subsection (3), paragraph (b) of subsection (8), and paragraph (a) of present subsection (10) are amended, and a new subsection (10) is added to that section, to read:

1002.39 The John M. McKay Scholarships for Students with Disabilities Program.—There is established a program that is separate and distinct from the Opportunity Scholarship Program and is named the John M. McKay Scholarships for Students with Disabilities Program.

(2) JOHN M. MCKAY SCHOLARSHIP ELIGIBILITY.—The parent of a student with a disability may request and receive from the state a John M. McKay Scholarship for the child to enroll in and attend a private school in accordance with this section if:

(a) The student has:

1. Received specialized instructional services under the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program pursuant to s. 1002.66 during the previous school year and the student has a current individual educational plan developed by the local school board in accordance with rules of the State Board of Education for the John M. McKay Scholarships for Students with Disabilities Program or a 504 accommodation plan has been issued under s. 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; or

2. Spent the prior school year in attendance at a Florida public school or the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind. For purposes of this subparagraph, prior school year in attendance means that the student was enrolled and reported by:

a. A school district for funding during the preceding October and February Florida Education Finance Program surveys in kindergarten through grade 12, which includes time spent in a Department of Juvenile Justice commitment program if funded under the Florida Education Finance Program;

b. The Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind during the preceding October and February student membership surveys in kindergarten through grade 12; or

c. A school district for funding during the preceding October and February Florida Education Finance Program surveys, was at least 4 years of age when so enrolled and reported, and was eligible for services under s. 1003.21(1)(e).

However, a dependent child of a member of the United States Armed Forces who transfers to a school in this state from out of state or from a foreign country due to a parent's permanent change of station orders or a foster child is exempt from this paragraph but must meet all other eligibility requirements to participate in the program.

(3) JOHN M. MCKAY SCHOLARSHIP PROHIBITIONS.—A student is not eligible for a John M. McKay Scholarship:

(h) While he or she is not having regular and direct contact with his or her private school teachers at the school's physical location unless he or she

is enrolled in the private school’s transition-to-work program pursuant to subsection (10); or

(8) PRIVATE SCHOOL ELIGIBILITY AND OBLIGATIONS.—To be eligible to participate in the John M. McKay Scholarships for Students with Disabilities Program, a private school may be sectarian or nonsectarian and must:

(b) Provide to the department all documentation required for a student’s participation, including the private school’s and student’s fee schedules, at least 30 days before any quarterly scholarship payment is made for the student pursuant to paragraph (11)(e) ~~(10)(e)~~. A student is not eligible to receive a quarterly scholarship payment if the private school fails to meet this deadline.

The inability of a private school to meet the requirements of this subsection shall constitute a basis for the ineligibility of the private school to participate in the scholarship program as determined by the department.

(10) TRANSITION-TO-WORK PROGRAM.—A student participating in the John M. McKay Scholarships for Students with Disabilities Program who is at least 17 years, but not older than 22 years, of age and who has not received a high school diploma or certificate of completion is eligible for enrollment in his or her private school’s transition-to-work program. A transition-to-work program shall consist of academic instruction, work skills training, and a volunteer or paid work experience.

(a) To offer a transition-to-work program, a participating private school must:

1. Develop a transition-to-work program plan, which must include a written description of the academic instruction and work skills training students will receive and the goals for students in the program.

2. Submit the transition-to-work program plan to the Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice.

3. Develop a personalized transition-to-work program plan for each student enrolled in the program. The student’s parent, the student, and the school principal must sign the personalized plan. The personalized plan must be submitted to the Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice upon request by the office.

4. Provide a release of liability form that must be signed by the student’s parent, the student, and a representative of the business offering the volunteer or paid work experience.

5. Assign a case manager or job coach to visit the student’s job site on a weekly basis to observe the student and, if necessary, provide support and guidance to the student.

6. Provide to the parent and student a quarterly report that documents and explains the student's progress and performance in the program.

7. Maintain accurate attendance and performance records for the student.

(b) A student enrolled in a transition-to-work program must, at a minimum:

1. Receive 15 instructional hours at the private school's physical facility, which must include academic instruction and work skills training.

2. Participate in 10 hours of work at the student's volunteer or paid work experience.

(c) To participate in a transition-to-work program, a business must:

1. Maintain an accurate record of the student's performance and hours worked and provide the information to the private school.

