

6A-20.028 Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program.

(1) through (2) No change.

(3) Initial eligibility requirements.

(a) through (b) No change.

(c) For the purposes of initial eligibility, in accordance with Section 1009.531(1), F.S.:

1. through 2. No change.

3. Students who intend to graduate high school mid-year must file the FFAA-1, Florida Financial Aid Application for Students, or the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), ~~as incorporated by reference in Rule 6A-20.023, F.A.C.~~ by December 31 of the student's last year in high school, and meet all Bright Futures academic requirements provided in Florida Statutes. A mid-year high school graduate seventh semester evaluation includes completed spring coursework and grades, fall coursework in progress, volunteer service hours or paid work hours, and test scores for test dates through the end of June. A mid-year high school graduate eighth semester evaluation includes all coursework and grades through fall semester of high school graduation, volunteer service hours or paid work hours, and test scores for test dates through the end of January and a graduation date from an official standard diploma or its equivalent.

4. A student's initial year of eligibility is defined as the first academic year immediately following high school graduation or its equivalent, whether funded or not.

(d) A home-educated student applying for a Florida Academic Scholars award under Section 1009.534, F.S., must complete volunteer service hours or paid work hours that meet the following requirements during high school and by high school graduation:

1. Volunteer service hours and paid work hours may not be hours that benefitted the student financially or materially while in the ~~or be~~ service of to family members defined as: parents, grandparents, siblings, aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, nephews, and spouses, including aforementioned step relations.

2. The agencies where the volunteer service hours or paid work hours were earned must provide on agency letterhead documentation of the number of hours and dates of service or paid work completed.

3. The documented hours must be submitted by the district where the student is registered as a home-educated student.

4. Students attending public or private Florida high schools are required to follow volunteer service hour or paid

work hour requirements during high school and by high school graduation as specified in subparagraphs (3)(d)1. and (3)(d)2. of this rule.

5. Volunteer service hours and paid work hours are separate paths to satisfy the hours requirement; they cannot be combined to satisfy the hours required.

(e) through (f) No change.

(g) Initial Academic Criteria:

1. No change.

a. Required coursework, as listed in the Course Code Directory, ~~as~~ incorporated in Rule 6A-1.09441, F.A.C., and, therefore, approved by the State Board of Education for initial eligibility for the Florida Academic Scholars or Florida Medallion Scholars awards, includes the minimum college preparatory academic courses as required for state university system admissions and outlined in the Florida Board of Governors Regulation 6.002 Admission of Undergraduate First-Time-in-College, Degree-Seeking Freshmen, which is hereby incorporated by reference (<http://www.flrules.org/Gateway/reference.asp?No=Ref-07541>). A copy of the Florida Board of Governors Regulation 6.002 may be obtained online at <https://www.flbog.edu/regulations/active-regulations/> or from the Florida Board of Governors, 325 West Gaines Street, Suite 1614, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0400.

b. A student may use up to two (2) additional academic college preparatory course credits from the Course Code Directory, ~~as incorporated in Rule 6A-1.09441, F.A.C.,~~ and/or from fine arts courses in Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, or Advanced International Certificate of Education programs to raise the GPA.

c. No change.

d. A student must earn at least the minimum standardized Evidence ~~Evidenced~~-based Reading and Writing and Math scores on the SAT combined composite, excluding the Essay section, or the minimum standardized scores on the ACT, either administered by January 31 for seventh semester evaluation or by June 30 for eighth semester evaluation of the student's last year in high school, as identified for each award level specified in Section 1009.531(6), F.S. ACT scores are rounded up for scores with .5 and higher; SAT scores do not require rounding. Sections of the SAT or ACT from different test dates may be used to meet the test criteria, but test types cannot be mixed.

I. To be eligible for the Florida Academic Scholars award, a student ~~graduating high school in the 2020-21 through 2022-23 academic years~~ must achieve the required examination score at the 89th SAT User percentile or the concordant ACT score. ~~which equates to a 1330 SAT or a 29 ACT.~~

II. To be eligible for the Florida Medallion Scholars award, a student ~~graduating high school in the 2020-21 through 2022-23 academic years~~ must achieve the required examination score at the 75th SAT User percentile or the concordant ACT score, which equates to a 1210 SAT or a 25 ACT.

III. The required scores may be adjusted annually based on the test score distribution report provided by the College Board, only if the required score drops below the specified SAT User percentiles. In the event that the 89th or 75th percentile is not listed, the next higher percentile score is used.

IV. Before each school year, examination score requirements applicable to students graduating in the next two (2) years will be published on the OSFA website (<https://www.floridastudentfinancialaidsg.org>).

~~e. Students who earn a minimum of five (5) postsecondary credit hours through the Florida Career and Professional Education Act (CAPE) industry certifications that articulate for college credit and complete thirty (30) volunteer service hours qualify for a Bright Futures Florida Gold Seal CAPE Scholars award. Qualifying CAPE industry certifications are those published on the “Gold Standard Career Pathways” list available on the website at <https://www.fdoe.org/academics/career-adult-edu/career-technical-edu-agreements/>.~~

2. No change.

(h) No change.