2. Comply with all state and federal child labor laws.

~~(11)~~(10) JOHN M. MCKAY SCHOLARSHIP FUNDING AND PAYMENT.—

(a)1. The maximum scholarship granted for an eligible student with disabilities shall be equivalent to the base student allocation in the Florida Education Finance Program multiplied by the appropriate cost factor for the educational program that would have been provided for the student in the district school to which he or she was assigned, multiplied by the district cost differential.

2. In addition, a share of the guaranteed allocation for exceptional students shall be determined and added to the amount in subparagraph 1. The calculation shall be based on the methodology and the data used to calculate the guaranteed allocation for exceptional students for each district in chapter 2000-166, Laws of Florida. Except as provided in subparagraphs 3. and 4., the calculation shall be based on the student's grade, matrix level of services, and the difference between the 2000-2001 basic program and the appropriate level of services cost factor, multiplied by the 2000-2001 base student allocation and the 2000-2001 district cost differential for the sending district. The calculated amount shall include the per-student share of supplemental academic instruction funds, instructional materials funds, technology funds, and other categorical funds as provided in the General Appropriations Act.

3. The scholarship amount for a student who is eligible under subparagraph (2)(a)2.b. shall be calculated as provided in subparagraphs 1. and 2. However, the calculation shall be based on the school district in which the parent resides at the time of the scholarship request.

4. Until the school district completes the matrix required by paragraph (5)(b), the calculation shall be based on the matrix that assigns the student to support Level I of service as it existed prior to the 2000-2001 school year. When the school district completes the matrix, the amount of the payment shall be adjusted as needed.

5. The scholarship amount for a student eligible under s. 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 shall be based on the program cost factor the student currently generates through the Florida Education Finance Program.

6. The scholarship amount granted for an eligible student with disabilities is not subject to the maximum value for funding a student under s. 1011.61(4).

Section 2. Subsection (9) of section 1002.41, Florida Statutes, is amended, and subsection (10) is added to that section, to read:

1002.41 Home education programs.—

(9) ~~Home education program students may receive~~ Testing and evaluation services at diagnostic and resource centers shall be available to home education program students, including, but not limited to, student with disabilities, in accordance with the provisions of s. 1006.03.

(10) A school district may provide exceptional student education-related services, as defined in State Board of Education rule, to a home education program student with a disability who is eligible for the services and who enrolls in a public school solely for the purpose of receiving those related services. The school district providing the services shall report each student as a full-time equivalent student in the class and in a manner prescribed by the Department of Education, and funding shall be provided through the Florida Education Finance Program pursuant to s. 1011.62.

Section 3. Effective June 29, 2016, section 1004.935, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1004.935 Adults with Disabilities Workforce Education ~~Pilot~~ Program.

(1) The Adults with Disabilities Workforce Education ~~Pilot~~ Program is established in the Department of Education ~~through June 30, 2016,~~ in Hardee, DeSoto, Manatee, and Sarasota Counties to provide the option of receiving a scholarship for instruction at private schools for up to 30 students who:

- (a) Have a disability;
- (b) Are 22 years of age;

(c) Are receiving instruction from an instructor in a private school to meet the high school graduation requirements in s. 1002.3105(5) or s. 1003.4282;

(d) Do not have a standard high school diploma or a special high school diploma; and

(e) Receive “supported employment services,” which means employment that is located or provided in an integrated work setting with earnings paid on a commensurate wage basis and for which continued support is needed for job maintenance.

As used in this section, the term “student with a disability” includes a student who is documented as having an intellectual disability; a speech impairment; a language impairment; a hearing impairment, including deafness; a visual impairment, including blindness; a dual sensory impairment; an orthopedic impairment; another health impairment; an emotional or behavioral disability; a specific learning disability, including, but not limited to, dyslexia, dyscalculia, or developmental aphasia; a traumatic brain injury; a developmental delay; or autism spectrum disorder.

(2) A student participating in the ~~pilot~~ program may continue to participate in the program until the student graduates from high school or reaches the age of 40 years, whichever occurs first.

(3) Supported employment services may be provided at more than one site.

(4) The provider of supported employment services must be a nonprofit corporation under s. 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code which serves Hardee County, DeSoto County, Manatee County, or Sarasota County and must contract with a private school in this state which meets the requirements in subsection (5).

(5) A private school that participates in the ~~pilot~~ program may be sectarian or nonsectarian and must:

(a) Be academically accountable for meeting the educational needs of the student by annually providing to the provider of supported employment services a written explanation of the student’s progress.

(b) Comply with the antidiscrimination provisions of 42 U.S.C. s. 2000d.