(4) Academic Top Scholars awards.

(a) No change.

(b) To be designated an Academic Top Scholar, a student must have:

1. Attended any public school or FDOE registered private high school, or be home-educated or a GED student who has completed the minimum required coursework as listed in subparagraph (3)(g)1., of this rule, and earned a standard high school diploma, or the equivalent, during the last year of high school;

2. Met eligibility requirements for an initial Florida Academic Scholars award; ~~and,~~

3. Received funding for an initial Florida Academic Scholars award at an eligible Florida postsecondary institution during the first term of the academic year in which the student was initially eligible; ~~and,~~

4. Been the highest-ranked Florida Academic Scholars award recipient in the Florida school district where the student last attended and graduated from high school. For this determination, Florida Academic Scholars award recipients will be ranked by the FDOE on the basis of the product of their Florida Bright Futures cumulative GPA, calculated on the minimum college preparatory academic courses as listed in subparagraph (3)(g)1., of this rule and

their best combined SAT or composite ACT test score as reported for their Florida Academic Scholars eligibility.

(c) In the event of a tie, the FDOE shall apply the following criteria in the following order to students who are tied in the same school district, until the tie is broken:

1. The product of each student's weighted Bright Futures GPA and best combined SAT, or equivalent ACT score, at a single administration of the test;

2. The product of each student's weighted Bright Futures GPA and best combined SAT, or equivalent ACT score, at the earliest single administration of the test;

3. The higher of the total number of high school credits earned;

4. The earlier date and time stamp for filing the FFAA-1.

(5) Renewing Academic Criteria.

(a) No change.

(b) Academic eligibility criteria for a renewed award, in accordance with Section 1009.532, F.S., shall be evaluated based on an institutional cumulative GPA and cumulative hours earned at the end of the academic year, which for this purpose shall be defined as the end of the second semester or third quarter of each academic year, which is the end of the spring term; or ~~is the~~ end of the summer term for students in the Program for the ~~s~~Spring and ~~s~~Summer ~~t~~Terms in accordance with Section 1009.215, F.S. Students in this cohort ~~class~~ will hereafter be referred to as spring/summer students.

1. A Florida Academic Scholars renewal award requires a 3.0 unweighted and unrounded GPA on a 4.0 scale and a minimum of twelve (12) semester hours earned per term funded for a full-time student, a minimum of nine (9) for nine (9) to eleven (11) hours per term funded for a three-quarter time student, and a minimum of six (6) for six (6) to eight (8) hours per term funded for a half-time student, or the equivalent in quarter or clock hours. If a Florida Academic Scholar earns a GPA less than a 3.0 but equal to or greater than a 2.75, he/she renews as a Florida Medallion Scholar.

2. A Florida Medallion Scholars renewal award requires a 2.75 unweighted and unrounded GPA on a 4.0 scale and a minimum of twelve (12) semester hours earned per term funded for a full-time student, a minimum of nine (9) for nine (9) to eleven (11) hours per term funded for a three-quarter time student, and a minimum of six (6) for six (6) to eight (8) hours per term funded for a half-time student, or the equivalent in quarter or clock hours.

3. A Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholars renewal award requires a 2.75 unweighted and unrounded GPA on a

4.0 scale and a minimum of twelve (12) semester hours earned per term funded for a full-time student, a minimum of nine (9) for nine (9) to eleven (11) hours per term funded for a three-quarter time student, and a minimum of six (6) for six (6) to eight (8) hours per term funded for a half-time student, or the equivalent in quarter or clock hours.

4. ~~A~~ The Florida Gold Seal CAPE Scholars renewal award requires a 2.75 unweighted and unrounded GPA on a 4.0 scale and a minimum of twelve (12) semester hours earned per term funded for a full-time student, a minimum of nine (9) for nine (9) to eleven (11) hours per term funded for a three-quarter time student, and a minimum of six (6) for six (6) to eight (8) hours per term funded for a half-time student, or the equivalent in quarter or clock hours.

5. The cumulative GPA required to renew any Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program award as referenced in Sections 1009.534, 1009.535 and 1009.536, F.S., shall be determined by the institution where the student is enrolled as degree- or certificate-seeking ~~as the student's cumulative GPA~~. The cumulative GPA shall be computed to two (2) decimals and shall not be rounded.

6. No change.

(c) Eligibility criteria for a reinstated award shall be determined if the student did not receive scholarship funding for the last academic year during which the student was eligible. The student must submit Form FFAA-3, Florida Financial Aid Reinstatement/Restoration Application, ~~as~~ incorporated by reference in Rule 6A-20.027, F.A.C., by May 30 of the academic year the student is seeking funding. A student who enlists in the United States Armed Forces, as referenced in Section 1009.531(2), F.S., and submits Form FFAA-3, Florida Financial Aid Reinstatement/Restoration Application, ~~as incorporated by reference in Rule 6A-20.027, F.A.C.~~, by May 30 of the academic year the student is seeking funding, must also submit to the FDOE via U.S. mail proof of all active-duty assignments from high school graduation through the date of the requested reinstatement year. Acceptable proof of active-duty assignment(s) is the Department of Defense Certificate of Release or Discharge from ~~A~~active - Duty, the DD Form 214.