(c) Meet state and local health and safety laws and codes.

(d) Provide to the provider of supported employment services all documentation required for a student’s participation, including the private school’s and student’s fee schedules, at least 30 days before any quarterly scholarship payment is made for the student. A student is not eligible to receive a quarterly scholarship payment if the private school fails to meet this deadline.

The inability of a private school to meet the requirements of this subsection constitutes a basis for the ineligibility of the private school to participate in the ~~pilot~~ program.

(6)(a) If the student chooses to participate in the ~~pilot~~ program and is accepted by the provider of supported employment services, the student must notify the Department of Education of his or her acceptance into the program 60 days before the first scholarship payment and before participating in the ~~pilot~~ program in order to be eligible for the scholarship.

(b) Upon receipt of a scholarship warrant, the student or parent to whom the warrant is made must restrictively endorse the warrant to the provider of supported employment services for deposit into the account of the provider. The student or parent may not designate any entity or individual associated with the participating provider of supported employment services as the student's or parent's attorney in fact to endorse a scholarship warrant. A participant who fails to comply with this paragraph forfeits the scholarship.

(7) Funds for the scholarship shall be provided from the appropriation from the school district's Workforce Development Fund in the General Appropriations Act for students who reside in the Hardee County School District, the DeSoto County School District, the Manatee County School District, or the Sarasota County School District. ~~During the pilot program,~~ The scholarship amount granted for an eligible student with a disability shall be equal to the cost per unit of a full-time equivalent adult general education student, multiplied by the adult general education funding factor, and multiplied by the district cost differential pursuant to the formula required by s. 1011.80(6)(a) for the district in which the student resides.

(8) Upon notification by the Department of Education that it has received the required documentation, the Chief Financial Officer shall make scholarship payments in four equal amounts no later than September 1, November 1, February 1, and April 1 of each academic year in which the scholarship is in force. The initial payment shall be made after the Department of Education verifies that the student was accepted into the ~~pilot~~ program, and subsequent payments shall be made upon verification of continued participation in the ~~pilot~~ program. Payment must be by individual warrant made payable to the student or parent and mailed by the Department of Education to the provider of supported employment services, and the student or parent shall restrictively endorse the warrant to the provider of supported employment services for deposit into the account of that provider.

(9) Subsequent to each scholarship payment, the Department of Education shall request from the Department of Financial Services a sample of endorsed warrants to review and confirm compliance with endorsement requirements.

Section 4. Subsections (13), (22), (23), and (24) of section 1007.271, Florida Statutes, are amended, and subsection (25) is added to the section, to read:

1007.271 Dual enrollment programs.—

(13)(a) The dual enrollment program for a home education student, including, but not limited to, students with disabilities, consists of the enrollment of an eligible home education secondary student in a postsecondary course creditable toward an associate degree, a career certificate, or a baccalaureate degree. To participate in the dual enrollment program, an eligible home education secondary student must:

1. Provide proof of enrollment in a home education program pursuant to s. 1002.41.
2. Be responsible for his or her own instructional materials and transportation unless provided for in the articulation agreement otherwise.
3. Sign a home education articulation agreement pursuant to paragraph (b).

(b) Each postsecondary institution eligible to participate in the dual enrollment program pursuant to s. 1011.62(1)(i) must shall enter into a home education articulation agreement with each home education student seeking enrollment in a dual enrollment course and the student's parent. By August 1 of each year, the eligible postsecondary institution shall complete and submit the home education articulation agreement to the Department of Education. The home education articulation agreement must shall include, at a minimum:

1. A delineation of courses and programs available to dually enrolled home education students. Courses and programs may be added, revised, or deleted at any time by the postsecondary institution.
2. The initial and continued eligibility requirements for home education student participation, not to exceed those required of other dually enrolled students.
3. The student's responsibilities for providing his or her own instructional materials and transportation.
4. A copy of the statement on transfer guarantees developed by the Department of Education under subsection (15).

(22) The Department of Education shall develop an electronic submission system for dual enrollment articulation agreements and shall review, for compliance, each dual enrollment articulation agreement submitted pursuant to subsections (13), subsection (21), and (24). The Commissioner of Education shall notify the district school superintendent and the Florida College System institution president if the dual enrollment articulation

agreement does not comply with statutory requirements and shall submit any dual enrollment articulation agreement with unresolved issues of noncompliance to the State Board of Education.