(d) A student who engages in a full-time religious or federal government service obligation lasting at least eighteen (18) months ~~that which~~ begins within 1 year after completion of high school, as referenced in Section 1009.531(2)(~~e~~), F.S., and submits Form FFAA-3 by May 30 of the academic year the student is seeking funding must also provide documentation of the service obligation. The student must submit to the FDOE Form RSOR-01, Religious or Service Obligation Reporting Form, to document the service obligation. Form RSOR-01 is hereby incorporated by reference (<http://www.flrules.org/Gateway/reference.asp?No=Ref-07542>) and made a part of this rule to become

effective November 2016. A copy of Form RSOR-01 and Form FFAA-3 may be obtained from the Office of Student Financial Assistance, Department of Education, 325 West Gaines Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0400 or online at <https://www.floridastudentfinancialaidsg.org>.

(e) Academic eligibility criteria for a restored award shall be evaluated at the end of the summer or second semester/third quarter each academic year thereafter.

1. For ~~a the~~ student who graduated from high school in 2009-10 and thereafter, the award may be restored for the student who has earned an insufficient GPA at the end of the first year of funding only. The student must submit Form FFAA-3, Florida Financial Aid Reinstatement/Restoration Application, ~~as incorporated by reference in Rule 6A-20.027, F.A.C.,~~ by May 30 of the year the student is seeking funding, or by September 30 for a spring/summer student as outlined in paragraph (6)(c) of this rule. A student may earn and be funded in an eligible restored status one-time only. In addition to applying for restoration, the student is responsible for ensuring submission of verification from the last institution attended as a degree- or certificate-seeking student. The institutional cumulative GPA, as defined in paragraph (5)(b) of this rule, and as reported by the last institution attended, will determine the student's eligibility to be restored based on the minimum academic program renewal requirements.

2. A Florida Medallion Scholar who initially was awarded as a Florida Academic Scholar who earns a GPA of 3.0 or above, may restore as a Florida Academic Scholar utilizing the one-time-only restoration.

(6) Awards. Awards are made under all programs in this section in accordance with Sections 1009.215, 1009.43, 1009.53, 1009.531, 1009.532, 1009.533, 1009.534, 1009.5341, 1009.535, 1009.536 and 1009.538, F.S.

(a) through (c) No change.

(d) The student must be funded from his/her home institution. The home institution may also fund the student for courses enrolled at other ~~another~~ eligible institutions in eligible credits applicable toward a student's degree or certificate program of study. The student is responsible for notifying the home institution at the beginning of the term of his/her enrollment of credit hours and payment due, and then at the end of the term of his/her cumulative GPA and hours earned at another institution. The award amount is calculated based on the total number of fundable hours per institution type where enrolled, multiplied by the award per credit hour, per the General Appropriation Act amounts.

(e) The student is required to refund to the postsecondary institution the cost of dropped or withdrawn Bright Futures-funded courses; non-payment of such courses will result in future year program ineligibility. Students may not repay unearned hours after the completion of the term in order to regain their scholarship.

(7) No change.

(8) Institutional responsibilities.

(a) Participating postsecondary institutions shall comply with Rules 6A-20.002 and 6A-20.0021, F.A.C.; and,

(b) Verify, prior to disbursement each term, each recipient's graduation from a Florida high school, ~~or~~ State of Florida high school equivalency diploma (FDOE-authorized GED), home education, or out-of-state high school; Florida residency, as defined in Section 1009.21, F.S., and Rule 6A-10.044, F.A.C., ~~which is~~ incorporated by reference herein; the number of non-remedial hours enrolled; degree- or certificate-seeking status; eligible maximum program hours; default status; and repayment status.

(c) No change.

(d) Florida public school districts shall:

1. No change.

2. Submit transcripts, volunteer service hours or paid work hours, and eligibility criteria data by deadlines established by the FDOE.

(e) Florida eligible non-public secondary schools must, in order to annually maintain eligibility to participate in the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program:

1. Register as a non-public high school via the Private Annual School Survey (<http://www.fldoe.org/schools/school-choice/private-schools/annual-survey.stml>) with the FDOE.

2. Submit scholarship-required courses, volunteer service hours or paid work hours, and other eligibility criteria data as requested for all students in ninth through twelfth grades to the FDOE, via the Online Transcript Entry and Evaluation System (<https://www.floridastudentfinancialaidsgk.org>).

Rulemaking Authority 1001.02(1), (2)(n), 1009.53(3) FS. Law Implemented 1009.40, 1009.42, 1009.43, 1009.53, 1009.531, 1009.532, 1009.533, 1009.534, 1009.5341, 1009.535, 1009.536, 1009.538 FS. History—New 5-10-12, Amended 1-1-14, 11-29-16, 3-15-22.