(23) District school boards and Florida College System institutions may enter into additional dual enrollment articulation agreements with state universities for the purposes of this section. School districts may also enter into dual enrollment articulation agreements with eligible independent colleges and universities pursuant to s. 1011.62(1)(i). By August 1 of each year, the district school board and the Florida College System institution shall complete and submit the dual enrollment articulation agreement with the state university or an eligible independent college or university, as applicable, to the Department of Education.

(24)(a) The dual enrollment program for a private school student consists of the enrollment of an eligible private school student in a postsecondary course creditable toward an associate degree, a career certificate, or a baccalaureate degree. In addition, a private school in which a student, including, but not limited to, students with disabilities, is enrolled must award credit toward high school completion for the postsecondary course under the dual enrollment program. To participate in the dual enrollment program, an eligible private school student must:

1. Provide proof of enrollment in a private school pursuant to subsection (2).
2. Be responsible for his or her own instructional materials and transportation unless provided for in the articulation agreement.
3. Sign a private school articulation agreement pursuant to paragraph (b).

(b) Each postsecondary institution eligible to participate in the dual enrollment program pursuant to s. 1011.62(1)(i) must enter into a private school articulation agreement with each eligible private school in its geographic service area seeking to offer dual enrollment courses to its students, including, but not limited to, students with disabilities. By August 1 of each year, the eligible postsecondary institution shall complete and submit the private school articulation agreement to the Department of Education. The private school articulation agreement must include, at a minimum:

1. A delineation of courses and programs available to the private school student. The postsecondary institution may add, revise, or delete courses and programs at any time.
2. The initial and continued eligibility requirements for private school student participation, not to exceed those required of other dual enrollment students.

3. The student's responsibilities for providing his or her own instructional materials and transportation.

4. A provision clarifying that the private school will award appropriate credit toward high school completion for the postsecondary course under the dual enrollment program.

5. A provision expressing that costs associated with tuition and fees, including registration, and laboratory fees, will not be passed along to the student.

6. A provision stating whether the private school will compensate the postsecondary institution for the standard tuition rate per credit hour for each dual enrollment course taken by its students ~~Postsecondary institutions may enter into dual enrollment articulation agreements with private secondary schools pursuant to subsection (2).~~

(25) For students with disabilities, a postsecondary institution eligible to participate in dual enrollment pursuant to s. 1011.62(1)(i) shall include in its dual enrollment articulation agreement, services and resources that are available to students with disabilities who register in a dual enrollment course at the eligible institution and provide information regarding such services and resources to the Florida Center for Students with Unique Abilities. The Department of Education shall provide to the center the Internet website link to dual enrollment articulation agreements specific to students with disabilities. The center shall include in the information that it is responsible for disseminating to students with disabilities and their parents pursuant to s. 1004.6495, dual enrollment articulation agreements and opportunities for meaningful campus experience through dual enrollment.

Section 5. Subsection (4) of section 1011.61, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1011.61 Definitions.—Notwithstanding the provisions of s. 1000.21, the following terms are defined as follows for the purposes of the Florida Education Finance Program:

(4) The maximum value for funding a student in kindergarten through grade 12 or in a prekindergarten program for exceptional children as provided in s. 1003.21(1)(e) shall be the sum of the calculations in paragraphs (a), (b), and (c) as calculated by the department.

(a) The sum of the student's full-time equivalent student membership value for the school year or the equivalent derived from paragraphs (1)(a) and (b), subparagraph (1)(c)1., sub-subparagraphs (1)(c)2.b. and c., subparagraph (1)(c)3., and subsection (2). If the sum is greater than 1.0, the full-time equivalent student membership value for each program or course shall be reduced by an equal proportion so that the student's total full-time equivalent student membership value is equal to 1.0.

(b) If the result in paragraph (a) is less than 1.0 full-time equivalent student and the student has full-time equivalent student enrollment pursuant to sub-sub-subparagraph (1)(c)1.b.(VIII), calculate an amount that is the lesser of the value in sub-sub-subparagraph (1)(c)1.b.(VIII) or the value of 1.0 less the value in paragraph (a).

(c) The full-time equivalent student enrollment value in sub-subparagraph (1)(c)2.a.

A scholarship award provided to a student enrolled in the John M. McKay Scholarships for Students with Disabilities Program pursuant to s. 1002.39 is not subject to the maximum value for funding a student under this subsection.

Section 6. Except as otherwise expressly provided in this act, this act shall take effect July 1, 2016.

Approved by the Governor March 25, 2016.

Filed in Office Secretary of State March 25, 2016.